

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 219

Jan 2007

## A Church Revived: The 1818 Church Building Commissioners in North London

Thurs. 25 January, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

What were commonly called 'Waterloo' churches were built after the Waterloo battle and hailed as a thanks to God for the victory, though it was also contended that they were built to impede the rise and rise of non-conformist worship and radical political aspirations. A Church Building Act of 1818 arose from a meeting at the Freemasons' Hall in London in February that year chaired by the Archbishop of Canterbury. This led to the formation of a Church Building Society, which lobbied Parliament to fund a £1 million building programme. This was subsequently supplemented by more government money as well as private donations.

Eventually the Society and the appointed Commissioners helped in the construction of more than 600 churches across the UK. They were built "with a view to accommodating the greatest number of persons at the smallest expense within the compass of an ordinary voice, one half of the number to be free seats for the poor".

Dr Michael Port, who has written an authoritative book on this subject, is our speaker in January and he will deal with churches built in north London. This will include All Saints in Camden Town (designed by the Inwoods and now occupied by the Greek Orthodox church).

## A New Treasurer

Henry Fitzhugh has kindly accepted our invitation to become the Treasurer of the Society at the end of our financial year. Until then (end Feb), Angela Bowen is still in office.

## A must to see...

Go and see the exhibition at the British Library called *London: a life in maps*. It depicts London through the ages and is curated by our member, Peter Barber, Head of Map Collections at the Library.

## Pevsner and Germany

Thurs. 15 February, 7pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Nikolaus Pevsner is best known to most of us as the editor and compiler of the Penguin *Buildings of England* series. This, and his sometimes quirky assessments of buildings, made Pevsner an English treasure, despite his German upbringing and accent - he settled in England in 1933 at the age of 33. (His first experience of London was on a visit as a youth before the 1st World War to see his grandparents who lived in West Hampstead. Hampstead was to reclaim him in 1936 when he took up residence at 2 Wildwood Terrace, where he remained until 1983.)

Our speaker in February, the well-known writer Stephen Games, is, however, particularly interested in Pevsner's German history and his support for modern architecture that he expressed to great effect in his book *Pioneers of the Modern Movement* (1936). Here he extolled not the cosy world of English architecture but the cutting edge of Bauhaus style.

In his talk Stephen Games will look at Pevsner's upbringing and the values and ideas that predated and then coloured his transformation into one of the most celebrated Englishmen of the last century.

**Please note: the evening is scheduled to begin at 7pm when the Society will be making a presentation to Malcolm Holmes on his retirement from Camden (see overleaf). Stephen Games's talk will begin, as is our custom, at 7.30pm.**

## First Prize

The Society has received a well-deserved Award for the best local history publication in London in 2005, for *The Streets of Kentish Town*. This Award is sponsored by the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society.

Congratulations go to the research team of Sheila Ayres, David Hayes, Michael Ogden, Mimi Romilly and the team leader Steve Denford. And also to our designer, Ivor Kamlish, who has stamped his style on all our publications for a good many years past.

The book, available at most of our meetings and at the Owl Bookshop, costs £8.50.

## Malcolm Holmes Retires

Camden's Archivist Malcolm Holmes is retiring on February 10th. He began his career in libraries in 1961 working for the Middlesex County Library and came to work for the old Borough of Holborn in December 1963. In 1964 he went off to study librarianship in Newcastle and returned to the London Borough of Camden which had been formed during his absence.

He soon began his career in local studies when he began working with the Assistant Curator and Archivist, Christina Gee. At first he worked at Highgate Library, where the St Pancras local collection had been rather chaotically stored - it was then moved to Swiss Cottage Library. Malcolm was also to work at Keats House and in the reference library at Holborn, but retaining an interest in the Holborn local collection.

