

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 183
Jan 2001

Tavistock House

Thurs 18 Jan, 7.30pm

BMA House, Tavistock Square WC1

The headquarters of the British Medical Association, on the east side of Tavistock Square, stands on the site of Tavistock House the last London residence of Charles Dickens from 1851-60. He wrote *Bleak House*, *Little Dorrit*, *Hard Times* and part of *Great Expectations* here. According to J.B. Priestley in his book on Dickens, the house was in very bad condition when he took it over and months were spent cleaning, decorating and altering it. Dickens received a visit from the storyteller, Hans Christian Andersen in 1857. The Dane recorded that 'In the passage from street to garden hung pictures and engravings. Here stood a marble bust of Dickens, so like him, so youthful and handsome... On the first floor was a rich library...'

The house was large enough for Dickens to indulge his passion for amateur and private theatricals. In his productions here he was assisted by Mark Lemon, joint founder of *Punch*, the playwright Douglas Jerrold the artist Clarkson Stanfield, then living in Hampstead Road. Landseer, of Trafalgar Square lions fame, designed some of the scenery. In 1855 they produced *The Lighthouse* by Wilkie Collins.

The old house was demolished to make way in 1938 for the present Lutyens building, designed to house the Theosophists, but soon occupied by the BMA.

The history of the house in its various forms is the subject of our January talk by Mandy Mordue. As noted in our last *Newsletter*, because of security, anyone hoping to attend should notify Dr Peter Woodford first - he is on 7435 2088 or fax 7794 6695.

The Reading Room

Thurs 15 Feb, 7.30pm

Netherhall House, cnr Maresfield Gardens and Nutley Terrace

(Nearest tube station Finchley Road - cross the road, walk north and after 30 yards turn right into steep path which leads to Netherhall Gardens. Follow this street and then turn right into Nutley Terrace. About 70 yards to the left, before the crossroads with Maresfield Gardens, you will see Netherhall House, with its circular drive in front. Parking restrictions locally apply until 8pm.)



The old Tavistock House

Anyone who has not yet seen the restored round Reading Room at the British Library and its adjacent and now glass-roofed courtyard should hasten there before our February talk, which is on the history of the Room. Despite the fulminations of Jocelyn Stevens *et al* re the wrong stone being used on one part of the courtyard (it would never have matched the older parts anyway since it cannot now weather), the BM and its architect should be congratulated on a stunning success.

The Reading Room has many legends attached to it - eccentric and famous readers, though many users, despite their affection for the ambience, used to fume at the delays. Our speaker on the history of the Room is Marjorie Caygill, Assistant to the Director of the British Museum. Please note, we are at a new venue.

Advance Notice

Future talks in 2001 are:

15 March: Gillian Tindall on the magistrates' courts of Hampstead and Clerkenwell. At Burgh House.

27 April: Heather Creaton on the observations of travellers who have visited London. In the Haldane Room at University College London.

17 May: History of the Pearl Assurance. To be held in the restored old headquarters, now the Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel.

21 June: AGM at Hampstead Town Hall. Dr Stephen Inwood, London historian.

19 July: David Hayes on the St Giles Missionaries. At the church hall in Kelly Street, Kentish Town.

August: Summer outing to be announced.

20 Sep: Roger Cline on the 'New Streets' of London at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

18 Oct: Philip Ward-Jackson on Baron Marochetti's sculptures of engineers in London. At Netherhall House.

15 Nov. Guy Holborn on Lincoln's Inn. At Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

The new Subscription

Following last year's AGM, the annual subscription to the Society has been raised to a universal rate of £10 (which also applies to joint members at the same address receiving a single mailing). The subscription rates have been static from about 1992 since when the costs of hiring meeting halls and printing the *Camden History Review* have much increased.

In order to avoid payments being made at the old rates, those members with current standing orders are urged to complete and return the new standing order form enclosed with this *Newsletter* and return it to Roger Cline as soon as possible. Since standing orders are much easier to deal with than cheques, we hope you will adopt a standing order for payments even if you had not done so before.

On the same piece of paper is a Charitable Giving Declaration which replaces the old covenant. We hope you will complete this declaration if it applies to you (you are an income tax payer even if tax is deducted from your building society interest, share dividends, salary of pension before you get them). The completed declaration will enable us to claim a refund of tax on your donations to the Society.

The subscription for 2001-02 is due by 1 March 2001. Please take action now before the matter gets forgotten.

The South Place Ethical Society

Peter Cadogan, General Secretary of the South Place Ethical Society writes:

I regret having to correct the corrector (see *Newsletter* 182), but the *Newsletter* is a means of record and major mistakes need to be put right.

Far from the South Place Chapel being "legally recognised as Unitarian (in 1834), under W.J. Fox", that was the year in which Fox was formally expelled from the London Unitarian Church by his fellow Ministers. The chapel departed with the Minister. There had been religious differences, but the critical matter was that Fox had just left his wife and set up house with his ward, Eliza Flower.

South Place joined the Unitarian connection in 1802 when the then Minister, William Vidler, abandoned the Trinity. The Society dates its origins from 1793 when its founding Minister, Elhanan Winchester, rented the old Huguenot Chapel in Parliament Court. It is still there. The Huguenots built their new church in Soho Square, where they remain to the present day. Winchester had by that time been in London for six years creating his gathered church in hired rooms. He was a Universalist from America. Universalism, as a denomination, is extinct in this country where it merged with Unitarianism after the Unitarians, in 1802, declared that there was no such place as hell. The ultimate source of Universalism goes back to Gerrard Winstanly and the teaching that since God is love, there has to be ultimate forgiveness – a major heresy. Universalists still exist in the US and Canada as the Unitarian-Universalist Church.

During the 1790s there was a macabre debate as to how long the sinner would burn in hell pending God's forgiveness. The Unitarian doctrine put an end to that.

Ms Colloms tells us that the society was "legally and officially recognised" under its new name in 1895. That presumably is a reference to its charity status or its Trust Deed. The name was actually changed to that of South Place Ethical Society in the 'eighties when another American, Stanton Coit, became its Minister. He came from the Ethical Society of New York and he made the change of name a condition of his acceptance of the appointment.

Finally, it is quite wrong to suggest any connection between the hymn-singing and enthusiastic amateur music of the Flower sisters with other members of the congregation and the polished professionalism of the South Place concerts which, incidentally, do not take place in "the afternoon". They begin at 6.30pm.

The Society has had a very stormy history and in that respect nothing has changed!

LAMAS Theme – The Bridges of London

Camden History Society was well represented at this year's conference of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. This was held on 18 November at the Museum of London. The publication stalls did a brisk trade in between the lectures, all of which concerned the bridges of London over the Thames.

Derek Keane, Director of the Centre for Metropolitan History, spoke first on London Bridge and the identity of London. He talked, not only of the old London Bridge with all its buildings, but of the several successors, their design and the materials of their construction.

Next came Chris Ellmers of the Museum of Docklands. His topic was Ferries and Watermen. These played a very vital part in communications up to the mid-nineteenth century, when modern bridges and railways developed. There were thousands of watermen and apprentices, taking passengers and goods across between the City and the Surrey side and their working conditions and the training of the apprentices was a matter of considerable importance.

After lunch, Denis Smith, an engineer/historian spoke of the many later bridges, including Waterloo and Blackfriars. Problems of construction and design were considered, notably the habit of suspension bridges to sway from side to side. This happened often on Boat Race Day at Putney. Foundations in the bed of the river were a problem. There were details given of the various means employed to deal with this.

Roger Cline came next. He spoke of railway crossings, notably Hungerford Bridge leading into Charing Cross station. The latter, of course, covered and superseded the old Hungerford Market.

Finally there was the Symbolism of London Bridge by Cathy Ross of the Museum of London. She had to admit that symbolism was not very strong, owing to the haphazard development of London with a number of grand plans considered but few carried out.

Joan Barraclough

Belsize 2000: A Living Suburb

Belsize Park is the subject of an exhibition at the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library in Theobalds Road. This collection of photographs is the culmination of a 3-year project by the Belsize Conservation Area Committee, and celebrates the fascinating history and varied character of the area.

A wealth of historical and contemporary photographs and maps, many not seen before, depict this hand-

some, lively and often quirky neighbourhood. A large number of the images, including some unexpected and little-known corners, have been donated by many local photographers, both professional and amateur.

The exhibition also deals with 'problems' such as inappropriate development and neglect of fine old buildings and records the restoration of some of the best-known landmarks such as Hampstead Town Hall.

An accompanying book (£9.99, 140 pages, 120 illustrations) is also available. More than twenty contributions range from authoritative commentary by noted local historians and architects to first-hand historical accounts of the vibrant artists' colonies in Belsize, and thought-provoking accounts of the battles by local conservationists to save buildings under threat.

A New Guide to the Archives

The new comprehensive guide to the source materials in Camden's archives has just been published, price £2.95. The compilers, Mark Aston, Malcolm Holmes and Richard Knight, are to be congratulated on such a clear summary of the holdings. There are, of course, details of the extensive collections of rate books, minute books and newspapers, the sort of thing you would expect the archives to hold. But there are listings of records deposited by a wide variety of local organisations such as the Association for Promoting the Repeal of Taxes on Knowledge (1830s-50s), the Broad Street-Richmond Line Committee, the Highgate Harriers, Hampstead Choral Society and the Hampstead Non-political and Progressive Association (1900-19).

A guide well worth having to aid any local history research project.

THE GUNTHER FAMILY

Miss S. Gunther has written regarding a reference to her piano-making family in John Richardson's *History of Camden*. The Gunther in Gunther & Horwood was her great-great grandfather who came to this country in 1797 to work for Muzio Clementi, and later Broadwood's. She found at the PRO that he came from Winzlar near Hanover, Germany. His application for application for denization to Robert Peel was signed by George Horwood and 11 others.

The family lived in Camden High Street at no. 7. The house numbers changed when the other side of the road was built, and her great grandfather, Henry, died at no. 16.

Her family inherited various papers because nothing was ever thrown away.



Belton House, Lincolnshire.

A Belsize House likeness

The photograph reproduced here gives an idea of what the 1663-1745 version of Belsize House might have looked like, the imaginary viewpoint being the rear of 18 Belsize Park, alongside Belsize Terrace – the actual house lay astride Belsize Park (the later street), facing NE, between St Peter's church and the crossroads below Belsize village.

In fact the photograph, taken in 1989, shows Belton House in Lincolnshire, a National Trust property. The house was started in 1685 and it was the last in a series of Restoration mansions, with Belsize an early example. The main features of the front are projecting wings and a prominent central structure, at Belton a cupola (restored) and at Belsize a tower (see the print at p.10 of *The Streets of Belsize*).

