

# newsletter

No 111

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Jan 1989

## Sounds from the Past

Wed, 25th January, 6.30pm  
Children's Library, St Marylebone Library,  
Marylebone Road, NW1. (nr Baker Street  
Station). Entrance through main door of  
library.

One of the treasures of Britain,  
surprisingly unprivatised so far, is the  
BBC Sound Archive. Regular radio listeners  
will be aware of its scope and grateful  
for it. We are joining with the St  
Marylebone Society for this talk on the  
work and contents of this famous library,  
to be given by Sally Hine, its archivist.  
Please note the earlier starting time!

## Poets on the Heath

16th March, 7.30pm  
Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Rosslyn Hill, NW3.

As mentioned in our previous Newsletter  
our talk in March is by Michael Foot MP,  
on the theme of the poets associated with  
Hampstead Heath. We shall be publicising  
this meeting widely in the hope that  
members of the public will also want to  
come and, perhaps, sign up as members of  
the Society that evening. We aim,  
therefore, to have seats available on the  
night which will be on a first come-first  
admitted basis. Those CHS members who  
definitely want to attend should apply to  
Roger Cline, 34 Kingstown Town Street, NW1  
for a ticket, enclosing a self-addressed  
envelope, by 31st January

After that tickets will be available only  
on the night, and will cost members of the  
Society and the public £1 each.

## BELSIZE AND WEST HAMPSTEAD REVISITED

We are contemplating the revision of the  
two Streets of Hampstead publications  
dealing with Belsize Park and West  
Hampstead. We would like to hear from any  
members interested in working on these  
subjects. They should write to Christopher  
Wade, 28 Willoughby Road, NW3. (794 2752)

## Faking the Past

20th February, 7.30pm  
King of Bohemia, Hampstead High Street NW3

Philip Venning, the Director of the  
Society for the Preservation of Ancient  
Buildings is our speaker on the 20th. He  
will, of course, be telling us about the  
work of his Society, but he tells us that  
one of the concerns of his organisation is  
not just the preservation of old buildings  
but the well-intentioned restoration or  
faking that goes on.

## STEPHEN WILSON BECOMES VICE-PRESIDENT

We are pleased to announce that one of our  
members, Stephen Wilson, has accepted our  
invitation to become a Vice-President of  
the Society. Mr Wilson, who is now  
retired, was Keeper of the Public Records  
from October 1960, but prior to that he  
had spent much of his previous career in  
the Ministry of Transport and the Ministry  
of Supply soon after the last War. An  
article by him, on the changing shopping  
patterns in Hampstead Village, will appear  
in the next Newsletter.

## FURTHER STREETS OF HAMPSTEAD

Members wishing to brush up their history  
of Hampstead may like to know that  
Christopher Wade is continuing his series  
of slide shows at Burgh House on Friday  
afternoons in February, at 2.30pm  
(admission 50p). Main subjects are:

Feb '3 Northern Hampstead  
Feb 10 Belsize Park  
Feb 17 West Hampstead  
Feb 24 Stately Homes of Hampstead.

## WHAT'S NEW?

Under this title the Hampstead Museum at  
Burgh House is currently exhibiting an  
array of new acquisitions and loans. These  
include pictures, medals, miniatures,  
ceramics, curiosities and souvenirs of the  
late-lamented High Hill Bookshop. This  
runs until 27th March.

## Anniversaries 1989

This year will, no doubt, be dominated by the 50th anniversary of the beginning of the 2nd World War - once again the colour supplements will drag out their old pictures in a seemingly endless marking of 20th century wars.

However, you may like to be diverted by local anniversaries:

### 50 years

Death of notable people with Camden connections: W.B. Yeats, Henry Havelock Ellis, Sigmund Freud, Mark Gertler and Arthur Rackham.

### 100 years

St Martin's Burial Ground in Camden Town was laid out as a public garden.  
All Hallows church, Savernake Road, opened.  
The upper galleries of the British Museum were lit by electricity in anticipation of them being 'opened at night for the working classes'.  
The Hall School, now in Crossfield Road, was founded at 18 Buckland Crescent as a prep. school called Belsize School.  
People with Camden connections: Born - Geoffrey Faber, publisher, Stanley Morison, typographer, John Middleton Murry, Paul Nash, Christopher Nevinson, artist, Cecil Stephenson, artist, Helen Waddell, writer, Howard Spring. Died - William Allingham, writer, Wilkie Collins, Gerard Manley Hopkins.  
There was a police raid on a male brothel in Cleveland Street. The editor of the North London Press was imprisoned for imputing that the place was patronised by a member of the royal family. It was revealed later that he had been right in his accusation.

The first motion pictures on celluloid were exhibited at 20 Brooke Street, Holborn by Friese Greene.

The London County Council and the Middlesex County Council were formed.

### 150 years

Highgate Cemetery was opened

The Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution was founded.

People with Camden connections. Born - William de Morgan, ceramicist, Henry Holiday, George Gilbert Scott the younger. Died - Sir William Beechey, artist.

### 250 years

The Foundling Hospital was founded at a meeting of 'nobility and gentry' at Somerset House.

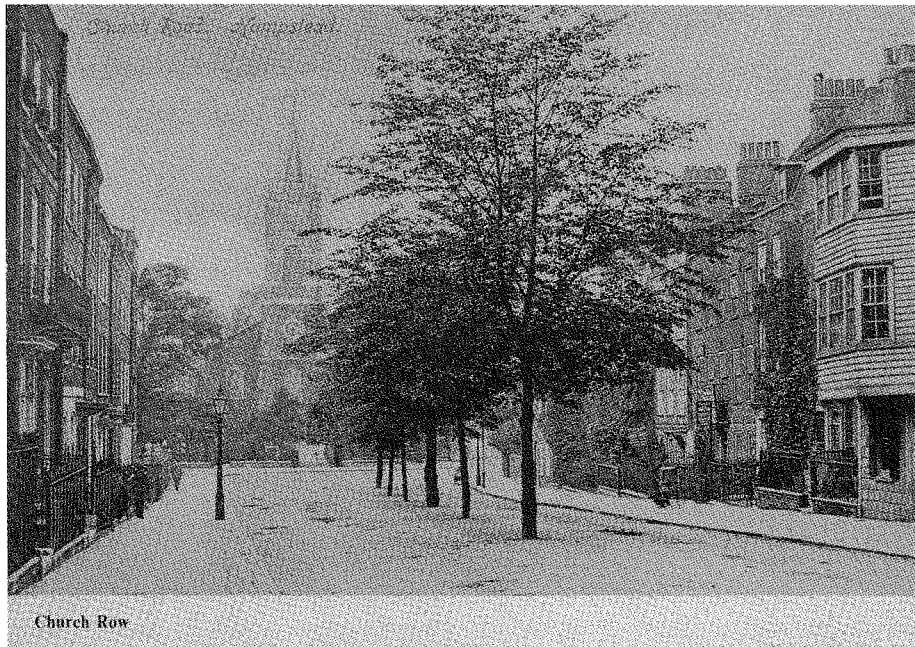
### 300 years

The chapel at Grays Inn was rebuilt

## CHURCH ROW OR ROAD?

Wendy Trewin has sent us the postcard shown here which reproduces one of the well-known views of Hampstead, c1905. At the top of it, which may not come out in the reproduction, the scene is referred to as Church Road, although beneath it is Church Row. Wendy Trewin asks three questions:

a) Was it ever called Church Road, or was this a mistake. b) Estate agents' boards are in evidence - were they regarded with any hostility then? Lastly, did the parking of cars in the street, or perhaps the traffic, make necessary the present 'platform' around the trees in the centre of the road, and when did this happen?



## MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

You are reminded that subscriptions for 1989 are due on 1st March. A prompt renewal would be much appreciated by your officers, and it would also save postage in further reminders. A notice is enclosed for those who pay cash or by cheque. If you pay by banker's order no action is necessary.

## 'Dem Old Dry Bones!

A conference with the intriguing title of Londoners Beneath Your Feet: The Research Potential of Human Skeletal Remains in London could not fail to attract the likes of Roger Cline and Diana Rau! Historians, archaeologists and demographers, among others, were assembled to find any possible joint approaches to some skeletal evidence, at a recent workshop organised by the Centre for Metropolitan History and the Museum of London.

The skeletal remains in question are in large collections of data recently excavated in London on three sites: the Black Death cemetery on the site of the former Royal Mint, the 16th-century 'New Cemetery' outside Bishopsgate, and the 18th-century burials at Christ Church, Spitalfields. It was hoped that several disciplines would be able to offer lines of approach, in order to appreciate fully the significance of this rich source of information.

The cemeteries varied considerably in period and length of use, from the East Smithfield cemetery, needed for a short period at the peak of the Black Death when there were up to 200 burials a day, to the 'New Cemetery', which was bought in 1569 and used until the mid-18th century. (After the plague of 1563 a new burial ground was found before the next plague necessity.) The Spitalfields cemetery was also used for two centuries, from about 1640-1860. These burial grounds and their skeletons have yielded much information to the archaeologists, paleopathologists, epidemiologists and osteologists, to name but a few of the experts involved. What they have led to is a possible revision of population estimates in the case of 14th century London from the supposed 40,000-50,000 before the Black Death to possibly as many as 80,000-120,000. Also, for example, in the Spitalfields data, the skeletal examination and historical records revealed the Huguenot inhabitants of the area, and the stresses on the arthritic joints, at first believed to indicate the occupation of weavers, are

now thought to show inherited disease, as these master weavers would not have done heavy work on the looms.

