

Wargrave Local History Society

Latest News - July 2012

Summer Visit - Fawley Hill Museum

In July, members of the Wargrave Local History Society made their annual trip to a place of 'local history interest'. This year they were privileged to be able to visit the Fawley Hill Museum - which can only be viewed by private invitation.

The Museum contains the personal collection of Sir William McAlpine, and he - with his curator - personally showed us around and answered questions about the very wide range of artefacts on display. They range in size from uniform buttons to a complete railway station! (from Somersham, in Cambridgeshire). Sir William has been acquiring exhibits over a period of around half a century. The collection is predominantly 'railway related', but it covers all aspects of railways - from the rails and rolling stock, to signs, china and cutlery, posters. There are also some non-railway items, such as a display of major civil engineering works carried out by McAlpines, exhibits of other forms of transport, etc -- altogether a most fascinating 'social history' from the past 170 years or so.



GWR Station Nameplates from platform lamp cases including Wargrave and Twyford (left)

Platform indicator board formerly on Brighton Station (right)





A Hornby model train with wagons used by McAlpines (above) and special axlebox dipsticks for electric locomotives (right)



As is customary for a Wargrave Local History Society visit, the occasion ended with a most delightful 'afternoon tea', served in the station building.

The next meeting, after our summer break, takes place on Tuesday, September 11th, when Geoff and Val Beckett will tell us about Berkshire's Lady Fliers, with stories and pictures relating to the lady aviators of the county, and then on Tuesday, October 9th, Professor Ted Collins, President of the Berkshire Local History Association, will talk about Horses on and off the Farm, and explore the ways that working horses were used not only in the the agricultural setting, but also in towns, whilst on Tuesday, November 13th, Clive Williams will speak about The Nabobs of Berkshire - the merchants of the East India Company who subsequently returned to Britain and mostly settled in the Thames Valley in large mansions - many of which still survive.