Belsize also had an outside staircase, probably added in the 1720s for customers of the 'meaner sort': they were being cultivated towards the end of the mansion's time as an entertainment centre. Another difference is that Belton has projecting wings at the rear as well as the front, those at the rear being longer.

Belton took three years to build and the same might be true of Belsize: in 1664, a year after work had begun, there were only seven hearths recorded out of a final total of thirty-six.

Roy Allen

INNS ARE IN

At Burgh House, New End Square, from 14 Jan until 29 April is an exhibition on Hampstead's historic taverns. It deals with the history, significance and clientele of some of Hampstead's wealth of drinking places.

SPONSOR A STREET

Members may have seen the first (South-East London) volume in Deptford Forum Publishing's 'Streets of London' series. This makes accessible a first batch of the 392 notebooks compiled in 1897/8 by the re-

searchers working on updating Charles Booth's famous poverty maps, by then a decade old. Until the Deptford project got under way the notebooks languished in the LSE archives, and were not particularly easy to use. Handsomely produced, at affordable cost, Deptford's series aims ultimately to transcribe the full series of notebooks, indexed and organised into districts, accompanied by full colour reproductions of the maps and contemporary photographs. In the full transcript of the text, each researcher describes a walk round a specified area in the company of an experienced local police officer. Street life, the condition of the people and their homes, crime, drinking and prostitution are all observed first hand or from the local policeman's insight, and make this a source beyond compare for social and topographical history. Jess Steele, the editor, and her colleagues have hit on a first class resource, and the South-East London volume (published in 1998) sets a high standard and does the material full justice.

Money is short. The publishers invite anyone who supports the project to subscribe. £30 will sponsor a street, £100 a neighbourhood, and sponsors will be recorded in the appropriate volume. Next to be published, in 2001, will be East London. Details from Deptford Forum Publishing, 441 New Cross Road, SE14 6TA (020 8692 7115).

Isobel Watson

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society. The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 020-7607 1628, Fax: 020-7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (020 7586 4436), and the Treasurer is Marion Bennathan, 24 Murray Mews, NW1 9RJ. The Membership Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH. The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (020-7435 2088).

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 184
Mar 2001

200 Years of Local Justice

Thurs, 15 March, 7.30pm
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Our March talk, to be given by Gillian Tindall, is the story of two, now unused, courthouses at Hampstead and Clerkenwell. Our speaker was herself a magistrate at each of them. She has had access to the records of the Hampstead court back to the mid-Victorian period and to Clerkenwell's since the Edwardian period. Her talk will illustrate how the nature and development of the two areas were reflected in the work and happenings at those two courts. Later this year the Society will be publishing an occasional paper by Gillian on the same subject.

Visitors to London

Thurs 26 April, 7.30pm
Haldane Room, University College London, Gower Street
WC1

The title of our April talk is *Not much pleased with its first appearance....* which is a distillation of impressions of London taken from the diaries of visitors over the centuries. Our speaker is Heather Creaton who is author of what is now the standard work of London bibliography, *Bibliography of Printed Works on London History to 1939*. The reactions of visitors have covered the spectrum from delight to despair. Wagner, for example, found the London concert scene very frustrating. He attacked its puritanical artistic conventions and the formality of the audience in wearing gloves, stockings and black or white ties, whereas Mendelssohn announced that 'London is the grandest and most complicated monster on the face of the earth.'

Please note: The date for this talk is the 26th, and not the 27th announced in the previous two Newsletters.

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18 Oct: Philip Ward-Jackson on Baron Marochetti's sculptures of engineers in London. At Netherhall House.

15 Nov: Guy Holborn on Lincoln's Inn. At Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

Subscriptions (£10) were due on 1 March. Those who paid for three years in 1999 do not of course need to pay again until next year and if you are one of this group who sent in a standing order form, you can rest assured that we have adjusted its starting date to 2002, and you will not pay twice.

Our Treasurer, Roger Cline, would be grateful if those other members who still need to renew their subscription would do so as soon as possible - it saves the expenditure of sending out reminders! His address is on the back of this *Newsletter*.

STORAGE NEEDED

At the moment the bulk of our stocks of publications are stored either at the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre in Holborn or else in the homes of various members. This is provided free, but we are now running out of space. The Society is now anxious to know of any other convenient storage space, either free or else at a modest charge. Are any members able to help or have information of likely places? Please contact Sheila Ayres on 7794 1735.

St Luke's Hospital and Camden

Robert Leon has been doing some interesting research into the St Luke's Hospital for mental patients which opened in a small way in the Moorfields area in 1751 and was later housed in a much larger building in Old Street near to the present Old Street roundabout. He has discovered that it had Camden connections.

The hospital was founded in response to the numerous complaints voiced concerning the management of the Bethlehem hospital (Bedlam), in particular about the treatment of patients there. The object in St Luke's was to provide an alternative to the Bethlehem which would be both more humane and more effective in its treatment.

Although there was a clear intention from the outset to distance the new hospital from Bethlehem, nevertheless the latter proved a benchmark and certain aspects of its regime were reproduced at St Luke's. Most notably the reforming William Battie, first Physician of Saint Luke's, had previously worked at the Bethlehem.

Similarly the system of raising money by accepting payment in return for appointment to the position of a governor of the hospital was adopted at St Luke's. This was standard practice during the eighteenth century and those who acted as governors of hospitals had the privilege of securing the admission of patients. At St Luke's no patient could gain admission without the recommendation of a governor, of whom there were soon several hundred. A number of these were resident in modern Camden.

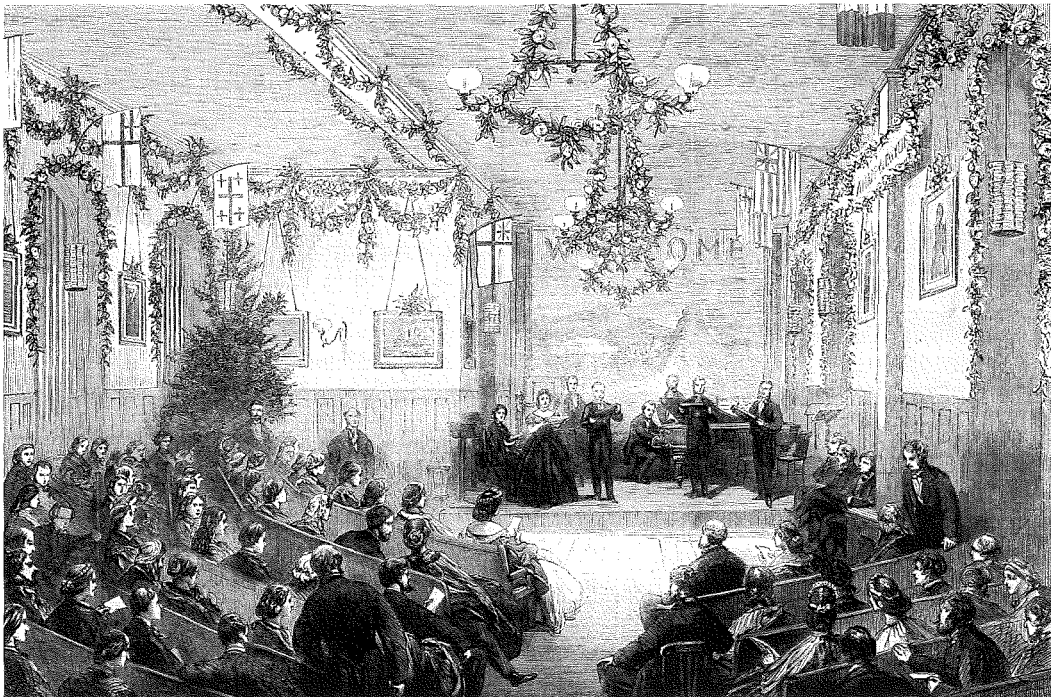
For governors of *general* hospitals, the privilege of being able to use one's influence for the benefit of a friend, a neighbour or even a member of one's own family must have been an important consideration, enabling those of one's circle of acquaintances to gain access to emergency medical treatment. Assuming that the incidence of madness was less common than that of everyday injuries or illnesses, the governors of a mental hospital would be less likely to be acquainted with potential patients and therefore it appears that the privilege of being a governor of St Luke's was less valuable.

However, whereas most general hospitals existed for the provision of emergency services only and were intent on accelerating the turnover of beds by discharging patients as soon as possible, St Luke's was prepared to accommodate patients for a period of twelve months in the hope of effecting a cure. This was a valuable concession for the patient, who might be cured or at least improved following a stay in a specialist institution, and also for the family, who might benefit from the brief tranquillity of a year free from the disruption of having a mad person in the home.

Some families were expected to pay for relatives to stay at St Luke's and if they did not keep up the payments, the patient would be discharged. Patients who were found to be incurable were also discharged and there were a number of other circumstances in which patients would be expected to leave the hospital.

The rules of St Luke's were drafted to take account of the situation which might arise if the family refused to

'Winter entertainment at St Luke's Hospital: Vocal and instrumental concert' from the Illustrated London News 8 Feb 1862



take back the patient into their home or even, which was by no means unknown, if the family disappeared. Every patient had to have the support of two securities who would accept responsibility for the patient in the case of discharge.

The securities had to reside within the Bills of Mortality and they had to be 'substantial householders'. There was no precise definition of what this meant but securities had to enter into a bond, set at £100, to remove the patient whenever he or she might be discharged.

One hundred pounds was an enormous sum; many people would probably go through life without ever meeting a person with so much free money. Nevertheless, a family who wished to have a relative or friend admitted to St Luke's would have to find two such persons and persuade them somehow to enter into a binding agreement. This would be difficult enough for residents of London; the task would have been even more formidable for anyone living in the country who might never have set foot in the capital, let alone know how to begin the search for suitable persons to act as securities.

Robert Leon has now deposited in the Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn library a list of 180 residents of today's Camden, who during the period 1781-1796 acted as securities for patients admitted to St Luke's. Since this period predates the introduction of the more comprehensive London directories, the list has some value as a record of residents and tradesmen. Those listed may be considered as public spirited citizens who were known to be (or at least represented themselves to be) worth the £100 liable. In practice however there were few instances recorded of securities being asked for their money.

The fact that St Luke's became an important London institution, admitting hundreds of patients each year, suggests that the financial barriers were by no means insuperable and that there were networks by which families and potential securities were brought together, not least through the auspices of local parishes.