The demographic background was presented by historical demographers, and the problem of how the archaeological data could be used to address questions about populations, such as the age structure, the vulnerability of different age groups to disease, standards of nutrition, and so on. However, the greatest problem is that of migration, for London depended on migrants for the replacement and growth of its population, due to the very high mortality in the capital. Migration was age and sex specific, resulting in a unique demographic regime with a surplus of men, many in the 20-29 age group, mainly apprentices. The problem is that the skeletons do not reveal anything about migration, nor much yet about the diseases affecting mortality, including the high infant and maternal mortality, etc. During the archaeological research, it was hoped that one lead would show how many children the women had borne, but this theory was later discarded. Perhaps the archaeologists will eventually be able to shed more light on topics such as morbidity, deaths in childbirth, etc, which would be most useful to demographers.

The historical demographers work within the theory of a 'closed' population, that is assuming no migration, and are able to estimate fertility and mortality characteristics of a population, such as, for example, mean age of death and expectation of life at birth, but for this what is needed is the number of persons at risk in the population. The big problem with the archaeological evidence is that it does not reveal the age structure of the population at risk. So migration and age structure seem to be the big stumbling blocks in adding to historical demographic knowledge via skeletal evidence.

This rather pessimistic approach was somewhat countered by the possible contribution of new techniques, including dental analysis with, for example, the estimate of ageing from the formation and wear of teeth. However, even here very broad categories of age must be used, perhaps even using the idea of 'maturity' rather than 'age'. The concept of biology rather than demography may be more useful in the field of archaeology and skeletal remains. Nevertheless, these sessions of papers and discussions on approaches, techniques and forms of analysis, and the evidence itself were an example of the value of sharing experience with related academic disciplines, which may prove to be of mutual help in the future.

Diana Rau

## Book Review

The General Index to the Transactions of the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society Volumes 18-32.

This handsome-looking publication, available to LAMAS members at a purely nominal £1, emerged early in 1988 after a very long gestation period. It covers the years 1955 to 1981, earlier volumes having had an index apiece. I have to declare an interest because it was I who persuaded the Society's Council to look to its responsibilities and provide this necessary tool for scholarship. But having lit the blue touch-paper, so to speak, I stood well back and awaited developments. What follows is therefore said without any inside knowledge of how the index reached its final form.

It is set out with three columns to a page, in a brisk sans-serif type, with volume numbers given in bold for clarity in the entries. However, the huge amounts of white space between letter-groups add up to about 22 blank columns or 7 full pages; so the present 47 pages (plus 3 blanks) could have been reduced to 40. Small matter, perhaps, except to the Society's finances. The real puzzle is the format, which does not match the smaller (old quarto) format of the Transactions themselves but is A4 (like this Newsletter); surely this breaks Rule 1 in the book.

What of the content? I find it rather disappointing. It is heavily biased towards indexing names of people and places, so that you need to remember that the Bronze Age cemetery or the monumental brasses you want to look up were at (say) Hampton; there are no entries under 'cemeteries' or 'brasses'. This lack of what I call 'generic' indexing is a common fault but a particularly disastrous one for historians or archaeologists. The indexer (Mr. F.H.C. Tatham) has tried to help the reader by putting fairly exhaustive lists of 'things found' under the place-names, but that defeats most of the purpose of an index which is to provide all kinds of different routes into the published material. To be sure, there are a very few generic entries: 'pottery', obviously had to go in because full treatment of such a fundamental material is vital; and there are a few more like 'scabbards', 'coins', 'sceattas' and 'brooches', but these only serve to indicate how few there are in the whole index. The nationally important Neolithic site at Staines is only found under its place-name, not under 'causewayed enclosure' or even 'Neolithic'. An entry

'Maglemosean fruit industries' stopped me in my tracks: I know Mesolithic people like those on West Heath collected berries, but a fruit industry? No, merely a very careless mistake - for fruit, read flint.

It is only fair to say that individual entries like those for Hampstead or Holborn are full of interest in themselves, but an index is supposed to reveal the contents of a run of volumes in a systematic, not a haphazard way. You should not have to read the whole index to find out the subjects that have been covered!

At the price it is probably churlish to complain, and your pound will not be thrown away, because the index will undoubtedly help to trace half-remembered references to particular places or persons. Anyway, if we want a better index we must support the society that tries to provide one; but it is sad that LAMAS has spent so much money without managing to make a significant contribution to scholarship in its area. In a word, I was hoping for a Golden Fountain, but this is uncomfortably close to a damp squib...

Cherry Lavell

## LIBRARY OPENING TIMES

Members may like to have by them the revised opening times of the Camden local history libraries.

### SWISS COTTAGE:

Monday	9.30-8pm
Tuesday	9.30-5pm
Wed	Closed
Thurs	9.30-8pm
Fri	Closed
Sat	9.30-5pm

(1st and 3rd Sat in month)

Usually closed for lunch 1-2pm.

Appointments advisable for detailed research or the use of a microfilm reader. It may be possible for the library to be open additional hours by prior arrangement.

### HOLBORN:

Restricted service only by appointment. Some weekday service each week, with limited evening opening and very restricted Saturday opening. Contact Holborn Library (405 2706 ext 337) for current hours and appointments.

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No 112

Mar 1989

## Poets on the Heath

Thurs, 16th March, 7.30pm  
Rosslyn Hill Chapel, Rosslyn Hill, NW3.

We have already given advance notice of this talk by that most articulate of politicians, Michael Foot. He takes as his theme those poets who made Hampstead and its heath famous.

As you will know, from previous editions, we are hoping to attract an 'outside' audience for this talk as well as members, and the latter were asked to apply for their free ticket by January 31st. Those members who did not obtain a ticket but who still want to come on the night may do so, of course, but they will have to pay £1 entrance. As Mr Foot is one of the most interesting speakers around it is still a bargain.

## Poor But Happy in Somers Town

The St Pancras Housing Association has just published 'And Grandmother's Bed Went Too...Poor But Happy in Somers Town' - a title sure to cause difficulty in your local newsagent. However, it will also be available at Holborn and Swiss Cottage Local Studies libraries, price £4.95 or it can be obtained for that price from the Association at St Richard's House, 90 Eversholt Street, NW1.

The compiler of these reminiscences of old residents is Margaret White, herself a veteran housing manager whose firm, Barclay and Perry, had managed estates for the St Pancras Housing Association. When she retired she decided to put on record the life and early times of poorer people in places like Somers Town. In particular she deals with those communities housed by her Association, whose work is quite often pointed out as an example of good estate management.

## The Docklands Museum - our April Talk

Thurs, Apr 20th, 7.30pm  
St Pancras Church House, Lancing Street, NW1

In the Docklands in east London it is change all the time at the moment - and it will for at least ten years. As new development eradicates, for the most part, the scenery of the past, it becomes ever more important that what was once an important part of London's life and economy should have some permanent record. To that end the Docklands Museum has been set up by the Museum of London and we are fortunate to have for our speaker Louise Brodie, the Director, who will be describing the work and the ambitions of this new London attraction. We hope also to arrange a visit to the museum in the near future.

## SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Members are reminded that subscriptions fell due on March 1st and that a form was enclosed with the last Newsletter. It would be helpful (as well as economic!) to the Society if members who intend to renew could do so as soon as possible.

## THE LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

The annual LAMAS Local History Conference will be held on November 25th at the Museum of London. The theme of the talks this year will be London's government through the ages and in its different stages. Of particular interest to members will be that given by our Chairman, John Richardson, on vestries, in particular that of St Pancras.

## NEWSLETTERS TO SPARE

Timothy Wilson has written to say that he has a run of Newsletters from No.1 (in 1970) through to No.66 with some more recent issues to dispose of. Any member who wants to supplement his or her collection should telephone him on 323 8665 (day) or 241 6255 (evenings).

## A St John's Wood to Enjoy

St. John's Wood: An Abode of Love and the Arts, by Stella Margetson. Price £3.95. 32pp plus cover, 28 illustrations.

Once upon a time the St Marylebone Society issued a well-written and researched series of booklets about their borough, but alas no longer. Which is a pity, because London students would have welcomed an extension of those studies. There is, in fact, a great shortage of publications on St Marylebone - partly the result of the lack of bookshops in the area. It is difficult for publishers to tread where there are no significant outlets and, indeed, the note inside this booklet that it may be obtained from libraries and newsagents underlines this problem.

So, we must welcome this brave venture by the St John's Wood Society. The author is Stella Margetson, known to many through her contributions to *Country Life*, who has compiled a very readable account of the development of the St John's Wood Estate and the illustrious residents who inhabited its picturesque villas.

It is a pity there is no credit for the designer who has, within what must have been a tight budget, produced a very attractive and imaginative layout. The publication is well worth buying and is also available from the Local Studies

This c1906 postcard shows Brecknock Road looking north from the junction of Camden Road. The pub on the left has had a number of recent changes but is now a pub again. On the right is now a furniture showroom,

Library at Swiss Cottage or else from the St John's Wood Society at 15 Hamilton Terrace, NW8. Please add 19p postage.