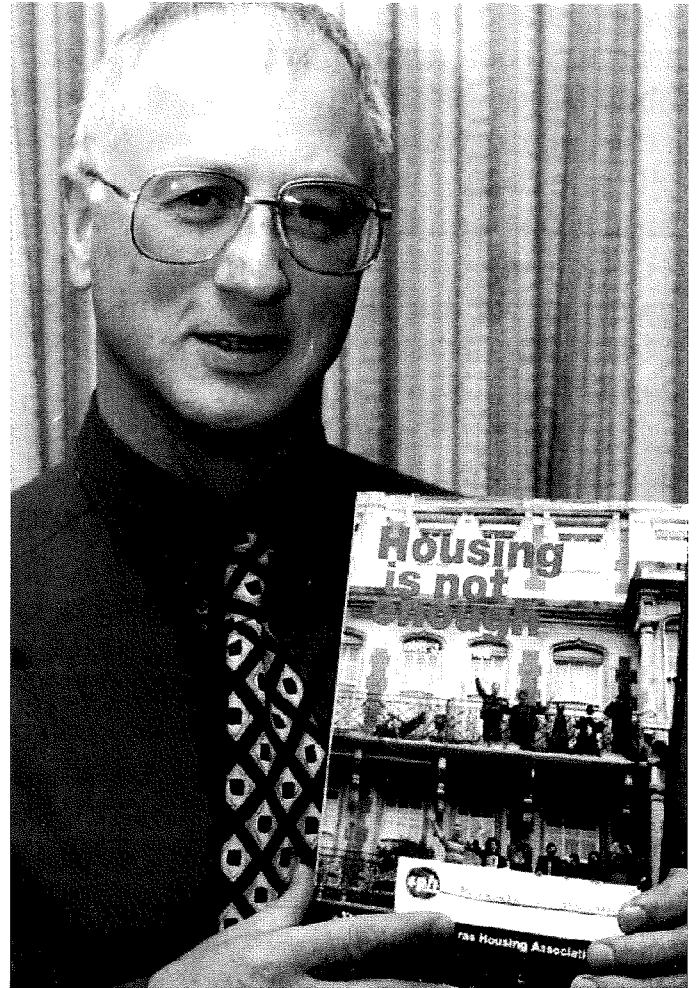
In 1974 Camden created a separate Local History Library and Malcolm was appointed its first Librarian. He continued in this until 1994 when in a reorganisation he was appointed Borough Archivist.

Initially the local history collection was based in both Swiss Cottage and Holborn and during Malcolm's time as Librarian the service expanded enormously and outgrew the two locations. He was in charge when the whole collection was rehoused at Holborn Library with the creation of the present Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre. It is generally agreed by people interested in the keeping of archives in London that Camden's is one of the very best departments.

Malcolm, who has always been of great help to the Society, was appointed our own Honorary Archivist in June 1975 and has been on our Council since that time until his recent resignation. To us he has been immensely helpful in our publications programme and been particularly useful in their storage and their sale. The Society owes him a great debt as indeed does Camden, for he has not only met and helped a vast number of people who have come to the Centre, but he has given numerous talks to outside groups and societies. He has indeed been a model of what local government service used to be about and we as a society have been particularly fortunate to have him both as a friend and an ally. It has been a long and fruitful relationship of benefit to the Society and also, we hope, to the Local Studies Centre as well.

Malcolm well deserves the MBE which was awarded to him in the New Year's Honours List.

As a measure of our thanks we propose to make a substantial gift to him at the February meeting (see p.1) beginning at 7pm. Your Council proposes that the Society makes this possible partly from the central funds of the Society, but also from private donations from members. The Council members them-



*Malcolm Holmes holding a copy of Housing is not enough, which he wrote for the St Pancras Housing Association.*

selves will be making personal donations, but we know that there are plenty of ordinary members who have benefited from Malcolm's help and advice and who would want to contribute. Cheques made out to the Camden History Society should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3 3LJ.

## Advance Notice

Please put the following talks in your diary:

*15 March:* Gillian Tindall. *A window on the Thames: an account of the oldest house on Bankside.* At Burgh House.

*19 April:* Richard Lines, on *The Swedenborg Society in Camden.* At Swedenborg House, 20 Bloomsbury Way.

*17 May:* Nigel Watson, *From Gower Street to Frognal - the centenary of University College School.* At the School in Frognal.

*21 June (AGM):* Roger Cline on the centenary of *The Hampstead Tube*, at the Crowndale Centre, Camden Town.