Securities often acted in pairs so that the same two securities would often be given for several patients. It is fairly certain therefore that in most cases the securities knew one another, either as neighbours or through business. Each name is accompanied by a brief comment regarding the patient concerned and, where appropriate, a reference to the person who acted as security with them.

It is important to place these names in context. The total number of patients admitted to the hospital during this 16-year period was 2655. Although the hospital was founded by 'gentlemen' of the City, because of its reputation it soon attracted patients from all over England, though principally from the south. During the period covered by this list 35.7% of

patients came from outside today's London boundaries, 10.8% from the City itself.

As might be expected, given that little of modern Camden had been built up, very few of the patients were local residents. The only area which sent patients regularly to St Luke's was the parish of St Andrew, Holborn which accounted for 2.3% of the patients. The street called Holborn was a fruitful area for finding securities: 1.54% of all securities were located here.

A Search for a Lost Wood of the Heath

(The following is a reprint of an article by Deborah Wolton which appeared in the *Newsletter* of the Heath & Hampstead Society last year. Together with David McDowall, Ms Wolton published the excellent guide *Hampstead Heath: The Walker's Guide*. Copies may be obtained from her at 8 Oakford Road NW5 1AH, price £6.99 plus 50p postage. Alternatively it may be bought at Camden's Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library.)

Many English place names are very old and were often drawn from some natural feature which gave the place its special identity. It was this that gave us a lead in our search for the whereabouts of the wood 'Gyll Holt' which we knew had existed on the Heath up until the late 17th century.

We were looking at the history of woodland for one of our walks on the Heath and came across this name mentioned in documents several times as being part of or adjacent to Cane Wood (Kenwood). Although it seems to have been attached to Cane Wood, Gyll Holt was distinct enough to have been given its own name, but we could find no description of where it had been or what had distinguished it from Cane Wood.

The Two Woods

For the 300 years up to the dissolution of the monasteries the area of Kenwood and Parliament Hill Fields was owned by the Priory of Holy Trinity, Aldgate. The southern part was farmland, the northern part, from the hedgerow south of the Tumulus to the boundary with the Bishop of London's Hornsey Park, was managed woodland. In 1525 a grant was made by the Prior to Nicholas Gray, yeoman of Highgate, 'of the office of woodwardship, bailiship and keeping of their two woods Cane Wood and Gyll Holt'. This is the first record of either name being used, but no description was given. The woodward was expected to work the woods according to ancient practices of management, felling timber in the winter, preparing the different types of wood, polewood, longwood, talwood and bush baven, as well as keeping the watercourses clear and the hedges in good order.

Woodland gives way to pasture

Gray was the last woodward appointed by the Priory which was dissolved in 1532. Within the next few years the farmland on the south side of 'Cane Wood and Gillys Hawte' was leased to John Palmer of 'Kentyctown', the northern part, Cane Wood and Gyll Holt together about 190 acres of woodland, was leased to John Slannyng of Hampstead. Slannyng was one of the new class of gentry landholders looking for investment and he found it more profitable to sell the timber and use the land for grazing. In spite of public complaints and an Act of Parliament intended to compel owners to maintain woods in the public interest, the economic climate was changing in favour of pasture and hay meadows and over the next 150 years many acres of ancient managed woodland disappeared.

When Slannyng's lease ended in 1565, Cane Wood was sold and then resold in 1616 to John Bill, the King's printer. It was probably he who cleared part of the wood and built the first Kenwood House. Gyll Holt however was still there in 1685 when Lady Diana Bill surrendered her rights in Canewood to her son Charles: 'a capital message at Canewood, and a farmhouse called Little Canewood and the woods called Canewood and Gills Hawte'. But it was soon to go, its memory lingering for a while in the names of the new fields. In 1690 Charles sold Canewood, the main house with gardens, the farmhouse called Little Canewood along with the fields which included 'Gills Hart 5 acres 1 rood, Gills Hart 6 acres, Cane Wood pasture 10 acres 1 rood... and Cane Wood 61 acres part of which was lately grubbed up.' It appears that most of Cane Wood and Gyll Holt had been grubbed up over the previous five years. South Wood today is a remnant of what was left standing by Charles Bill.

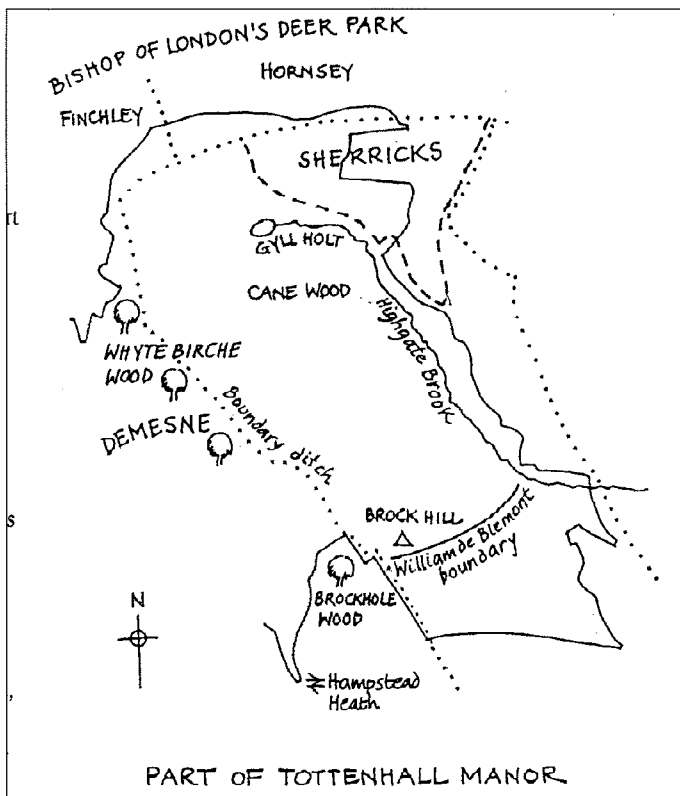
But where was Gyll Holt?

Today there is no trace of Gyll Holt in the field names. The only clue we have found is that in the early medieval period the name was used to indicate a wooded valley, usually with a stream. So perhaps it was in the valley of the Highgate Brook and was a wood of willows and alders, trees which would have grown well in the damp ground, in contrast to the oaks ('keynes' in Norman French) of the higher, drier sandy soil which may have given Cane Wood its name.

A Wartime Postcard



*This unusual postcard depicts the deep shelter provided at Camden Town station during the last war. The (printed) message on the reverse reads: 'With Sincere Greetings from *The Rev. R.F. Skinner and Canteen Staff of The New Tube Shelter, Camden Town, N.W.1.*



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No 185

May 2001

The Pearl Assurance – our May talk

Thurs 17 May, 7.30pm

Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel, 247 High Holborn WC1

Our May event will be at the recently opened Renaissance Chancery Court Hotel, which has been converted from the spectacular Pearl Assurance headquarters building. Speakers will include Robin Bevitt, retired head of Pearl's legal department, who will talk on 40 years with the company, and a team from T.P. Bennett, architects, on the restoration and conversion of the building.

Though the talks begin at 7.30, drinks will be generously available at 7.00pm and after the talks, at 8.30, there will be a tour for those who can stay of the public rooms – this will highlight the notable features of the old building still retained or, in some cases, replicated.

The hotel is in High Holborn, east of Holborn underground station.

The Annual General Meeting

Thurs, 21 June, 6.30pm

Hampstead Town Hall, Haverstock Hill NW3

Our annual meeting this year is at the newly restored Hampstead Town Hall, disparagingly described by Pevsner, but held in much affection by local residents. Our talk is to be given by Dr Stephen Inwood, the author of the much praised *A History of London*, who appropriately takes as his theme the writing of histories of London from Stow until the present day.

As usual at AGM time, we begin at 6.30pm with refreshments, have the business meeting at 7pm, and the talk at 7.30pm.

Members are invited to propose others or themselves as officers or members of our committee. The present officers and members are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington

VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Christina Gee, Dr Ann Saunders

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson

VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade

SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay

TREASURER: Marion Bennathan

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford

PUBLICATIONS MANAGER: Sheila Ayres

MEETINGS SECRETARY: Dr Peter Woodford

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough

ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes

HON. AUDITOR: Audrey Nottman

Council Members: Peter Barber, Steve Denford, Ruth Hayes, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven

Nominations should be sent to Jane Ramsay at the address on the back page of this *Newsletter*.

Advance Notice

Future talks for your diary:

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August: Summer Outing – see details next page.

20 Sep: Roger Cline on the 'New Streets' of London, at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

18 Oct: Philip Ward-Jackson on Baron Marochetti's sculptures of engineers in London. At Netherhall House.

15 Nov: Guy Holborn on Lincoln's Inn. At Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

A WALK ROUND PRIMROSE HILL

Caroline Cooper is carrying on the tradition of her father Anthony in researching the history of Primrose Hill. She is leading, in conjunction with Roger Cline, a walk around Primrose Hill for the Camden Civic Society, looking at her particular interest in the history of the shops in Regent's Park Road.

This *Newsletter* may just be in time to let you know that this will be on 12 May, beginning at 2.30pm at the junction of Primrose Hill Road and Regent's Park Road.

The Annual Outing

Sat, 11 August

Our outing this year takes us to Northamptonshire. Jean Archer has booked us in at the Prebendal Manor House, Nassington, Peterborough at 11am, where we will be given refreshments. The house is early 13th century, with recreated 14th-century gardens. Mrs Baile, the owner, has a slight Camden connection in that she started the Cavendish School.

Oundle is about 6 miles away, to the south, and we can spend about 75 minutes there for lunch (sandwiches or café) before going on to Southwick Hall, three miles to the north of Oundle. A family home since 1300, there is much of interest to see, and we are promised a very good tea.

An application form is enclosed with this *Newsletter* so that you may book your seat.

The Seven Dials Exhibition

An unusual exhibition at the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library celebrates a small piece of 'urban renaissance' in the West End of London – carried out by the efforts of the local community.

In 1971 the then GLC proposed to demolish two thirds of Covent Garden. This exhibition is a reminder of the battles fought by long standing communities in the 1970s and indeed today, to ensure that parts of central London, such as Seven Dials, Soho and Fitzrovia, retain thriving residential communities. It sets out the history of this much loved area, describes who built it, how it was transformed from a fashionable neighbourhood into one of London's most notorious rookeries, and its revival.

Seven Dials, together with the Piazza of Covent Garden, is one of the great architectural set pieces of the area. It was laid out by Thomas Neale, MP, who was known as 'The Great Projector'. He was one of the great entrepreneurs of late Stuart England, the organiser of England's first lottery and a member of no fewer than 62 parliamentary committees.