## The Annual Meeting

The annual Meeting is not until the end of June but at the time of writing the venue and date are still uncertain, although we know that the speaker will be Alastair Service on Edwardian and Victorian Hampstead.

However, members should be sending in any nominations they have for the Society's officers. Unfortunately, our President, Dr Ann Saunders, is standing down because of pressure of work. The present officers are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Dr Ann Saunders  
VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Anthony Cooper, R. Michael Robbins, Stephen Wilson

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade  
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay  
TREASURER: Roger Cline  
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: John Gage  
PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Roger Cline  
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Horace Shooter  
ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes  
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Carmel Egan

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, Christina Gee, Philip Greenall, Diana Rau, Gillian Tindall, Rosemary Weinstein, Ann Winser.

formerly a car showroom. It is interesting to note the advertisement hoarding for E. Leaf & Daughter on the side of the building on the right, and the advert for the Holloway Empire.





# The Changing face of Hampstead's shopping

Stephen Wilson, our new Vice-President, has compiled a survey of the nature of shops in Hampstead Village which makes interesting, if depressing, comparisons. His table shows the percentage of shops in particular fields over a number of years.

	1856	1931	1970	1988
Food - provisions	26	25	15	9
Food - meals	1	4	12	16
Drink including pubs	8	6	7	6
Clothes	16	18	17	25
Household	19	12	9	4
Transport	6	5	2	0
Personal	10	9	9	8
Financial	1	5	11	14
Other	13	16	18	18
	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>	<u>100</u>
Actual	160	206	178	195

Significant points in the table include:  
The decrease in the shops dealing with provisions (foods) or with household goods.  
The increase in those providing meals, clothes and financial services  
The complete disappearance of those dealing with horse or motor transport.

The variation in the number of shops is partly due to unoccupied premises, partly to shops expanding to double or treble frontages, partly from changes to or from residential use, and to some of the following developments:

In the 1890s: Extension of Heath Street to Fitzjohn's Avenue with 48 additional shops.  
1900s - building of the Underground Station with loss of 8 shops  
1940-50 - The gash of Blue Star Garage with loss of 8 shops and the replacement of 2  
1960s - Presbyterian Church demolished with gain of 3 shops  
1970s - Kingswell development with gain of 10 shops  
1980s - Community Centre with gain of 4 shops.

Those goods and services being provided in 1988 which were the same as those provided on the same site (but generally under a different name) in:

1886:  
28 High Street Bank (Barclays - then London and South Western)  
29 High Street Chemist (Stamp's - still same name)

1931:

15 Heath Street Estate Agent (Goldschmidt and Howland)  
17 Heath Street Butcher (Harris)  
22 Heath Street Hardware (Andrews)  
29 Heath Street Wine (Allen Smith)  
37 Heath Street Meals (Bacchus)  
43 Heath Street Chemist (Ritz)  
64 Heath Street Meals (La Pizza)  
109 Heath Street Meals (Le Gaffe)

8 High Street Shoes (Tiptree)  
9 High Street Wine (Threshers)  
15 High Street Greengrocer (Michael's)  
42 High Street Meals (Chinese Moonlight)  
43 High Street Newsagent (Maynard)  
62 High Street Wine (Victoria Wine)  
71 High Street Meals (La Guita)  
  
30 Rosslyn Hill Chemist (Weiner)  
40 Rosslyn Hill Bank (Lloyd's)  
42 Rosslyn Hill Hairdresser (Sweeney Todd)  
  
8 Flask Walk Butcher

Since the end of the last war the following chains have disappeared from Hampstead Village - ABC, Boots, Dewhurst, Express Dairy, Sainsbury, W.H. Smith, United Dairies, Freeman Hardy and Willis, Woolworth's

Since 1985 the following chains have arrived - Laura Ashley, Benetton, Next, Blazer, Pizzaland

## COUNTRY LIFE FARRAGO

Members who are Country Life readers may have spotted an absurd article in November on the King's Cross area by Flora Cullerne Bown. It has so much unsubstantiated nonsense in it that one wonders if that illustrious magazine has taken leave of its standards. For example we have: 'The Celtic nature goddess Bride survives at King's Cross in the name 'Battle Bridge Street'...The 'bridge' part of the name may refer to Bride or Bridget, the guardian goddess of the River Fleet which once flowed through King's Cross. It is likely that she also gave her name to the trading post there.' Later on we have 'Local historians and persistent rumour claim that there was once a mighty battle at King's Cross between Julius Caesar and Boudicca. Like a lot of folklore, the story may contain a gem of truth. The confrontation between Rome and a great British 'Queen' may well have taken place, and the contestants were Pancras and Bride.' And so on.

The only statement based on fact in the whole article is 'The Fleet rises at Hampstead and Highgate'. As Cherry Lavell (who brought the article to our attention) says - this sort of article detracts from the good pieces so often to be found in the magazine.

## Church Road or Row?

Operation Skyscraper, by Tom Dixon. 120pp, paperback, price £3.95.

This unusual book is a far cry from the leafy streets of St John's Wood - it's about Gospel Oak and the fight to rebuild a community when demolition of the old streets took place. The author had not heard of the place when the Bishop of Willesden invited him to accept the living of St Martin's - the patron was, incidentally, Lady Magnus-Allcroft, whose first name indicates her marriage to the historian Sir Philip Magnus and whose second derives from the original 19th century estate developers in the area.

The late Rev. Dixon (the book has been edited by his widow) was persuaded to move from the more comfortable ambience of Harrow Weald to an area torn apart by development and showing the signs of wear and tear occasioned by rapid population change. His is an interesting story - of his dealings with the local characters, tenants' associations and Camden Council. He recalls the saga of the Kiln Place Play Centre, which members may recall being featured regularly in the local press because of the problems it caused to the nearby residents. Here there was confrontation between social workers intent on forming play centres (oddly enough, the head of the play centre scheme was employed by the Borough Engineer!) and many local residents who objected to having their homes knocked down in the first place and then rehoused in a development where they seemed to have no peace due to the noise from the play centre. The Rev Dixon recalls that the object of the centre was to 'provide a reasonably free environment where the young people can learn to take responsibility for themselves rather than having it imposed upon them by adult members of society as in youth clubs and schools...' Turbulent experimentation, as the author calls it, then followed. When he saw Council officials about it he was usually told that it was better to concentrate the nuisance in one place than to have it spread all over Camden.'

The outstanding merit of this book is that it puts on record social change as it affected a very small area of Camden. The Rev Dixon, who nowadays would be described in the current jargon as an 'outreach' vicar, tells us without gloss or pretence about his work, his contacts, his failures and achievements.

In answer to Wendy Trewin's question in the last Newsletter Dionys Moore sends us some interesting recollections:

1) So far as I know Church Row has always been so named. Certainly it has been since 1854 and was in 1792; Donald Towner researched the deeds of no. 8 and the rate books as far back as that at least and found no other name mentioned. So the word Road on the card must have been a mistake.

2) The estate agents' boards are for the sale of no. 9, which ceased to belong to the Field Lane Industrial School and was bought by Mr Clifton Adams in 1905.

3) The raised 'platform', as Wendy Trewin calls it, was not put there to prevent the parking of cars - there were few cars in 1931 - but to prevent the 'parking' of the Gas Board's handcarts which the men took to leaving there, rather than wheeling them down beyond the Finchley Road and back again next morning. The width of the paving was purposely made just less than the distance between the wheels of the said handcarts.

4) The trees as you see them on the card are of varying sizes. The third one down was the only survivor of the three old trees. The others were planted as young saplings of varying sizes and types of lime in 1875 at the instigation of the three architects - Scott, Bodley and Garner who lived in Nos. 24, 25 and 26, the holes being dug by my grandfather Temple Lushington Moore and the other pupils of the three architects on his first Saturday afternoon in London. He was articled to George Gilbert Scott - the middle Scott - whose son Giles later became my grandfather's pupil.

### THE SOCIETY

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society. It is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7, to whom all contributions should be sent. The Secretary of the Society is Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3. The Treasurer is Roger Cline, 34 Kingstown Street, NW1. Contributions to the Camden Review should be sent to John Gage, 21 Lambolle Road, NW3

It is published by the Churchman Publishing Ltd, 117 Broomfield Avenue, Worthing, West Sussex. (0903 692430)



# newsletter

No 113

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

May 1989

## The New River - our May talk

Tues, May 23rd, 7.30pm  
St Pancras Church House, Lancing Street,  
NW1

The New River has always excited interest. It had its origins in the increasingly poor water supply to London in Tudor times and the failure of the City to find alternative sources, or at least to exploit them. Sir Hugh Myddelton headed a private venture, eventually to be somewhat a labour of love, to cut a canal from the Amwell and Chadwell rivers near Ware to the place off Pentonville Road where Thames Water today have their headquarters.

The New River was opened in 1613, its wooden pipes supplying some parts of the City, with a limited pressure. It was not an immediate success since residents had some suspicion of water from pipes whereas they were content to continue to get their supplies from polluted streams and wells. Even Charles I despaired of a return on his investment and sold his shares in 1631. Early this century just one share sold at auction for £125,000.