Neale chose Edward Pierce to build a Sundial Pillar at the centre of Seven Dials. Pierce was the greatest carver of his generation – working in stone, wood and marble. The Pillar was later moved to Weybridge, where its remains can still be seen. The exhibition describes the restoration of a replica of the Pillar of Seven Dials in 1989, the first monumental column to be built in London since Nelson's Column in the 1840s, and illustrates the Seven Dials charity's award winning environmental improvements to the area.

Visitors to the exhibition can order David Gentleman's limited edition (150 only) lithograph of Seven Dials and purchase other items produced by the Seven Dials Monuments Charity.

The exhibition runs from 30 April to Saturday 30 June. For further information ring Malcolm Holmes, Senior Archivist, or Richard Knight, Principal Officer on 7974 6342.

Click Week 2000

As members will recall, it was the Society's intention to photograph every one of the 1300 streets and places in Camden to mark millennium year, so as to provide a visual archive for local historians many years hence.

In all the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre has received between 4,500 and 5,000 photographs – which is a fantastic achievement and credit must go to all the volunteers who took part. No less important has been the behind-the-scenes work of archiving the pictures. Special thanks must go to Sharon Newson and Roger Cline for their work in this. The Local Studies Department intends to make the collection available to the public in July and a selection of the photographs will be copied and displayed in Holborn Library at the time.

OPEN HOUSE

The London Open House is now an event firmly in the London calendar. It is sometimes the only chance that lesser mortals may have of seeing many of the outstanding buildings of London and the organisers of this event must be congratulated on their persistence and persuasion, let alone their hard work in organising the event.

This year Open House will be on 22/23 September – the 22nd is also Car Free Day in London.

If any members know of any buildings which were not included last year and which they think would be of interest, please let the organisers know. They also need volunteers to help out at certain venues and also to distribute Open House directories, posters etc throughout London. If you think you can help in any of these things, please write to them at London Open House, 1st Floor, 39-51 Highgate Road NW5 1RS (tel: 7267 2822).

REMEMBERING JEAN SCOTT ROGERS

This *Newsletter* may just be out in time to notify members who knew her, of the memorial service for Jean Scott Rogers. It will be held at 2.30pm on 12 May at St Mark's Church, Prince Albert Road, NW1. This church was a very special part of her life when she lived in London.

If you wish to attend please telephone Mrs R.J. Hampson on 8892 2100.

New Publications

Primrose Hill Remembered

published by the Friends of Chalk Farm Library, 176pp, paperback, with numerous illustrations, some in colour, edited by Caroline Read. £8.99.

This book, compiled by local residents, and with a foreword by Simon Jenkins and contributions from Alan Bennett and Amanda Craig, is both adventurous and handsome – it was designed by Ivor Kamlisch. It is full of interest. Beginning with an historical account of Primrose Hill itself by Roger Cline, it then goes on to the personal recollections of long-standing residents. These include memories of Princess Road School, childhood in the 1920s, old trades such as chimney sweeps, old shops such as the Chalcot Road bakery, wartime, libraries, picnics and various other shops, topped up with local histories of landmarks such as St Mark's church, Primrose Hill Studios and Cecil Sharp House. The book is an important addition to our knowledge of the area and a bargain at £8.99. It may be obtained from local bookshops, the Chalk Farm Library and, of course, the Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library. It can also be had from Kevin Bucknall (7722 7085).

Handlist of the Hampstead Garden Suburb Archive – a User's Guide, published by the HGS Archive Trust in association with London Metropolitan Archives; 162pp, card covers, £10.00.

This handlist is a shortened catalogue of the archives of the Hampstead Garden Suburb which have been deposited at the LMA in Northampton Road, EC1. The archive began with the efforts of a long-standing suburb resident whose collection was used by Brigid Grafton Green in her research on local history. She was eventually appointed archivist to the HGS Trust and the collection has been much supplemented by the Trust's own papers, residents' photographs and plans from property developer companies. After her death in 1991 local residents have ensured the future of the archive by getting it properly housed at LMA and by generating this handlist so that more people can become aware of its delights.

The book begins with a brief history of the formation and development of the suburb which is reproduced with minor edits from Bridgid Grafton Green's A4 booklet celebrating 70 years of the suburb in 1977. A selection of archive photographs and old architects' plans is included.

The main part of the book includes a list of documentary and photographic items from the archive which will help anyone planning to do some research in this already rather well cultivated field. There are also lists of the architects for most houses in the suburb and of the houses in the suburb which were designed or altered by a given architect – this will probably be the reason why many local residents will buy the book.

It may be obtained from London Metropolitan Archives at 40 Northampton Road EC1 0HB (tel: 7332 3820 to see what the postal price would be).

Roger Cline

St Mary's Church, Hampstead, 1816-2000.

32pages, paperback, illustrated with some in colour.

The decorative Roman Catholic church of St Mary in Holly Place, began as the first permanent chapel to be built by Catholics in Hampstead since the Reformation three centuries earlier. For a number of years previously the congregation had been accommodated at Oriel House in Little Church Row, until 'the anxious wish of the Abbé Morel and of a few Catholic gentlemen residing in Hampstead to raise a proper and convenient place of worship' was pursued.

Morel was one of over 5,000 clergy from northern France who had sought refuge in England following the Revolution in 1789. Having spent four years in Sussex, he was advised to move to Hampstead for the sake of his health – he died there aged 86, a splendid advertisement for the air of the place.

This booklet tells the story of the formation and development of this little church hidden away in Froggnal. Unfortunately, I have managed either to lose (or did not have in the first place) details of price and availability. No doubt it is on sale at the church itself.

John Richardson

Hornsey Historical Society Bulletin 42

Our friends across the border in Hornsey have produced a new and very interesting *Bulletin*. Among the articles, Malcolm Stokes discusses the age of Hornsey's boundaries, a matter of some uncertainty, because for so long in medieval times the affairs of Hornsey and Finchley were intertwined. Albert Pinching records the life of Henry Cline, a surgeon, revolutionary and farmer of Bounds Green whose name today is remembered in Cline Road off the Bounds Green Road. Joan Schwitzer returns to Southwood Hall in the series detailing the lost great houses of Hornsey, and Joyce Crow details the early history of the *Hornsey Journal*. As may be expected of him, the geologist Eric Robinson has contributed an entertaining article on the various geological formations to be noticed in that well-known landmark, the Crouch End clock tower. Having read it, you will never go by it again without a more searching glance.

The *Bulletin* may be obtained from the HHS at The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, N8. (8348 8429).

An Appeal to Readers of the "Town Crier."

SIR or MADAM,

The result of the libel suit against the TOWN CRIER has been to leave a sum of £187 to be found, the responsibility for the whole of which has been voluntarily assumed by Mr. and Mrs. Crump. They absolutely decline to attempt to put any share of this burthen upon the Shareholders of the TOWN CRIER Company, or upon any of the other Defendants; but they are quite ready to accept any assistance that the readers and supporters of the TOWN CRIER are able or willing to give them.

As habitual contributors to the paper, we venture to express a hope that there will be a good response to the appeal that we make for this assistance. The work needed to produce the TOWN CRIER is very considerable, and is done without any payment whatever. No one need be deterred from contributing either by the magnitude of the total sum required, or by the fear that a small donation will not be welcome; and if those who wish to contribute will do so according to their power, there should be no difficulty in raising at any rate a considerable portion of the sum.

We are, Sir or Madam,

K. BEATTIE,	ANNIE ESPLIN,	P. MEADOWS,
V. T. BRENNAN,	PAUL JEWITT,	WARD MUIR,
S. J. COBB,	P. C. LYELL,	R. ROSCOE,
HARRY DEARSLLEY,	ALAN H. MAUDE,	W. T. H. WALSH,

Contributors to the TOWN CRIER

Subscriptions will be received by -

Mr. R. ROSCOE, 30 Wilfield Way; by Mr. R. S. FOX, 1 Wootside; or by TOZER & SMITH, 12 Temple Fortune Arcade.

Roger Cline has sent in the above cutting from a magazine called 'The Town Crier', published in the Hampstead Garden Suburb (see book reviews on p.3) from 1911 to 1920. He wonders what the libel suit was all about.

SUBSCRIPTION REMINDER

This will be the last *Newsletter* that will be sent to members who have not paid their subscriptions for 2001-02, due on 1 March. If there is a reminder enclosed with this issue, please attend to it now before it gets overlooked. It would be a shame to lose you.

Roger Cline

THE FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN – FIFTY YEARS ON

The Festival of Britain had its origins in a post-war plan by the new Labour government to celebrate British industry and design (like the Great Exhibition of 1851). It soon became much more: an opportunity for a country still recovering from the effects of the last war to celebrate its heritage, skill, creativity, imagination and hopes for the future.

From May to October 1951 the Festival was inescapable, its emblem (designed by Golders Green resident Abram Games) appearing on everything from aircraft carriers to powder compacts. In five months ten million Britons visited the London sites. Most of the South Bank site was bulldozed afterwards and only the Royal Festival Hall stands as a reminder of this 'tonic to the Nation'.

The Festival is recalled at a new exhibition at the Church Farmhouse Museum at Greyhound Hill, NW4. It runs until 3 June. The Museum is open every day except Friday, but please ring 8203 0130 to obtain the variable opening times.

THE ART WORLD IN LONDON

At the Museum of London at the moment (until 15 July) is an exhibition entitled *The Art World in London 1700-2000*. Of particular interest to members are sections dealing with the Camden Town School 1905-1920, and the artists working in Hampstead from 1800-1835 and in the 1930s.

FORTHCOMING PUBLICATIONS

Those of you who were at the talk given by Gillian Tindall in March will know that in October the Society will be publishing a book by her entitled *200 Years of Local Justice* – the story of the magistrates' courts of Hampstead and Clerkenwell.

Also to be published by the Society at the end of June will be an occasional paper by David Hayes called *Seven Dials in 1865*. This will centre around his researches on the St Giles Missionaries, the subject of his talk to us in July.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society. The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 020-7607 1628, Fax: 020-7609 6451, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

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The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 186

Jul 2001

The Missionaries of St Giles

Thurs. 19 July, 7.30pm

Congregational Church Hall,

Kelly Street, NW5

(nearest tube: Kentish Town or, by car, park in Prince of Wales Road)

Our July talk has an unusual subject and is in, for us, a new venue. David Hayes, our speaker, discovered the text of a talk given in Manningtree in 1865 outlining the social conditions in Seven Dials and the work done by charity workers to help the local residents. It is not known who compiled the original talk, but it does give a first-hand account of the time when Seven Dials was the last word in slum living just as today it is one of the last words in niche shopping.

The work done by charity workers was organised by the Young Men's Society for the relief of the poor in the neighbourhood of St Giles. This evolved into the St Giles Christian Mission which had its home in Neal Street and Little Wild Street. More recently it moved into Islington to the junction of Westbourne Road and Bride Street where a building, which appears still to have a connection with the St Giles Mission, is used by local community groups.

David's researches into the Mission will be the subject of an Occasional Paper to be published later this year by the Society.

Summer Outing

Saturday, 11 August.

Details of our annual outing were printed in the last *Newsletter*. There are a few places left on the coach. If you wish to go to the Prebendal Manor House at Nassington and then on to Southwick Hall at Oundle, please contact Jean Archer, 91 Fitzjohns Avenue NW3 6NX. The price is £23.50, which includes coach travel, morning coffee, entrance fees and tea.

The Annual Meeting

A well-attended annual meeting at the old Hampstead Town Hall was entertained by a talk by Dr Stephen Inwood relating to his researches and methods in compiling his *History of London*.

Officers and committee members elected were:

PRESIDENT: Christopher Elrington

VICE PRESIDENTS: Frank Cole, Christina Gee, Dr Ann Saunders

CHAIRMAN: John Richardson

VICE CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade

SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay

TREASURER: Marion Benathan

MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline

PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford

PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough

ARCHIVIST: Malcolm Holmes

HON AUDITOR: Audrey Nottman

Council members: Peter Barber, Steve Denford, Ruth Hayes, Michael Ogden, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven.

Advance Notice

20 Sep: Roger Cline on the 'New Streets' of London, at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

18 Oct: Philip Ward-Jackson on Baron Marochetti's sculptures of engineers in London. At Netherhall House.

15 Nov: Guy Holborn on Lincoln's Inn at Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church.

Local History Book Sale

The Local Studies and Archives Centre will be holding a book sale of local history publications from 6 August - 25 August. Many titles will be significantly reduced in price, some for sale as low as 20% of the recommended retail price. Many Camden History Society publications will be in the sale, particularly back copies of the *Review*, so you will have the opportunity to complete your sets at rock bottom prices.

The Centre is on the second floor of Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1 (7974 6342) and is open Monday 10-7, Tuesday 10-6, Thursdays 10-7, Fridays 10-6, Saturdays 10-1 and 2-5. It is closed Wednesdays.

Click 2000

The Click 2000 Project to photograph every street in Camden is now complete. Click 2000 was part of the Society's Millennium history project run in conjunction with the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre. Volunteers and staff from the Centre have photographed all 1300 streets in Camden, resulting in some 6000 pictures which have all been indexed and will be available for use from the end of July.

To celebrate the end of the project Centre staff have selected 100 images which reflect the incredible diversity of the urban landscape of Camden today. An exhibition of these, at the Centre at Holborn Library, will be held from 2 August until 27 September (address and opening times as previous page).

Robert Leon and his team of volunteers have recorded the reminiscences of about 150 people. These have been indexed by David Hayes and will also be available at the Centre from the end of July.

MEDIEVAL AND VICTORIAN ENGLAND

Two adult education courses, which may interest CHS members, are to be run by Birkbeck College at Gunnersbury Park Museum. The first starts on 26 September and runs for 20 weeks over two terms. It is on the Archaeology of Early Medieval England, from the Norman Conquest to the 13th century. The times are 2.30 to 4.30 every Wednesday.

The second course, also covering 20 weeks and two terms, is on The Victorian Country House and its Garden. This also starts on 26 September at the same venue, but the times are 10.30 to 12.30 each Wednesday. The fee for each course is the same: £98 full fee or £49 concession.

The Museum is in Gunnersbury Park, Popes Lane W3 8LQ (tel: 8992 2247 or 1612, fax 8752 0686). The nearest underground is Acton Town.

MAURICE RANDALL

Christopher Deakes writes:

I have been trying to trace information about the marine artist Maurice Randall, whose last known address (in 1924) has been given as 59 Broadhurst Gardens, Hampstead.

Randall painted coastal scenes of a quality sufficiently high to be exhibited at the RA and at major galleries in Britain during the period 1910-20. Also, up to 1930 he painted many ship portraits for the Union-Castle Line as well as some for the P & O. However, none of the usual art reference books contains any mention of him later than 1924, and he seems to have disappeared. As far as I can gather, he had lived at other addresses in or near Hampstead since 1901, and I would have hoped some record exists of his stay in the locality, although the Hampstead Museum does not know of him. If you have any information please send it to Mr Deakes at 43 Thornton Hill, Exeter EX4 4NR.

THE DIG AT THE MUSEUM OF LONDON

The Museum of London is planning an exhibition called *The Dig* that will run from 14 August until 28 October. It will be a hands-on exhibition aimed at families and schools which will include a reconstructed dig made up of 24 sand-filled trenches, where visitors excavate real and replica Roman objects.

The Museum is looking for volunteers to help in this, who would re-set the trenches after each session, carry out completeness and safety checks on objects and equipment, work with visitors in the trenches and carry out evaluation. Training will be given and £5 per day will be offered towards travelling expenses.

They are looking for volunteers for:

14 Aug – 2 Sep

20 Oct – 28 Oct.

Hours of attendance will be 10.15-5.15 (12.30-5.15 on Sundays).

Those interested should contact Frazer Swift (Monday-Wednesday) on 7814 5779. Email fswift@museumoflondon.org.uk

Good for a Laugh

This summer the Hampstead Museum at Burgh House is mounting an exhibition of drawings of Hampstead subjects by Ken Pyne, the cartoonist for the *Ham & High*, *Evening Standard*, *Private Eye* etc, published over the years. The display will be divided up into themes such as the Heath, local politics, traffic etc. The exhibition runs 15 July – 23 September.

The Museum is also mounting an exhibition in the autumn on the life and work of stained glass designers of Hampstead. Wanted particularly is information on John Burlison (1843-91). Please get in touch with the Museum if you have any.

A new magazine of London history

We have been advised of the launch of a new quarterly magazine devoted to London history. It is an adventurous project. Its founder, Hawk Norton, tells us that it will consist of 80 pages and cover, with 32 in colour plus an A2 fold out poster. More details may be found on the web site www.londonhistory.com.

Mr Norton is at this stage inviting contributions, but there is no indication that contributors will be paid. Apart from articles on London's history, there will be others on topical issues, latest news on development proposals and threatened buildings, and archaeological updates. It will also review the latest books, exhibitions and give details of local society activities.

Those who wish to find out more, or who have articles to publish, should contact him at 35 Somerset Road, Brentford, Middlesex TW8 8BT (tel 8560 6122 or email hawk@londonhistory.com).

The Dead Stump

The photograph shown here, taken in 1978, is the dead stump of a Spanish or Sweet Chestnut near the top of Lyndhurst Gardens, opposite no. 28. Small branches beyond the upper part are those of a living offshoot from one of the roots; this has since become a substantial tree, leaning even more to the left. Recently the stump itself has been reduced in height (there is decay at the foot) and it now protrudes only a short distance above the fence.

Stump and offshoot appear to be relics of Rosslyn Grove, a tree-lined avenue which until the early 1860s led up the future Lyndhurst Road from the east, diverging left (at the present Rosslyn Park Mews) to run behind the site of nos. 12-18 in the new street. These houses were not built until 1869-71 and meanwhile, the trees having been felled, the space was "waste-land, and sheep and donkeys grazed upon it".

Continuing westwards, the avenue crossed Lyndhurst Gardens just to the right of the stump and, after a further 65 yards, ended at the gates of Rosslyn House. Here most of the trees survived, as a newly-acquired extension to the drive, until the house was demolished in 1896. From the mews, the street was privately owned but the public had access to three 'doorways', one of them (to a footpath) near the gates.

The avenue, known in 1679 as the Chestnut Walks, seems to have been planted exclusively with Spanish Chestnuts; but other species sometimes replaced fallen trees. William Howitt, on p210 of his *Northern Heights* (1869), indicates that Charles Woodd at Rosslyn was convinced that house and avenue went back to the Armada (1588), his evidence being a find of coins under flooring and a tree-ring count on a fallen specimen.

When Lyndhurst Gardens was started in 1882, the Rosslyn gates were moved to their final position, set back alongside the stump. At the time this was probably a living tree: what might be the base of its trunk is shown by J.P. Emslie on the left of his 1896 water-colour of the gates awaiting removal.

Rosslyn now became in effect no. 19 in Lyndhurst Gardens. Nevertheless, with the western tip of the avenue in the grounds, it continued to regard itself as being in the street that bore its name; and the rate collector duly noted the address as Rosslyn Grove. The old house, once with 21 acres, could thus feel it had escaped the indignity of being part of a suburban street.

The stump is still worth a glance and it would be interesting to have an expert opinion on its age.

Roy Allen



WILLIAM TURPIN AND MILITARY MUSIC

Richard Powell has written to ask for information of a William Turpin, a leading composer of marching music. Turpin lived in Holborn, working as a carter for one of the railway companies. A contemporary of his said that he practised music in a hall behind St Pancras railway station, and another informant said that Turpin was a trombone player in the Covent Garden opera band. By all accounts he composed his marches sitting in the corner of a pub. Not much else is known about him, though there is a record that in the disastrous flu epidemic of 1918, which killed millions, a W.H. Turpin of Holborn died.

If any member has information on Turpin, or indeed on the marching bands and their music, prevalent all around the country until the 1950s, Mr Powell would be pleased to hear from you. Major (Retd) Richard Powell is at 48 Eastwood, Chatteris, PE16 6RU. His email is pyperuk@aol.com.

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The Field Lane Refuge was a well-known institution in Holborn which, in a modern form, survives today. This picture, probably pre-First World War, shows inmates as very docile indeed, or perhaps giving thanks for the food they are about to get.

More on coal-hole covers

In *Camden History Review* 23, A.D. Harvey introduced the subject of coal-hole covers in Camden, assessing the designs and some of the manufacturers of these varied items.