There is renewed speculation as to the New River's assets, now part of Thames Water and, presumably, about to be privatised. For the change in management coincides with the completion of a vast new deep level main grid for London, making the New River virtually redundant and the land it uses very attractive indeed.

Mary Cosh, who has written a book about the New River, is our speaker on this most fascinating of private enterprises.

## COUNTRY LIFE FARRAGO

You will be pleased to learn that Country Life have admitted that the article on St Pancras mentioned in our last Newsletter was unsatisfactory!

## The Annual Meeting and Victorian and Edwardian Hampstead

Wednesday, June 28th, 7.00pm  
ASLEF Headquarters, 9 Arkwright Road, NW3

For each Annual Meeting we try to go to a building of particular architectural or historic interest. This year we have been fortunate in obtaining permission to use the headquarters of ASLEF in one of the spectacular houses of Hampstead. The nearest underground station is Hampstead or else you can come on the North London line.

Our speaker is a most appropriate one - the architectural historian Alastair Service, whose subject will be Victorian and Edwardian Hampstead. It is hoped that his book on the subject will be available for sale that night. His main topic will be those building developments in Hampstead not usually covered in history lectures - those areas on the other side of Froggnal built up in the very early years of this century, with architects such as Quennell, Champneys, Voysey and Shaw being the foremost contributors. Alastair is an excellent speaker and we look forward to his talk in such an apt setting.

The business meeting begins at 7.00pm and will last for half an hour. We will then go on to refreshments and the talk, the order of which has not been fixed at the moment. It would help Tina Gee, who does the refreshments for us each year, enormously if members would take the trouble to return the enclosed form to indicate that they are coming and will want some refreshments, for which there will be a charge as usual. So please do send the form back if you are hungry.

## Bridge House goes

One of the oldest houses in Kentish Town has been demolished, presumably with a bang, and scarcely with a whimper. It was there one day and gone the next, with no warning from the authorities so that conservation or history groups might be alerted.

Bridge House at 58 Highgate Road, which is shown on the **Kentish Town Panorama** published by the London Topographical Society and the London Borough of Camden in 1986, a series of panels which depicts Kentish Town at the beginning of the 19th century. It was near to the bridge in Highgate Road which crossed the Fleet as that river meandered down towards Kentish Town. The gardens to the house extended southwards to the stream which formed a pond where Burghley Road now emerges. In 1487 this place was known as Handeford Bridge.

We show here a picture of the house, which to be honest, was not of great attraction, kindly supplied by Gillian Tindall.

## A Hundred and Fifty in Highgate

That very Highgate institution, affectionately called the Highgate Lit, celebrates its 150th anniversary this year - a remarkable survival story. We shall be having a lecture on the subject in October but meanwhile an exhibition opens there from the 13th May entitled **The Heart of a London Village** which tells the story visually. We send our congratulations to the Institution and look forward to its ambitious conversion programme.

## HORNSEY BETWEEN THE WARS

The Hornsey Historical Society has just published 'Between the Wars' which includes a number of articles of much interest. They deal with the building of the prize-winning Hornsey Town Hall, medical care before the Health Service, schooldays in the thirties, the purchase and development of Priory Park, and an article on the philanthropist Guy Chester. Copies may be obtained from the Society at the Old School House, Tottenham Lane, N8 for £3.



## Streets Ahead

Members have responded well to our invitation to help up-date our Street Surveys of Belsize and West Hampstead. At our April meeting we divided up the sections to be re-researched and, apart from the Adelaide and Finchley Road areas (anyone interested?) we have everything covered. Monthly meetings are planned in future, either at the Local History Library or at Willoughby Road. Meanwhile some sixteen volunteers are pounding the streets.

Christopher and Diana Wade (794 2752)

### A COURSE ON NORTH LONDON HISTORY

We have heard that a Mr Harris, a lecturer at Birkbeck College, is willing to hold classes at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution on the history of North London, beginning late September. We are asked if any members of the CHS would like to attend. There would be 20 sessions of 2 hours each, either day-time or evening, Thursday being the preferred day.

If you are interested please contact Neil Barnes, (secretary of the Institution) at 4 Pond Square, N6 (340 1493). A firm commitment is not required at this stage, just some idea of the likely interest. The cost would be £20 for a 10-week term. (Senior citizens £13, the unwaged £5) plus £1 nominal fee to become an Associate member of the Institution.

### KNOW YOUR ARCHIVES

The London Archive Users Forum proposes to hold a twelve-week evening course beginning in late September on the scope and use of various public and private archives dealing with London matters. The course will cover the entire range of types of material including maps, photographs, audio tapes and videos, school and church archives etc.

The course will cost £40. If you are interested and would like further information please contact the Course Director, Ian Murray, 11 Coolhurst Road, N8, enclosing a SAE.

## Reminiscences of Kilburn

Barbara Browne, who now lives in Bury St Edmunds, has sent us some reminiscences of her childhood days in Kilburn in the 1930s. She was brought up by a lady who was a cook for the Haberdashers' School at Hampstead and she herself went to the Harben school in Netherwood Street. She remembers collecting coal for the aged during the war and running errands, and also singing carols by herself - netting 7/6d one evening, a considerable sum then.

'Hampstead fair of course was the highlight of our lives - those lovely paper hats and the threepenny rides etc - and toffee apples so big you couldn't get them into your mouth; lovely drinks of red fizzy stuff that dyed our tongues pink for the rest of the day; chips cooked to perfection for tuppence and the lovely Heath covered in cinders for days after the fair had gone.

### BAD PROJECTION

We apologise to those members who have attended some of our recent lectures where we had difficulties with the projector. Our apologies go to our speakers as well. We have, in fact, tried three different projectors, and each time there have been problems.

The Society is now purchasing its own projector for future meetings in the hope that this will be a problem of the past!

### WEST HAMPSTEAD DISSECTED

Members may like to know that there has been an academic assessment of the use of the term 'West Hampstead'. It is contained in the Journal of the Anthropological Society of Oxford by Jeremy Coote. It also deals with the names of some of the businesses in the area.

If you would like to read this article copies are available at the Local History Library at Swiss Cottage.

### CHEST EXPANDER

The London Chest Hospital in Bonner Road, E2 is launching an appeal to provide new theatres at the Hospital and has had the happy idea of producing a souvenir brochure of its history since its foundation 134 years ago.

The brochure, a limited edition, full of old photos of much interest, may be bought from them (Attn Len Greenbaum) for £2 incl. postage.

## The Haverstock Hill Settlement

Haverstock Hill, nowadays a street name, was at one time the name of the settlement on the steepest part of the hill, with Steele's Cottage on the west of the road and the Load of Hay (rebuilt 1863) on the east. On p36 of *More Streets of Hampstead* there is a view of about 1829; two of the tall houses have survived as a Georgian centre-piece (nos. 84 and 82, going downhill) to the parade of shops below the pub.

The street name was officially adopted in 1876 but it was already in use, for two short stretches of road, in the Hampstead census of 1841; and it applies from end to end on Stanford's Library Map of 1862.

Research is complicated by a change in the boundary between Hampstead and St Pancras. From Chalk Farm this ran up the centre of the road and originally it turned right (north-east) to pass along the uphill side of No. 84, leaving the Load of Hay and the first four shops in Hampstead (the manor of Belsize).

The Georgian houses therefore began life in St Pancras and it was not until November 1900 that they were transferred to Hampstead. With them came the properties immediately downhill, nos. 80-68 (even) and what is now the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This was a result of the 1899 London Government Act, which created metropolitan boroughs and tidied up any parish boundaries that had become inconvenient.

Roy Allen

## St Marylebone in Print

We have been taken to task by the Secretary of the St Marylebone Society for stating that there was very little to be bought on St Marylebone these days. He points out that the following are available:

The Western General Dispensary by Norah Schuster (£1.50)

John Bacon RA by Ann Saunders (£1.50)

St John's Wood - the Harrow School and Eyre estates by E. Bright Ashford (£1.50)

Tyburn Village and Stratford Place by E. Bright Ashford (£1.50)

Reproduction of the plan of St. Marylebone, 1832. (£4.00)

Diary of William Tayler by Ann Saunders, recently reissued.

Mollie Sands has also sent us a copy of her book *The Eighteenth Century Pleasure Grounds of Marylebone* which was published by the Society for Theatre Research in 1987. It deals exhaustively with the life and times of Marylebone Gardens in particular, including much new material on the sorts of entertainments to be found there.

The Marylebone Gardens lasted only 40 years and did not, as some others did, outlive their popularity - the site was too valuable. Mollie Sands has therefore been able to deal comprehensively with a short but changing period of entertainment styles and appetites.

Details of availability of the book may be obtained from her at Little House B, 16b Maresfield Gardens, NW3, enclosing a SAE. (Tel 435 8345).

## RESPONSIBLE TO THE PEOPLE

Still running at the Museum of London until May 21st is a fascinating exhibition which marks the hundredth anniversary of the foundation of the London County Council. This body, whose successor, the GLC, has been abolished, was the first directly elected authority for the capital - its predecessor, the Metropolitan Board of Works being composed of nominated members.

The exhibition, which includes much ephemera, gives a vivid insight into Victorian London.

## LINCOLN'S INN TOURS

Members may not know that there are weekday tours around Lincoln's Inn during the summer months. You can see the Old Hall, the Chapel and Undercroft and the Great Hall.

Tours begin each weekday morning from 9.30 to 11.30 and cost £2 from the Chief Porter's Office at the Main Gate from Lincoln's Inn Fields. Each tour lasts approximately 50 minutes.

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 114

Jul 1989

## The Annual Outing

To Rochester and Quex Park,  
Sunday, 20th August.

This year we go to Rochester, which is simply awash with Dickens connections, including a new Dickens Centre in a beautiful Elizabethan town house. The Centre won a BTA award. Rochester also has a cathedral (1080) and a castle and lots of book and antique shops.

Quex House, Quex Park, is the home of the Powell-Cotton family which owned and developed large parts of West Hampstead. The Powell-Cotton Museum was opened in 1896 and contains a dazzling display of African and Asian fauna and art.

For the convenience of members, the coach will have three pick-up points this year - West Hampstead, Hampstead and Camden Town. The cost will be £10 including tea. Please return the form enclosed with this Newsletter.

Regular 'outing' members will know that our trips are always enjoyable with plenty of surprises (although we hope this year that the coachdriver will not astonish us by travelling through west London in order to go south!), and those members who haven't yet been on one are very welcome.

## A CABINET OF CURIOSITIES

We are, later this year, having a talk on the Church Farm Museum at Hendon. Members may like to know that before that a useful introductory exhibition is being held there called 'A Cabinet of Curiosities: The Work of a Small Museum'. It continues until 17th September. The Museum, on Greyhound Hill, NW4 (203 0130) is open daily 10-1 and 2-5.30, except Tuesdays 10-1, and Sundays 2-5.30.

## No Meeting in July

Defying the journalistic advice that a headline should not contain a negative, this is to advise members that our arrangements for a meeting in July have fallen through and we have not been able to arrange another.

## From Turpin to Freud

Dick Turpin was hanged 250 years ago. Sigmund Freud died peacefully 50 years ago: they are just two of the fifteen famous Hampstead residents whose anniversaries are being celebrated in the current exhibition at Burgh House.

Was Turpin really a resident or just passing through? The old Heathside pubs believe he was a frequent visitor. The Spaniards Inn claimed that he stabled his horse there. Jack Straw's Castle used to show his hiding place - the crest of Hampstead hill is traditionally riddled with his escape tunnels. More certainly Sigmund Freud fled from the Nazis in 1938 and settled in Hampstead, where he died in 1939. His final home was the house in Maresfield Gardens which is now the Freud Museum.

The poet William Allingham ('Up the airy mountain' etc) also died in Hampstead and the exhibition includes memorabilia of him and his more famous artist wife, Helen, recently left to Hampstead Museum by their grandson, Pat.

Also included is material borrowed from the son of Mark Gertler, and the daughter of Arthur Rackham. A roomful of artists' work includes original pictures by C.R.W. Nevinson and George Gilbert Scott jnr, and ceramics by William de Morgan. The largest and most remarkable exhibit is a funeral pall from St Paul's Cathedral designed by Pre-Raphaelite Henry Holiday and worked by his wife Kate, embroiderer for William Morris.

## The Annual Meeting

Despite a rail strike it was a very successful Annual Meeting held, appropriately enough, at the headquarters of ASLEF in Arkwright Road. A great many people attended and we heard a talk by Alastair Service on Victorian and Edwardian Hampstead which many agreed was one of the best talks given to the Society.

The Society made a presentation to Dr Ann Saunders, who was stepping down after five years as President of the Society. We also welcomed as new president Christopher Elrington, the general editor of the Victoria County History series which, by coincidence, has published its volume on Hampstead in the last few weeks.

Other officers elected were as follows:

VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Anthony Cooper, R. Michael Robbins, Stephen Wilson

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson

VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade

SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay

TREASURER: Roger Cline

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: John Gage

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Diana Wade

MEETINGS SECRETARY: Horace Shooter

ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Diana Rau

COUNCIL MEMBERS: Peter Barber, Eric Brassington, Christina Gee, Philip Greenall, Gillian Tindall, Ann Winsler.

## LEG OF MUTTON MYTH

Following hard on the Country Life Farrago featured in previous newsletters, we now have, from the freebie magazine issued by American Express, Expression, an imaginative note on Hampstead:

'There are two heaths, the east and west. West Heath is the smaller. Here you will find Leg of Mutton Pond, so called apparently because a local proved the purity of the water by dropping a leg of mutton into it, letting it soak for a bit, and then cooking and eating it. The danger of doing this today, of course, would be what the lamb would do to the pond, not vice versa.'

Thanks to Diana Rau for sending in this piece of nonsense.

## Disappearing Shop Signs

Stephen Wilson's article on shops in Hampstead Village brings to mind another lamentable trend, the disappearance of trade signs and similar devices of the solid-object type.

It must be years since the traditional barber's pole was seen in the area but until 1979 Fowlers at 40 High Street had two large earthenware half-jars (now in Burgh House) to show that it was an oil shop. Fowlers dispensed paraffin by means of a beer engine and at one time, when the fortunes of real ale were at a low ebb, this was one of the few handpumps in the Village.

Specialised signs, commissioned by individual traders, have also gone. There used to be a stag's head outside the Huntsman Restaurant, 15 Flask Walk; and a spinning wheel over the restaurant of that name at 1 Perrin's Court. Down the hill were more oil jars (now in a Council depot) at Thompson's Stores, 4 Fleet Road; and a Yale key over Colemans, 74 Belsize Lane.

Further afield, a ham has vanished from 178a Royal College Street (once a ham and beef warehouse) but there is still something to be seen: the three brass balls of a pawnbroker at Thomsons, 36 Chalk Farm Road; Camden's last remaining oil jars at 39 Greville Street, EC1; and a five-foot fountain pen at Philip Poole, 182 Drury Lane.

Roy Allen

## Advance Notice

Please make a note of these talks in your diary:

Sep 14th: Gerard Roots on the Hendon Church Farm Museum. At the St Pancras Church House.

Oct 26th: Gwynydd Gosling on the 150 years of the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution. At the Institution.

Nov 20th: Michael Gandy on Genealogy. Venue to be arranged

Dec 8th: Dr Ann Saunders on the history of St Martin's in the Fields. Venue to be arranged.



## Book Review

The Victoria County History, Middlesex, Volume IX, Hampstead and Paddington. Oxford University Press, £60.

The major part of the volume is devoted to Hampstead, to which many of us, need I say, are also devoted.

The Victoria County History has been in operation since 1899, gradually covering all the historic counties of England - yes, Huntingdonshire and Rutland still live in their scheme of things - and producing not only general surveys of the whole county but topographical chapters on 'particular places'. (Incidentally, Particular Places is the title of an illuminating exhibition about the VCH at the British Library until 3 September.)

After ninety years the VCH has completed only twelve counties but it has originated many volumes about other parts of the country and has this year issued its 200th publication. (Bigger counties need a dozen or more volumes to complete the set!)

As with all the series since 1933, the Hampstead volume has been master-minded by the University of London's Institute of Historical Research (supported by the relevant London boroughs) and its voice is authoritative. Of first importance are the revelations about early Hampstead. While some of Barratt's findings in 1912 were suspect and Professor Thompson devoted only one chapter to pre-19th century Hampstead, the VCH authors (Diana Bolton, Patricia Croot and Tim Baker) have delved deeply into mediaeval manuscripts and ancient archives and thrown considerable new light on the origins of our community. Some of these flashes are inevitably obscured by academic jargon, such as the comment on the Domesday Book that 'there were presumably *famuli* on the demesne and probably also on Ranulf Peverell's subinfeudated hide'. But mediaevalists will take this in their stride.

The scope of the survey is remarkable, ranging over communications, economic history, local government, education, religion (including Buddhism and Sikhism) and Social and Cultural Activities. The latter section embraces pubs, theatres, cinemas (the first moving picture show in Hampstead was at the YMCA in Willoughby Road), local societies (including Camden History) and every variety of sport: even the 1910 roller skating rink in the former tram depot in Cressy Road has been duly recorded.

Information is packed in hard throughout. Statistics and dates jostle each other in a mind-boggling manner; the author goes off on a chronological ramble without any signposts and the reader longs for some helpful sub-headings. But this is the VCH style, often called 'a quarry of facts' and, as it is supported here by a detailed index, much welcomed by us local history quarrymen.

Nearly every fact has a footnote to give the source of information - and it comes as a delightful surprise and satisfaction to find so often that the source is a Camden History publication, mostly our Reviews and our Streets series. It is like getting your exam paper back with a tick to show that you got something right! In this case it is the VCH stamp of approval.