Bryan Diamond has followed this up with additional information on some covers in Hampstead. At nos 18, 22 and 26 Heath Hurst Road there are covers by Fred Hodge of Upper Holloway. At 40 Rosslyn Hill (now Lloyd's Bank built in 1896), there is a cover labelled 'Haywards, Borough, Patent Self-Locking'. There is a good concentration of covers at the tall stuccoed terraces around Belsize Village. The Crescent (built in 1873) has several including at no. 33 one by Wm Scott, ironmonger of 235 Junction Road, and at no. 2 by Wm Pryor + Co of Dalston Junction, and at 16 and 29 by Sampson of Euston Road. In Belsize Place, Lane and Terrace (built 1880), there are a dozen more surviving, including ones made by Durey, Ware of Newcastle Place, Edgware Road, and J. Matts of Paddington. Pryor and Durey covers are also in Gayton Road. Some in Belsize Lane are very near the kerb, indicating that the cellars extended beneath the pavement.

Mr Diamond notes that he has seen no covers outside the large detached houses such as in Fitzjohn's Avenue, suggesting that the coal store was to the side of the house.

The Hampstead Medical Society 1889-1989

A new history of the Hampstead Medical Society by Kenneth Lewis has recently been published. The Society was founded in what was called the Hampstead Home Hospital in October 1889 (the building later became the Hampstead General). At that time the most prevalent feverish illness was smallpox, and compulsory vaccination did not then exist. Vestries on the whole were inactive in promoting ways to prevent epidemics and Dr Lord, who had been appointed Hampstead's Medical Officer in 1874, had many problems with his employers in implementing the reforms he had in mind.

After a brief description of the early hospitals in Hampstead, the history then deals with the Society itself, formed to "talk over and discuss subjects of a social, scientific and professional interest". Twelve local doctors attended, one of whom, Dr Collingwood Andrews, subsequently became mayor of Hampstead. Regular talks on medical questions of the day were held and by 1897 there were 84 members (membership today is restricted to 70).

The book consists of 48 pages and cover, and is available from Dr Sheinman, Secretary of HMS, 7 Kidderpore Gardens NW3 7SS. It costs £20.

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 187

Sep 2001

The New Streets of London

Thurs, 20 Sept, 7.30pm

Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church

(The Forum, 2nd floor)

235 Shaftesbury Avenue WC2 (bottom of Gower Street)

It is difficult to imagine central London without some of the main arteries that helped once to relieve traffic congestion. Roads such as Kingsway, Shaftesbury Avenue, New Oxford Street for example and in south London, Southwark Street, were all built specially, carved through built-up areas to replace the haphazard road pattern that prevailed in the metropolis. By then city planners were wise enough to put pipes and services in special tunnels beneath the highways so that they could be maintained without digging up the roads themselves. Most of these new roads had the added benefit of sweeping away slums (though the residents were rarely offered alternative accommodation).

The fascinating story of the construction of these roads, some of which are in Camden, is the subject of Roger Cline's talk in September.

Marochetti's statues

Thurs. 18 October, 7.30pm

Netherhall House (cnr Maresfield Gardens and Nutley Terrace) NW3. (Nearest Tube Finchley Road, or bus 46 from Swiss Cottage).

Our speaker in October is Philip Ward-Jackson of the Courtauld Institute whose subject is the sculptor Baron Marochetti, who was much favoured by Queen Victoria and who made statues not only of royalty but of engineers, including that of Robert Stephenson in front of Euston station. The title of the talk is *Carlo Marochetti, sculptor of Robert Stephenson, a Romantic artist in the Railway Age*.

ADVANCE NOTICE

15 Nov: (change of programme) John Richardson on The Lost Rivers of London. At Bloomsbury Central Baptist church.

13 Dec: Aidan Flood on photographic surveys of Camden in the last hundred years. At Burgh House.

18 Jan: Rebecca Daniels 'The Art of Murder: Walter Sickert and the Camden Town affair', at Theatro Technis, 26 Crowndale Road NW1

21 Feb: Robert Stephenson on Kensal Green cemetery. At Bloomsbury Central Baptist church.

7 Mar: Gavin Stamp on George Gilbert Scott jnr. At Burgh House.

18 Apr: John Bowman on relief sculptures seen on the outside of buildings in the City.

17 May: John Nicholson on the building of the Farringdon Road and the construction of the Holborn Viaduct.

The Society has a website

Peter Woodford is to be congratulated on arranging for us to have a web page. This lists membership details and forthcoming talks. If you want to view it, in Explorer mode type cityneighbours.com and then click on Welcome home and scroll down the Welcome page until you see Groups and clubs, where they announce that Camden History Society now has a web page. Click on the name of the Society, ignore the invitation to 'subscribe' and scroll further when you will see the programme of talks which will be updated now and then.

A Farringdon Walk

John Nicholson, who is giving our May 2002 talk, recently led a much appreciated walk sponsored by the Clerkenwell Literary Festival describing the history of the Farringdon Waste and the building of the Holborn Viaduct. One of our members says that he kept 50 walkers enthralled and entertained for an hour and a half as he revealed the hidden depths of an area "notorious for its brothels, pickpockets, diamonds, steam railways, bridges, rookeries, ditches, rivers, alleyways and zeppelins". He would be interested in repeating the walk, preferably with 24 to 50 applicants. If you are interested, please contact Peter Woodford on 020-7435 2088 and he will see what can be organised.

WELCOME TO THE 25TH

Enclosed with this *Newsletter* is the *Camden History Review*. It is a special edition, not only because it contains more research done during the Society's *Catching the Past* project, but also because it is the 25th edition. Congratulations to Peter Woodford, the present editor, and to Christopher Wade who began and sustained the enterprise for many years.

Worth an Early Start

Northamptonshire was the destination for this year's Camden History Society outing. This meant an early start, which was well worth it to see two fascinating manor houses, have a look at the gold stone town of Oundle and drive past Fotheringay. This last-named is known as the place where Mary, Queen of Scots was beheaded, less so as the birthplace of Richard III.

The first stop was at the prebendal manor house of Nassington, run by Mrs Baile, who used to live in Camden. She took the house over as a 'Georgian farmhouse in need of modernisation'. In fact, it dates from Saxon times, King Canute having paid a visit there. The remains of a Saxon floor have been found under the main living room. When the Normans came, they built their own house round the Saxon buildings, demolishing the latter to make way for a massive hall with minstrels' gallery.

Gradually the house was changed. The ceiling was lowered, the gallery going out of sight, while the kitchen was moved indoors and a wall built to keep out noise and smells.

The house belonged to the king until the time of Henry I, when it was given to the church as a prebendal manor. Prebends had to be canons of a cathedral (Lincoln in this case) and to give some of the money they received to King, Pope and local parish priest. Many did not and often never came near the manor.

So to the garden, perhaps the most interesting feature of Nassington. This has plants, which as far as possible are those which would have been found in the 14th century. Some are modern versions of the originals, certain strains having died out. They include wormwood, for rat poison, with other poisons for vermin and the one with whose juice Dr Crippen is said to have poisoned his wife. There is actually woad. This, mixed with another extract, makes Lincoln green dye. For many years all plants were useful. It seems to have been only about the time of Charlemagne that decorative roses, lillies and irises came into use. They grew alongside plants providing remedies for worms, from which it seems Anglo-Saxons suffered badly.

After lunch at Oundle with a glance at Fotheringay, there was Southwick Manor to visit. This, like so many very old houses, has had additions over the years. A former worker took visitors round, showing where alterations had been made and noting the insistence on original Colley Weston slates. The name is that of a village, not a supplier. Sometimes renewals have to be obtained from other buildings not listed.

There was comment on the cold gypsum floors as CHS members saw the attractive church which is part of the estate (though this does not have gypsum floors) and a visit to a pleasant informal little museum. The exhibits included an ancient manual typewriter, a washtub with wringer, early tractor, churn and bicycle.

The house within is rambling, it being difficult to find one's way about. Perseverance is well worth while, for there are good family portraits on show, while upstairs there is a kitchen with an old-fashioned range and a table set for tea. Information and historic details were supplied by the guide's relative. Nearby is a maid's bedroom, though many who once worked in this capacity insist that they never had such comfortable rooms.

Another room holds a collection of special editions of magazines dealing with the coronations of George VI and the present Queen Mother as well as that of Elizabeth II.

A wonderful collection of lace is set out nearby. There is Brussels lace, Irish crochet, Honiton and Maltese lace of interest since lace collars and cuffs are seldom worn nowadays.

Tea before the homeward journey was lavish with a very good blend in the pot and the sort of fruitcake perhaps only English country houses can provide.

Joan Barraclough



An unusual interior photograph of c.1905, of the Queens Hotel, Primrose Hill Road.

Saving St John's

Many members will know that the beautiful proprietary chapel of St John in Downshire Hill, Hampstead, is now on the English Heritage 'at risk' register. It is Grade I, and as anyone who is familiar with it will confirm, it is a magnificent centrepiece of one of Hampstead's most attractive roads.

The church was completed in 1823 by John Woods under the instruction of the Rev. James Curry and a lawyer, Edward Carlisle. Proprietary chapels were common in London at the time of its building. Commissioned by preachers who sought a building for their own use, these chapels held no ties either to the parish or diocese and their upkeep was maintained by pew rents. Over the years such churches have gradually disappeared, but St John's has survived, possibly because its site was too small for a new (and much larger) Victorian church and because its congregation was determined to keep it. It is now the only proprietary chapel left in the diocese of London.

On more than one occasion the existence of the building has been threatened. In 1896 part of the roof collapsed and shortly afterwards the chapel was put up for sale. This never came to fruition and funds were found to repair and restore it, as they were again in 1963. However, neither of these previous restorations fully addressed the problem of the inadequacy of the building's foundations and the present campaign, Saving St John's, seeks to ensure that it continues to survive into its third century.

Donations to the 'Saving St John's Appeal' can be sent to the Appeal Administrator, St John's Church, Downshire Hill, NW3 1NU (Tel: 7794 8946).

Edwardian London

This year's London & Middlesex Archaeological Society Local History conference takes Edwardian London as its theme.

David Gilbert of Royal Holloway College will give a guided tour of Imperial London, Di Atkinson will talk about Suffragettes, Malcolm Jones on Edwardian theatre, and there will be other lectures on transport and film. The final talk will be on the White City exhibitions of 1908 and 1914.

The conference is, as usual, at the Museum of London. It is on Saturday, 17 November, beginning at 10am and finishing at 4.30pm. Tickets for non-members of LAMAS are £5, which includes a tea. Please apply to the Local History Conference, 36 Church Road, West Drayton, Middlesex, UB7 7PX.

Open House

Don't forget that London Open House weekend is on 22 and 23 September. New buildings on view are Portcullis House at Westminster, the wildly expensive office block overlooking Big Ben, 89 Genesta Road, the first house completed by Lubetkin, the Royal Danish Embassy, the Pagoda in Blackheath, and 125 Golden Lane, which is 7 storeys high but has

only 3 bedrooms: it is 21m high but only 3.5m wide. Check out details on www.londonopenhouse.org. Most libraries have a brochure of the entire list of open buildings.