Christopher Wade

## Street Furniture at Risk

Cherry Lavell writes:

A recent letter in the Ham and High (7 April) about the substitution of Victorian lamp columns in the Prince of Wales Road area with modern motorway-type lamps reminds me that many years ago we had a reassurance from the then Director of Planning and Communications that historic street furniture in the borough was safe in his hands. It occurs to me therefore that the Society might once again express interest in this near-listable material and ask for assurances from Planning and Communications that they are fulfilling their duty as guardians of historic street furniture. We also had an assurance, I remember, that no York paving would be leaving the borough. I bet that one has gone by the board - certainly a lot was torn up recently in Gloucester Avenue and I would not like to guess where it went. All this might seem like 'amenity' stuff but I hope you will agree with me that it is a vital part of Camden's history.

(Subsequently Cherry Lavell has sent us the cutting from the Ham and High reporting on Camden's problems in conserving or repairing old water troughs. In the next financial year there is nothing in the budget for this kind of work and no projects are envisaged. Indeed, the only substantial repair possible in the last year, was the major renovation of the 'Milkmaid Drinking Fountain' in Gloucester Gate, Regent's Park, which cost £20,000 - partly paid for by a grant from English Heritage.)

## CHAMPNEYS RECALLED

Wendy Trewin has kindly sent us an excerpt from James Lees-Milne's diary in Midway on the Waves:

7 April (1949)

'Received a letter from John Betj[eman] in which he mentioned that Basil Champneys died in April 1935 and would, if alive, be 107. Did I remember taking him to dinner with the Champneys in Church Row, Hampstead? Architecture was never mentioned, as though to be a professional architect was not quite the thing socially, although the old man did talk about 'my friend Mr. [Coventry] Patmore' and less enthusiastically about 'that Father Gerard Hopkins.' What I do well recall is our having to go into the dining-room arm-in-arm. I was to take in the daughter, and J.B. Mrs Champneys, who was very grand and correct. She had greying hair brushed back and wore a gown with train. John could not remember which arm to proffer. She gave him no help and stood up motionless like a statue, waiting. John jazzed around, caught my eye, in which anxiety and embarrassment were blended, and dissolved into giggles.'

## LATEST LISTINGS

We have been informed that the following properties have been listed as Grade II by the Department of the Environment:

No 233 Shaftesbury Avenue. An office c1929 by Leo Sylvester Sullivan, with carved details, probably by Henry Poole. Neo-Egyptian style.

Nos 24-28 Oval Road and 38-46 Jamestown Road, formerly listed as Gilbey House.

## NEWSLETTERS AVAILABLE

A full run of Newsletters, apart from no. 1, is being offered by Miss H.M. Garnett. Please contact her at 14 Stockers Avenue, Winchester, Hants SO22 5LB if you would like them.

## SALISBURY CORRECTION

One of our readers has pointed out an error in our Newsletter of May 1988 in which Frank Salisbury the painter was mistakenly described as an architect. Our apologies.

## Criminal Islington

Presumably on the premise that crime occasionally pays, the Islington Archaeological and History Society has just published a book entitled **Criminal Islington**, researched by a number of members and edited by Keith Sugden. It is the result of collaboration with the Islington Flashback Project.

It covers the Clerkenwell and St Luke's rookeries (less famous but no less squalid than the St Giles Rookery), famous murders such as those perpetrated by Crippen, Seddon and George Smith, and an interesting essay on the early years of the Metropolitan Police in the Islington area. There is also a section devoted to the earlier Irish troubles, then called 'Fenian Disturbances' which affected the Clerkenwell area.

Lastly, the book deals with punishments. Islington still contains two well-known prisons, Pentonville and Holloway and it was at the former that some of the most bizarre, well-meaning experiments in penal reform took place.

This is a lively, well presented booklet at the low price of £3.95. It contains 90 pages and a number of illustrations. Copies may be obtained from Catherine Silver, 8 Wynyatt Street, ECl adding 60p for postage and packing

## CURTAIN RISES ON THEATRE HISTORY

The Society intends to publish a book on the history of the various theatres which have existed, and still exist, in Camden. We hope that a number of members will volunteer to research one or more theatre - it will involve using libraries and research facilities outside the borough as well. Members who are interested should contact Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3 and mention, if appropriate, any theatre in which you have a particular interest.

## THE SOCIETY

This Newsletter is edited by John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7, to whom contributions should be sent. The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, Avenue Road, NW3. The Treasurer is Roger Cline of 34 Jamestown Street, NW1. The Editor of the Camden History Review, to whom contributions should be sent, is John Gage, 21 Lambolle Road, NW3

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 115

Sep 1989

## A Cabinet of Curiosities - the Church Farm Museum

Sep 14th, 7.30pm  
St Pancras Church House, Lancing Street,  
NW1

Our talk in September is on a local museum - the Church Farm Museum at Hendon. Many members will know this splendid house but others won't and will be surprised to hear of the scope of its activities. Gerard Roots is our speaker.

## Burgh House Celebrates

Burgh House is celebrating in September the tenth anniversary of its re-opening under the management of the charitable Burgh House Trust. So, the next exhibition at the Hampstead Museum will be THE TENTH BIRTHDAY SHOW, which will look back at some of their sixty exhibitions of the past, along with all the other activities of Burgh House. The Museum remains the only local history museum in Camden. (The Exhibition runs from Oct 7 to Dec 17.)

Incidentally, the Burgh House Book Sale and Michaelmas Fair is on Sept 30, 2-5pm.

## REVIEW OF LISTED BUILDINGS

English Heritage are reviewing the list of Listed Buildings in Camden and have employed a researcher, Sue Hendry, to check the old list and add anything that is 'definitely deemed worthy'. Suggestions should be sent as soon as possible to Miss Hendry at Room 208, Fortress House, 23 Savile Row, W1. As the List includes street furniture, we hope that the big milestone in Haverstock Hill (corner of Steele's Road) will get listed now.

## One Hundred and Fifty Years in Highgate

Oct 26th, 7.30pm  
Highgate Literary and Scientific  
Institution, South Grove, N6

In January 1839 a gathering of local worthies at the Gatehouse Tavern, Highgate, was urged to accept a proposition that a Literary and Scientific Institution should be formed in the Village to 'excite and cultivate an intelligent interest in the objects of literature and science.' From this modest beginning the Institution has developed, though not without its alarms as our speaker, Gwynydd Gosling, will no doubt relate. Indeed, its early years were faltering and the organisation was within an ace of being wound up at one time. But it survived and today is one of the few such bodies remaining in the country.

It is, itself, an integral part of Highgate and contributes in many ways to the still fairly relaxed, village atmosphere there, a quality sadly being overwhelmed in Hampstead. Our speaker has been librarian here for many years and in this special year she herself celebrates 50 years connection with the Institution.

## Advance Notice

Please put these meetings into your diary:

Nov 20: Michael Gandy on Genealogy. At the Moreland Hall, Hampstead, 7.30pm

Dec 8: Dr Ann Saunders on the history of St Martin's in the Fields, Westminster. At the church.

## Street Features at Risk

Peter G. Scott writes regarding Cherry Lavell's lament at disappearing street furniture in the last Newsletter:

'I note that the listed public lighting column at the north-west corner of Gordon Square has lost its door (stolen?) shewing Saint Pancras standing on a Roman soldier.

In Tottenham Court Road the listed centre-island columns have still not been restored. In 1982 I lent the GLC a Saint Pancras Vestry arc lamp cradle-type fitting in order that new tops could be cast for the Tottenham Court Road columns. With the subsequent demise of the GLC nothing has been done, and the arc lamp fitting hasn't been returned to me either.'

Mr A. Abrahart follows up on disappearing shop signs, and the mention of Thomson's, the pawnbrokers, in Chalk Farm Road. Mr Abrahart says that the business, still a family one, has been there for 150 years. Thomson's also have establishments at 63 Praed Street, W2 and 158 Portobello Road, W11. The pawnbroker's sign is also above those shops.

'In olden times the wealthy Florentine of the Medici were the greatest money-lenders, and their sign was three gilded pills. Their agents in England painted the sign upon their doors so as to indicate that they too were money-lenders and gradually the sign was adopted by most in the same trade, although nowadays it is only used by pawnbrokers.

## LOCAL HISTORY EVENING CLASSES

A course begins on 20 September at the Working Men's College, Crowndale Road, entitled Local History of Camden. The tutor is Michael Harris MA. The course is on each Wednesday at 7pm and is for 10 sessions. The total cost is £20.00.

The same tutor is also lecturing at the Highgate Literary and Scientific Institution, South Grove, N6, on Monday afternoons from 25 September at 2pm, on 'Villages and Suburbs: A View of the History of North London. There are 10 sessions, the fee £20. The busy Mr Harris will be giving a similar lecture, though spread over two terms, and restricted to history since 1850, at Avenue House, East End Road, N3, from Tuesday 3 October, at 1.30pm. (20 sessions).

## Camden Past and Present

One of the complications of beginning research in any one library is that you rarely have a good idea of what is in the collection. Quite often the archivists are too busy (and occasionally too secretive!) to fashion either a clear filing system or document so that a serious researcher can find not only what he or she thinks might be there, but discover, without too much badgering and effort, the unexpected.

We must be grateful, therefore, to Malcolm Holmes and Richard Knight of Camden's Local History Library for a new substantial guide to the Camden collections entitled Camden Past and Present. (We are hoping to distribute it free to members). It is a comprehensive and most useful survey.