HERBAL TRADITION

Some members may like to know of the existence of Ethnomedica, established in 1999 to research and record traditional plant healing methods. Researchers are herbalists and botanists. They would welcome memories of home cures by the use of plants. All the information will be put on to the internet. If you are interested please contact Mattie Pochee, 32a Crayford Road N7 0ND (7609 6254).

OPEN AIR AT KEATS HOUSE

A theatre company called Refraction is planning to stage Keats' narrative poem *Isabella* or *The Pot of Basil* in the gardens of his house in Hampstead next May. It will have five actors and three musicians. They are appealing for sponsorship/donation towards this – they are trying to raise £17,000. The artistic director is Clare Prenton at 71 Compayne Gardens, NW6 3RS (7372 4584).

HIGHGATE ON TAPE

The history of Highgate is now on a video produced under the auspices of the Hornsey Historical Society. It runs for 90 minutes, and its historical consultants include Peter Barber, Gwynnyd Gosling and Joan Schwitzer. It charts the everyday lives of people both rich and poor since medieval times. Buildings long-vanished and scenes now forgotten are brought to life with engravings, paintings, photographs and archive material. Sounds like a good Christmas present. It may be obtained from the Hornsey Historical Society, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, N8 7EL (8348 8429) for £14.99 plus £1 postage.

A MUSEUM IN DOCKLANDS

Due to open this month is the Museum in Docklands. It will occupy five floors of Warehouse No. 1 at West India Quay in E14. The building itself was begun in 1803 and was used for the storage of rum, sugar and molasses. The galleries will explore Roman trading practices, the medieval port and London Bridge, voyages of discovery and the East India Company, the 18th-century mercantile City, theft and piracy on the docks, Thames shipbuilding, the Port of London Authority, containerisation, decline and regeneration. We are also promised a dramatic recreation of the Rhinebeck Panorama showing the pool of London.

MISSING NAMES

In the last *Newsletter*, the list of officers elected at the Annual Meeting was incomplete. It should have included:

Dr Peter Woodford, Meetings Secretary
Sheila Ayres, Publications Secretary



King's Cross Road c.1905.

The Missionaries of St Giles

Roy Hidson writes:

I was most interested to read the item on the Missionaries of St Giles in the last Newsletter. The Mission moved to Islington (corner of Bride Street and Westbourne Road) in 1931 and the building was remodelled in 1935. The present frontage was built onto what was the Arundel Square Congregational Chapel which dates from 1863, the gallery being added in 1866. The ornamental columns were supplied by William Pedlar who was a local ironmonger and gas fitter. A detailed description of the building may be found in the RCHME publication *Islington Chapels*.

The building was adapted for mission and social work with space for lectures and meetings. There was also a club room for the use of the elderly, the homeless and the unemployed. One of the best known of the Congregationalist ministers to serve there was the Rev. John Jameson (1854-1922), who was minister between 1892 and 1898.

A tree in Oriel Place

Ann Eastman writes:

I am curious about the tree in Oriel Place, Hampstead Village, and wonder if members know anything about it, or have any idea when it might have been planted.

It used to have a pretty wrought iron circular seat around its trunk, but that was stolen some years ago. A couple of times I have seen tour groups stopping beside it and being told something, but I cannot imagine what, as I have been unable to find out anything about it at all.

Having written to Alistair Smith, principal arboricultural officer at Camden, he replied: "... I'm

afraid that the plane tree in Oriel Place is a bit of a mystery to me and has been for many years. So I am not able to offer any information" Can anyone do better than Mr Smith?

(Christopher Wade says that the tree is owned by the Wells and Campden Trust. The nearby blocks of flats were erected by the Wells Trust in 1876.)

LEVITA ORIGINS

I have always been curious as to the origin of the name Levita House, a block of flats in the old LCC estate in Somers Town. I found what must surely be the answer while glancing through *Who Was Who* for 1951-1960. It lists a Lt. Col Sir Cecil Bingham Levita (1867-1953) who, after a military career, became a Municipal Reform representative on the LCC for North Kensington from 1911-37. He was chairman of the LCC in 1928-29, roughly the date of Levita House.

John Richardson

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newsletter

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Nov 2001

The Lost Rivers of London

Thurs. 15 Nov, 7.30pm
Bloomsbury Central Baptist Church
(The Forum room)
235 Shaftesbury Avenue (bottom of Gower Street)

There is hardly a subject of such enduring interest to Londoners than their 'lost rivers'. Some indeed are lost, such as the Fleet, Tyburn, Effra and Walbrook, although a number of rivers remain resolutely above ground, such as the Lea and the Brent.

They were important in many ways – as defensive barriers, as land boundaries, as sources of drinking water, as sewage channels, as power for industrial mills and so on. Almost without exception they were treated badly and barely conserved and in the 19th century most of them disappeared from the terrain but still continued to play havoc beneath ground.

John Richardson will tell us why the Fleet had such a marked effect on the government of the old parish of St Pancras, and how, though hidden, the rivers could sometimes affect the health of the locality.

Photographic Surveys of Camden

Thurs. 13 December, 7.30pm
Burgh House, New End Square NW3

Aidan Flood of Camden's Local Studies and Archives Centre was responsible for the overall completion and the archiving of the CHS Year 2000 photographic project, in which every street in the borough was photographed. Over 5000 pictures, produced in the main by CHS volunteers, were eventually put into Camden's archives, to the probable delight of researchers 100 years hence.

Apart from talking about this project and its results, Aidan will inform us about previous photographic surveys in the borough, most notably that undertaken by the underground railways when burrowing beneath the streets. Their survey had an explicit purpose – it was to photograph every building that could be affected by tunnelling before work commenced, so that any later claim for compensation for subsidence and cracking could be checked against the remarkably clear pictures that were taken beforehand.

ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these talks into your 2002 diary:
18 Jan: Rebecca Daniels *The Art of Murder: Walter Sickert and the Camden Town affair*, at Teatro Technis, 26 Crowndale Road.
21 Feb: Robert Stephenson on Kensal Green cemetery. At Bloomsbury Central Church.
7 March: Gavin Stamp on George Gilbert Scott jnr. At Burgh House.
18 April: Relief sculptures seen on the outside of buildings in the City. At Burgh House.
17 May: John Nicholson on the building of the Farringdon Road and the construction of the Holborn Viaduct. At the St Alban's Centre, Baldwins Gardens, off Gray's Inn Road.
20 June: (Annual Meeting): Robert Thorne on the history of St Pancras Station and the Midland Grand Hotel. At Hampstead Town Hall.
18 July: Patrick Frazer on The Ways (father and son) of Hampstead – printer, lithographer, author and artist. At Burgh House.

200 Years of London Justice

The CHS publication by Gillian Tindall, *200 Years of London justice: the story of Hampstead and Clerkenwell magistrates' courts* is now on sale. Designed as usual by Ivor Kamlisch, and edited by Peter Woodford, it is the fascinating story of two different courts dealing with contrasting social conditions, and is well illustrated. Members will remember the splendid talk that Gillian gave to the Society on the subject in March. The price is £5.95, available from local bookshops and at CHS meetings.

New Publications Secretary wanted

Sadly, Sheila Ayres is resigning as the Society's Publications Secretary. She has for quite a few years helped to boost the sale of our many publications and she will be much missed. So, we need a volunteer to take over this important job which involves sending out by post any orders which come in, and circularising bookshops with flyers, or personally visiting them, regarding new publications. Please volunteer to Jane Ramsay, whose phone number etc is on the back page of this *Newsletter*.

REMEMBERING THE FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN

For those of you who don't mind remembering an event of fifty years ago, or those who were born too late to sample it, there is an exhibition at the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre from 5-17 November of great interest. It is on the 1951 Festival of Britain. After the devastation of war and years of austerity the Festival aimed to raise the nation's morale whilst promoting the very best of British art, design and industry. Of the buildings erected on the South Bank, only the Royal Festival Hall survives, but there is no doubt that the Festival had a great influence both on the spirit of the nation and the development of art and architecture in this country. The project was pushed through by Herbert Morrison, a man not usually known for his artistic sympathies. His grandson, Peter Mandelson was less fortunate fifty years later with the Dome.

The exhibition (originally produced by the Museum of London) includes original artefacts and visual displays. Just to remind you, the Centre is at Holborn Library at 32-38 Theobalds Road. It is open Monday (10-7), Tuesday (10-6), Thursday (10-7), Friday (10-6), Saturday (10-1 and 2-5).

VISIONS IN GLASS

At Burgh House from 4 November to 10 February there is an exhibition entitled *Visions in Glass; stained glass designers of Hampstead*.

The Victorian era was rich in the production of stained glass and some of the most famous designers of the period lived in Hampstead. Alfred Bell lived at 1 Lyndhurst Terrace and his firm, Clayton & Bell, became one of the most important in the country. He was churchwarden at St John's Hampstead for 17 years and designed and donated most of the stained glass there. Thomas Grylls lived for many years in Burgh House. His firm, Burlison and Grylls was responsible for the Rose Window in Poets' Corner in Westminster Abbey and for windows in numerous parish churches all over England.

Henry Holiday was a very successful artist, designer and book illustrator who had his home and studio in Hampstead. As a successor to Burne Jones, he was a great success in England and America where his work appears in many churches.

This exhibition is a reminder of the wealth and beauty of stained glass in Hampstead.

HAMPSTEAD MUSEUM REGISTERED

At long last Hampstead Museum at Burgh House has been granted full registration by the London Museums Agency. This signifies that the Museum is now recognised as meeting the minimum standards of museum operation and indicates to funding bodies that it is managed responsibly.

CLOSING TIME

The Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library will be closed from 3 December to 8 December inclusive and will reopen on the 10th. During the week a number of tasks will be undertaken which are impossible during normal opening hours. These include installing extra cabinets for illustrations and moving them around to create much needed expansion space, and cleaning, moving and listing archives and other items in strongrooms.

VOLUNTEERS AT KEW

The Public Record Office is looking for volunteers for a particular task. It concerns the records of criminals 1784-1829, which include letters petitioning on behalf of convicted criminals. These include a wealth of information on the criminal, usually containing details of his or her occupation, background, family situation, personal circumstances, date of crime, where and when tried, sentence and the Judge's final decision.

The documents are bound into 75 annual or bi-annual volumes and are at present simply listed by date with no indexes to name, location or crime. A local history researcher can only take pot luck in hoping to find petitions for their area, and studies on particular crimes or locations are extremely time consuming and virtually impossible. The records are consequently overlooked by many researchers despite their inherent value to local studies.

The project aims to create a fully searchable index by inputting details of each petition into a computerised catalogue. This will be a two stage process whereby volunteers use the original documents to enter the details into a simple spreadsheet.

If any member is interested, please contact Mr Chris Heather, Research and Editorial Services Department at the PRO at Kew, 8876 3444 ext 2604.

ARCHAEOLOGY IN SPITALFIELDS

The area of Spitalfields is the focus of one of the largest urban archaeological projects in Britain, under the auspices of the Museum of London. About 12 acres are involved, phased over nearly a decade. Much of the Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital has been discovered, together with nearly 10,000 medieval graves and a Roman cemetery beneath. The next large area to be excavated lies between 250 Bishopsgate and Spitalfields Market, under the former Steward Street.

The later archaeological levels, beneath the modern street, have now been removed. There were remains of about 25 houses, which once fronted onto Steward Street. They were originally built in the 1680s and 1690s, when the Old Artillery Ground was sold off for housing, but many were rebuilt in the 18th century. The cellars had brick walls and floors, and the remains of doorways and fireplaces still survived. Cesspits containing large quantities of pottery and glass had been dug in their back gardens.

Beneath these houses the archaeologists are starting to uncover medieval houses, which fronted onto a street within the precincts of the Priory and Hospital of St Mary Spital.

New Publications

The Growth of St Marylebone and Paddington by Jack Whitehead. Price £12.95 from the author at 55 Parliament Hill NW3 2TB, plus £2 p&p. or from local bookshops. 262pp, paperback

As with his volume on Camden Town, Jack Whitehead's new edition of St Marylebone and Paddington is crammed with detail and new bits of information. It isn't a straightforward history, though it is within a chronological framework. Its strength derives from the author's lively interest in specific issues. For example, instead of dwelling at length on the attractive, but somehow sterile terraces of St Marylebone south of the Marylebone Road, he takes up a great deal of space on those areas that gave cause for alarm in the Charles Booth Poverty map. He then goes on to discuss at length philanthropic housing and later council developments with particular emphasis on local schools, about which he had first-hand knowledge.

There are numerous illustrations, maps and sketch drawings. But they are squeezed in, so that the photographs receive less than justice because of their size. This is compensated by the author's own sketches of architectural features which you wouldn't usually get in a local history publication and by many small maps which help illustrate the development of the area. Bringing us right up-to-date, there is a montage of the latest buildings in the Paddington Basin this year – the development there is the largest in London since Canary Wharf.

Commenting on the previous edition of this work, a reviewer for the London Topographical Society commented that it was 'informative, lively and above all good fun'. This is still true, and those members who recall his talk on Camden Town, full of enthusiasm and odd and memorable bits of information, will no doubt want to read this new publication about an area not too far away.

Characters of Fitzrovia by Mike Pentelow and Marsha Rowe
262pp plus throw-out map, £25 hardback, profusely illustrated.

This is a sumptuously produced book, printed in colour throughout – even many of the mono pictures are printed in four-colours to give them greater depth. And it is printed in Hong Kong by a firm I have never heard of to a standard that is rarely achieved by British book printers.

It is an enjoyable but expensive gazetteer of anyone who had the remotest thing to do with Fitzrovia. For example William ('Lord Haw-Haw') Joyce is included

simply because he went to Birkbeck College in Gower Street – you will notice that the authors have crossed Tottenham Court Road to include Gower Street in Fitzrovia. Krishna Menon is in because he was a student at University College, although to be fair his image was once a statue in Fitzroy Square. The authors too have stretched the Fitzrovia border westwards – to Portland Place, where Edgar Wallace lived in style. And so, having gone that far west those who conducted at the Queen's Hall in Langham Place, and many who worked at the BBC, are included.

But on the plus side there are an enormous number of people not previously associated with Fitzrovia that allow the book to stray on many occasions from the well-trod paths of the more famous residents such as Dylan Thomas, Nina Hamnett etc. For example, we have Edgar Manning a 1920s' drug dealer who, his landlady stated, left his revolver on the washstand and drank a bottle of whisky a day. We have John Arlott, the doyen of cricket commentators, lodging at 4 All Souls Place (near the BBC) where Margot Fonteyn shared a flat with her lover, composer Constant Lambert.

There is a healthy amount of space devoted to the many political groups and people that centred on Fitzrovia, including Anarchist Martin Bourdin of Great Titchfield Street, who killed himself in 1894 while testing a bomb at Greenwich – his story was used by Joseph Conrad in *Secret Agent*. Bourdin was a member of the infamous Autonomie Club in Windmill Street. The Club had already made headlines two years earlier when some of its members were given ten-year sentences for manufacturing a bomb. And, of course, there was the Communist Club, which Marx attended. I didn't know that the funeral of Marx's 9-year-old son, who died of consumption, was held in Whitefield's Tabernacle.

The authors tell a good story about the comedian Tommy Cooper, whose only connection with Fitzrovia was that he drank at the Fitzroy Tavern. After a Royal Command performance he asked the Queen if she were interested in football, and when she replied that she wasn't, he asked if he could have her cup final ticket that year.

JR

A Palace of Hope: The story of Mount Vernon Hospital Hampstead and Northwood, by Richard Tremlett. Obtainable from the author at 92 Tudor Way, Rickmansworth, Herts WD3 8HS for £6.

This book covers the foundation of the hospital in Stanfield House, Prince Arthur Road, Hampstead as the North London Hospital for Consumption and Diseases of the Chest. It moved in 1887 into the spectacular and purpose-built hospital in Mount Vernon, further up the hill. It later opened a country branch in Northwood, and in 1915 sold the Hampstead site to the Medical Research Council. That building has now largely been converted into apartments.

The Dutton Street gasworks

In the 1950s a gas company employee, called E.G. Stewart, tried to make a list of all the London gas companies which had ever existed – there were far more than most people would believe possible¹. He found, in the minute books of the Imperial Gas Company, a reference to the purchase in 1822 of a gas works at 'Dutton Street'. This works had belonged to a William Caslon and was apparently private. No more was known and it might be assumed that this was another of several gas works set up to provide gas lighting to a factory.

Stewart managed to trace a Dutton Street near a turning off the Gray's Inn Road – and there the matter rested. Dutton Street is indeed not easy to track down, since both the road and the road name seem to have vanished with the construction of tenement blocks on the site in the late nineteenth century. It was a turning off Cromer Street (formerly called Lucas Street) roughly on the site of today's Tankerton Street. It was on the estate of Joseph Lucas – the southern end of Tonbridge Street was once called Joseph Street – developed for housing as from about 1800². In April 1817 the estate's management committee opened discussions with a William Caslon about gas lighting for the area³.

Stewart describes William Caslon as 'the typefounder' – as did Sterling Everard⁴, the other historian of the London gas industry who wrote in the late 1940s. Everard was aware that one of the subscribers to the City of London Gas Company, was a William Caslon. This company was one of several commercial gas undertakings in London in this period. In order to sell gas to the public such companies required an enabling Act of Parliament – and names of subscribers are appended to such Parliamentary documents. In the City of London Gas Company Act William Caslon's address is that of the typefounder business, thus it is very likely that it is the same person. His ancestor, William Caslon, the designer of the famous typeface named after him, died in 1766.

In fact, by the 1820s there were two Caslon typefounding businesses. The original foundry in Chiswell Street was in the hands of Henry Caslon, a great-grandson of the founder. The present company descends from this branch of the business but has no information or knowledge at all about either a gas works or Dutton Street⁵.

Another grandson, and a third William Caslon, had sold his shares in the original business and bought a different type foundry which from 1807 was run by his son, yet another William. It must be assumed that the Dutton Street gas works was set up by William Caslon, either father or son. This Caslon typefoundry was in Dorset Street, Salisbury Square – immediately adjacent to the works of the City of London Gas Company.

In 1800 the Cromer-Lucas estate had considerable preterensions. There were gates into the estate and an elected residents' committee, sworn in as Commissioners of Paving, who employed staff - a scavenger, watchmen and so on – and who negotiated with Caslon and tried to impose some sort of standards on the gas works and the lights it provided.

The gas works was actually on the estate, among the houses and soon things started to go wrong. By November 1821 there were complaints that the lights were not 'properly lit' and in June 1822 a very strong complaint was made that the

gas works 'had of late become so great a nuisance that it was almost impossible to live in the neighbourhood'. There were threats that the works would 'be indicted'⁶. Perhaps inevitably it was soon closed. The Paving Commissioners received a letter from the Imperial Gas Company in May 1823 to say that they had purchased the works – and the Commissioners replied that Mr Caslon had not told them of an intention to sell. In June Caslon told them that the works would be 'gone in two months' – which implies that a great deal of pressure was being applied, perhaps by local residents, to close the works down. It was indeed closed by the Imperial Company, and some of the equipment was transferred to their new Fulham works after 1829.

The site in Dutton Street must have been difficult to relet and the estate records show it vacant for many years, or else let for short periods to other industrial concerns. It was not until 1851 that it was permanently let, and then to a private school – a school is shown on the west side of Dutton Street on Bacon's Street Atlas of 1888.

By the late 1880s the Cromer-Lucas estate had descended into slum property and around 1900 a number of tenement blocks were built by the East End Improved Dwellings Company – most of these still remain on site. At the eastern, narrower end is a more recent block of flats. Today it is an area of high crime and all the dwellings on the site are fortified – the new flats aggressively so. In the early 1800s residents also felt sufficiently insecure to provide gates – and new street lighting – on their new private estate.

In the 1820s a network of London-wide gas providers did not exist – and perhaps was not even seen as a possibility. It seems in retrospect entirely reasonable that a developer should want to provide all services for a new estate, yet I can only think of one other example – that of the electric power station and hydraulics installed at Carr's Kensington Court in 1886. There certainly seems to be no other example of a small gas works for one estate – although plenty for single houses and single factories.

Mary Mills

(who is compiling a book about the early London gas industry).

¹ E.G. Stewart, *A Historical index of gasworks past & present in the area now served by North Thames Gas Board*. (NT Gas, 1958).

² *Survey of London*, Vol. XXIV, gives some details about the site and the development.

³ Minutes of the Paving Commissioners for the Lucas Estate.

⁴ Sterling Everard, *The History of the Gas Light & Coke Company 1812-1949*, Benn Bros, 1949.

⁵ I would like to thank Mr Richard Caslon, and information on his company's web site, for details of Caslon in this period.

⁶ Paving Commissioners' minutes.

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