It deals with each class of record in the collection from maps to census returns, directories to newspapers. They are all clearly displayed so that you can, in effect, prepare for your research at home beforehand, rather than turn up with a hopeful shopping list.

There are diverse surprises. For example the Collection includes records and photographs of the Highgate Harriers from the 1890s to the 1980s, or the early 19th century minutes of the Hampstead Assembly Rooms. Programmes and material related to the Hampstead Theatre may be expected, but you may also find the minutes of the Hampstead Children's Cinema of the 1950s or those of the Hampstead Mother and Baby Home from 1918.

Congratulations to the compilers - a publication of much use and merit is now available.

## The Curtain Awaits

We have had some response to our invitation in the last Newsletter for members to take an interest in a former Camden theatre sufficient to research its history, but not enough. Don't forget, we aim to make a good publication from this subject, but we do need members to make this possible.

Interested people should contact Jane Ramsay, c/o Swiss Cottage Library, NW3

## How ASLEF came to Hampstead

Joan Barraclough kindly took up our invitation to investigate why it was that ASLEF, the locomotive trade union in whose headquarters we held our last AGM, set up house at the unlikely venue of two houses in Arkwright Road, Hampstead. She reports:

'It was the need to be in or near London, that brought the Associated Society of Locomotive Engineers and Firemen (founded in 1880) to West Brow, Arkwright Road. They moved in in 1921 and have remained since.

The house is well-known as the home of the Beechams of pill, powder and symphonic fame. It belonged to Joseph Beecham of the second generation of the family and the father of Sir Thomas, the conductor. Joseph purchased it in 1903, and used it as his summer home for the London season. It was never his principal residence. On his death, the executors sold it, but not directly to ASLEF. There were two owners before they acquired it. The first was a Mrs Celia Gylsa, wife of a resident of Henley-on-Thames, who obtained it for £5,700 on the 14 October, 1918. By 1 April 1920, a Mr Stuart Goldhurst became the owner, and then on the 6 September 1921, ASLEF, three trustees being Richard Thomas Hatton, William Duckworth and George Eason, locomotive engineers.

The exact reason for choosing that particular house, for which £10,000 was paid, compared with the £6,750 for which Goldhurst acquired it, is obscure. However, many trades' unions acquired large houses outside the central area of London, often in districts which had become unfashionable, leading to a drop in house prices. (ASLEF, however, seem to have had to pay a good price.) The Sheet Metal Workers' Union at one time had premises down East Heath Road.

Not everyone was in favour of the move. It was said in support that much business was done in London, leading to heavy expenses for travelling and demands on the General Secretary's time. Additionally, the grouping of most of the railway companies into four complexes, which came into effect in 1923, meant that the Union would be nearer the head offices of the railways than they were in Leeds.

Opposition to the move was largely on the grounds of expense. Headquarters had been for some time at 8 Park Square, Leeds. This seems to have been a very basic building because in a lengthy speech to the Annual Assembly of Delegates (as ASLEF call their annual conference) the general secretary thought good money could be obtained 'when you have got it fitted with electricity and gas throughout with hot water heating installation, with all repairs done, with the old wells under it filled up...'

The General Secretary felt that a good price would offset the probable cost of £12,000 of taking on Arkwright Road, taking into account repairs and removal of furniture. He also noted removal costs for married members of staff and for single members who might or might not come. He stated that he had applied to 22 housing and estate agents. There was even talk of an offer of a three-acre plot on which to build, which seems to have prompted jokes about three acres and a cow. This was in the course of a heated debate too lengthy to reproduce here. In the end, the motion proposing the move to London was passed by 30 votes to 20. A motion to build the General Secretary a house was lost. Subsequently, it was noted that there had been difficulty in finding accommodation for staff in London.

As noted, ASLEF moved in and their next annual assembly was held at West Brow in 1922.'

### FAMILY HISTORY WANTED

We have been asked by Mrs Margarita Smith of 12 Marlborough Avenue, Tadcaster, North Yorks, LS24 9JX, if anyone has information regarding her family ancestors of the name of Bilton. They were Kentish Town people from about 1809 to 1851 but she does not know where yet.

### BELSIZE FESTIVAL

Members of our Streets Group, who are updating MORE STREETS OF HAMPSTEAD, will be running a Camden History stall at the Belsize Festival on 16 September. Apart from flying the flag, they will be selling our publications and encouraging others to join the Society. Its always a lively festival, so come if you can.

## Camden Notes and Queries

I have collected a number of items relating to Camden over the years from that venerable magazine Notes and Queries. Some of them are shown below:

1) \*Quoting a quarto newspaper dated 18 Jun 1649:

'On Saturday last there was in Pankridge churchyard a great congregation met, and a parson with them that did read the booke of common Prayer and all the parts thereof (according to that rubrick) appointed for the day, and prayed for the late Queen of England and her children thus: That God would blesse the Queen, wife to the late King of England, Charles the first, her dread Lord and Sovereigne husband, and to restore the royall issue to their just rights, or wordes to that purpose.'

From an issue of N&Q, 1866:

'When the Barbaulds were in Hampstead they lived in one of the two houses belonging to Lord Chesterfield on Red Lion Hill, where he took pupils. The stable at the end of the garden was made into a schoolroom. After a time he ceased being a schoolmaster and went to live in Church Row. My father took his house on Red Lion Hill.' (Ex J. Bockett).

Another edition quotes the Weekly Packet of 15 July, 1721:

On Saturday last the Prince and Princess of Wales dined at Belsize House near Hampstead, their own Cooks being there to dress the Dinner for their Royal Highnesses and their Retinue, afterwards they saw the Diversions of the Place, particularly that of Deer hunting, and were well pleas'd therewith; and at their going away were very liberal to the servants.'

In 1849 a correspondent noted that the Bloomsbury Market was opened by the Duke of Bedford in 1730. Does any member know where this was?

In 1854 it was noted that Theodore Hook lived in Kentish Town for many months after his return from Mauritius. 'His house was second to the left hand, contiguous to Providence Row, nearly opposite the Nag's Head.'

John Richardson

## Out but in Touch

Camden History Society members were still in touch, at least with West Hampstead, on this year's outing. They visited the home of the Powell-Cotton family, whose large estates in West Hampstead bear the names of their Kentish landownings. Quex, Birchington, Kingsgate, Westbere and then, commemorating Major Percy Powell-Cotton's incredible travels - Sumatra, Memelik and so on.

First, however, there was 'free activity' (in nursery school parlance), at Rochester. This city with its imposing Norman Keep, lovable cathedral and many lovely Georgian houses, has organised its tourist interests magnificently. There is special reference to Dickens, whose Camden links need not be stressed. There is also the Victoria and Bull where the young Princess Victoria of Kent stayed before she came to the throne. In fact, the problem was one of choice - what to see and what to leave.

On the Quex Park and the museum: perhaps there could be some anguish over the slaughter and stuffing of so many lovely animals. Camden likes to conserve wild life, which Major Powell-Cotton did not do. However, here are giraffes, lions, wildbeeste, hippos and much more. Attractive was the Chinese porcelain, pierced ivory and Burmese silverware, always elaborate, never overdone. Members watched the clock worked by ball and slot motion, a novelty but not a good timekeeper, and inspected the rooms.

Lunch was at our discretion, cream tea at Birchington, good and filling, leaving just time to see the grave of Dante Gabriel Rossetti. Thence home with naps on the way. Altogether as good an outing as any and better hot than wet and cold.

Joan Barraclough.

## ISLINGTON MEETINGS

Members may like to know of meetings of our friends in the Islington Archaeology and History Society in the near future:

20 Sep: The Rose Theatre Site. (Dept of Greater London Archaeology)

18 Oct: George Scharf's London (Peter Jackson) (At the Empress of Russia pub, 362 St John Street, EC1)

13 Dec: Smithfield in Danger (George Allan, Chairman, Smithfield Trust)

Unless stated otherwise, meetings are at the Camden Head pub, Camden Passage at 8pm.



# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 116

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## Tracing Your Ancestors

7.30, Mon, Nov. 20th  
Paragon Hill School, 84a Heath Street, NW3  
(The entrance is in an alleyway next to the Heath Street Baptist Chapel)

Michael Gandy is a well-known lecturer on the mechanics and joys of tracing your family history. Those who have tried it will know that genealogy is very often hard and tedious work compensated by delightful discoveries. There are many pitfalls and many alternative ways to search and our speaker knows them all.

Please note that this is a new venue. We have been kindly offered by Ralph Wade the free use of his new premises behind Heath Street Baptist chapel. Do not go to the Paragon Hill premises we used once before in New End!

## Stephen Wilson

We were sorry to hear of the death at the age of 85, in September, of our Vice-President, Stephen Wilson.

He was a keen member of our Society from early days and contributed research and articles to our publications on several occasions. He lived in Hampstead for most of his adult life, latterly in Willow Road.

His eminence in the Civil Service was reflected in his lengthy obituaries in The Times and the Independent.

## COUNCIL NEWS

We omitted in our report on the Annual Meeting to announce that Ruth Hayes had been elected to the Council. Since then Dr Ann Saunders has accepted our invitation to be a Vice-President of the Society.

## The History of St Martin in the Fields

8th Dec, 7.30pm  
Loveday Room, St Martin in the Fields church, Trafalgar Square. (Entrance through side door, market area)

Our Christmas lecture is aptly at St Martin-in-the-Fields, famed for its carol concerts, and near to Trafalgar Square where the giant tree tells us that Christmas is here again.

Dr Ann Saunders, our former President, and who needs no introduction as a speaker, has been researching for some time a history of this parish in the City of Westminster. A chapel existed here in Norman times, possibly for the use of the monks of Westminster Abbey. It was rebuilt in the 16th century and then again, the church we see today, by James Gibbs in 1722-24. All this, of course, was before the creation of Trafalgar Square, and when the Royal Mews for stabling horses was on the site of the National Gallery.

As it is Christmas there will be wine served after the meeting.

## CAMDEN NOW AND THEN

We reviewed in the last Newsletter a publication issued by the Local History Library entitled Camden Past and Present. In error we said that we were sending a copy of this to each of our members but in fact the publication we shall be sending is entitled, confusingly, Camden Now and Then, which is a more general guide to the resources of the local history collection!

## Bloomsbury Market

A statement made in 1849 about the former Bloomsbury Market, taken from Notes and Queries, was quoted in the last Newsletter. Apparently its early Victorian writer had noted that the market 'was opened by the Duke of Bedford in 1730'. This observation prompted the Newsletter to seek the market's whereabouts.

As to where it was, the site is shown on some old London maps, such as that attributed to John Strype c1720 (the part covering the parish of St Giles in the Fields, (now published by the Camden Local History Library); and that by John Rocque, 1746 (now published as 'The A-Z of Georgian London'). Putting such a map alongside a modern street-plan we see the Market lay approximately in an area upon which converge today's New Oxford Street, Bury Place and Bloomsbury Way - near where there is still a well-named little road called Barter Street. A definitive piece of archival research on Bloomsbury Market by Dr John Gage, editor of our Camden History Review, was published in the Review No 14 in 1986.

The opening date of 1730 generates the further question of 'When?' About seven years ago I gave the Society an illustrated lecture on my local 17th-century traders' tokens - farthings and halfpennies from Commonwealth and Restoration days issued in today's borough of Camden. My material for the southern parts of the borough has not appeared in print. Two slides showed halfpennies naming Bloomsbury Market, the one of Richard Ward 'OYLE MAN' being dated 1666, and that of Elizeus Southern 1667. (Two further slides showed part of Strype's map covering Bloomsbury and the Market; and a 1667 Hearth Tax manuscript for 'St Giles in ye Fields' with Richard Ward assessed for ten hearths, suggesting quite substantial property.) The early dates on the token coins would seem to contradict the quoted 1730, but they do accord with Dr Gage's evidence that the Market was there from about 1662 until about 1847. It is, of course, conceivable that the claimed opening by His Grace, then the local landlord, may have been of some development of the Market during the new century.

Philip D. Greenall

## Stocking Fillers

With Christmas upon us members may like to be reminded of some of those publications sold by the Society. They include:

The Kentish Town Packet - folder of maps, information sheets, gazetteer, £2.70 plus 70p postage

The Diary of a London Schoolboy 1826-30, by John Pocock. A Kilburn builder's son. £3.00 plus 40p postage

Fitzrovia by Nick Bailey. Profusely illustrated. £2.90 plus 45p postage

The Streets of Hampstead by Christopher Wade. Walkabout guide to houses and residents. £3.00 plus 45p postage

Primrose Hill to Euston Road walkabout guide to houses and residents. £2.70 plus 40p postage

Hampstead and Highgate Directory 1885-6 . Facsimile edition. £5.95 plus 80p postage.

## Farewell to Jean Scott Rogers

My bi-monthly Newsletter delivery round takes me round the fringes of Regent's Park but alas no more into the flats overlooking the Regent's Park Barracks since our long-standing member Jean Scott Rogers has moved permanently to her country cottage in Suffolk. Jean has a long Camden association, living in Prince Albert Road as a near neighbour of Jack Warner and his sisters Elsie and Doris Waters before the War. She wrote the history of St Mark's Church where she worshipped and was a member of the team which produced our best-selling guide to the streets of Primrose Hill to Euston road. We then had articles on Richard Cobden in the Camden History Reviews and she told us more of Christmas at Cobden's country home at Dunford near Midhurst at the Christmas party last year. In a wider context, she has prepared the catalogue for the new Theatre Museum in Covent Garden; all work of a high standard - it was good discipline and yet fun to work with her. We shall miss you, Jean, and wish you better health in your country cottage.

Roger Cline

# The Story of a Bookshop

A Hampstead Memoir: High Hill bookshop, 1957-1988, by Ian Norrie.

One of the puzzling things about statistics is that someone's interpretation of them quite often does not match with one's own observations. Just as politicians tell you frequently that they are spending more than ever in real terms on the Health Service, when your own experience tells you that the whole thing appears to be falling apart, then the recent statistic that hardly anyone, especially young people, reads books does not square with the deluge of new bookshops opening up - large bookshops at that.

Ian Norrie, in his preamble to his story of his own much-missed bookshop in Hampstead High Street, tells us that when he began there were few booksellers in north and north-west London. There was a branch of Collet's at Belsize Park, a Wyman and a W.H. Smith at Swiss Cottage, nothing at Highgate and, as he says, there was nowhere worth a publisher's rep calling in Kentish Town, Finchley, Barnet, Muswell Hill or Hornsey.

The author tells us too just how much the High Street has changed since 1957 when his shop opened. The multiples had not arrived other than a small branch of W.H. Smith on Rossllyn Hill whose manager turned off the lights if no customer was there!

In 1956 Hampstead was in danger of losing its only proper bookshop, that run by Alfred Wilson Ltd, a branch of the City firm. Efforts were made to revive the shop, on the site of the present Midland Bank, and Ian Norrie was appointed its manager. From an early stage he wanted to be free of the Wilson management and to buy out the business, even though the building was in an appalling state and, as it transpired, a dangerous structure.

Ian Norrie then goes on to describe his many years in Hampstead - the adventures into publishing, some of which were in association with this Society, the many friends he made and, refreshingly, the many mistakes he admits. He did, for example, act as box-office for the Hampstead Theatre Club when it began at the Moreland Hall. He also accepted the job as publications editor for this Society, which he soon relinquished!

For me the fascination of this book is the wealth of detail about his business. Many of the mechanics of bookselling are laid out in an understandable way. Even his turnover figures over the years, from £14,000 when he started, to £839,000 when the shop closed, are there. All that appears to be missing are his bank statements.

The other main interest for me is the recollection of names that I had quite forgotten since the late 50s when I used to live in Hampstead. He writes scathingly of a former landlord of mine, and indeed of a leading political figure with a virtuous public image.

He reveals that while still manager at High Hill (before his ownership) he was offered the job as Sales Manager of Penguin Books. But his inclinations were towards the editorial side of the business rather than the selling, even though by then he had made a considerable success of High Hill.

Ian Norrie bought the business in 1964. He got rid of the side-lines in the shop, such as records, crafts and prints and paintings and concentrated on what he was good at - selling books.

The end of the shop came quickly because Ian made the decision to close while he was still profitable instead of waiting to see if there would be a lingering decline. He reasons that while there is room for more than one bookshop, especially in a place like Hampstead, there is not room for two very large ones. Other factors, frankly expressed, were present as well and it is one of the engaging things about this book that he is straightforward about his own problems at that time as well as in the years which led to it.

Members will enjoy this lively book. The nominal price of it is £5 and purchasers are requested to pay this amount, or more or less, to either The Book Trade Benevolent Society or to the Burgh House Trust. Copies of it may be obtained at Burgh House.

John Richardson

## Hampstead and Highgate Past

Two more books are being published, hopefully by the end of this month, on the two villages on the heights. Both are hardback and cost £12.95. Hampstead Past by Christopher Wade has nearly 200 illustrations, some in colour, and Highgate Past by John Richardson has 177 pictures. Many of the illustrations have not been reproduced before. In each case there is a lengthy historical text. They will, of course, make excellent Christmas presents for yourself and other people. They will be on sale at local bookshops, Burgh House and at the CHS bookstall at meetings.

At the same time there will be an exhibition at Burgh House entitled, surprise, surprise, Hampstead Past, which will display many of the pictures used in the book. This will run from 6 Jan to 25 March.

One of the many pictures in Hampstead Past by Christopher Wade - Cresswell's Dairy in Kingsgate Road.

## HIGHGATE WALKS

Recently published is a booklet from the Hornsey Historical Society entitled 'Highgate Village: Four Walks', by Joan Schwitzer, with illustrations by Oliver Cox.

The title is self-explanatory and there are no surprises for those who know the Village well. However, as anyone discovers who has been on a guided walk on what he or she thought was familiar territory, there is a lot to learn and observe in the hands of someone who knows their history.

And, as everyone knows, walking around a place is vastly different from driving around it. How many of you (except Highgate residents) could honestly say that they have actually walked down Southwood Lane or North Road, for example, and looked attentively at the wide range of architecture on offer?

This publication costs £1.95 and is available from the Hornsey Historical Society at their headquarters, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, N.8 and from local bookshops.