It has been decided to reduce the number of venues we use for meetings because of the difficulties in moving projector, screen etc to different places. As an experiment we shall have half our meetings at Burgh House and half at the Crowndale Centre. We would welcome views of the latter venue from members.

## Horse Tunnels in Camden Goods Yard

In 1854-56, as part of the remodelled Camden Goods Yard, a horse tunnel was provided under the new embankment so that horses working in the goods yard could make their way to and from their stables more safely beneath the tracks. It is of round-arched construction with cast-iron ventilation grilles placed regularly in the roof.

Soon afterwards, when Pickfords moved their horses to new stables west of Gloucester Avenue (the site of the present Waterside Place), a second horse tunnel was built beneath the main line. Allsopp's had stables on the site of 42 Gloucester Avenue that gave access to the horse tunnel. The Regent's Canal towpath was also connected with the horse tunnel.

The two tunnels were united via the basement of a new large goods shed that replaced previously scattered facilities in 1864, providing a safe passage for horses across the whole site. Horses moved freely and independently from their work site back to their stables. At the peak, some 400 horses worked in the goods yard and sidings, moving goods and shunting railway wagons.

The eastern horse tunnel starts in Stables Market and connects with a large area of basement storage of brick arched construction that extends under the forecourt of the Interchange Warehouse. It emerges at ground level in Gilbeys Yard in a building that forms part of 30 Oval Road, the former Jim Henson Muppet Studios. Part of the route of the tunnel can be traced from the distinctive cast-iron ventilation grilles set at regular intervals into the road surface, originally the only source of light for the horses below. At the western end, on Gloucester Avenue, Sardo's restaurant has made a feature of a short length of the tunnel.

The eastern tunnel is Grade II listed and, with the western tunnel, appears to be a unique means of moving people, horses and goods around. There is no similar structure elsewhere in the country unless one counts the horse tunnels associated with canal towpaths. It has an intimate relationship with other railway heritage structures in the goods yard.

These considerations are not sufficient to prevent the planners acceding to the destruction of this heritage. At the Stables Market end the developer is restoring the horse tunnel by turning it into a swiss cheese, perforated by new cross passages to create greater "permeability". This is part of the plan for Building D.

At 30 Oval Road the developer has had approval to demolish the staircase leading from the horse tunnel to ground level, as part of a new office and housing development. Yet there appears to have been no consideration of the listed status of this structure.

The loss of the horse tunnel would be a major blow to the proposed Camden Railway Heritage Trail. It illustrates how the lack of joined-up thinking in Camden opens the door too wide to developers. The issue is very aptly expressed by an Irishman writing about the loss of heritage in Dublin:

"Experience shows us there is a deadly linkage between acts of planning vandalism and historical ignorance or apathy."

I am sure that this sentiment will strike a chord with CHS members. It is time for CHS to take up the pen if not the sword. Please protest to the email address of the manager responsible for reports to the Development Committee: [tim.cronin@camden.gov.uk](mailto:tim.cronin@camden.gov.uk).

The proposed Camden Railway Heritage Trail will include the Primrose Hill Tunnel east portals, the Roundhouse, Stables, Camden Lock, Interchange Building, the Stationary Winding Engine House and a complex of vaults, arches and horse tunnels.

For more information please contact me by email: [Darleyp@aol.com](mailto:Darleyp@aol.com).

**Peter Darley**

### THE BIN MEN

Following our picture of an old waste food collection lorry in the last *Newsletter*, Roger Martyn writes:

It reminds me that when I was a boy in a small town in Norfolk during the war, my father kept chickens. Food for man and beast was not excessive in those days, even with the advantage of living in the country. He used to buy a brown jelly-like substance called 'Tottenham Pudding' which looked rather like brawn. Whether that was where it came from or where the idea originated I do not know but the chickens certainly liked it.

I understood that in towns and cities waste food was collected separately, boiled up to sterilise it and, I suppose, kill any smell and sold for pig and chicken foot. It looked quite appetising! I don't know if anything like this is done now with the vast quantities of waste food created nowadays.

### THE DEVELOPMENT OF CINEMAS

Members might like to know that there is a talk at Burgh House on 2 February entitled 'From Picture Palaces to Multiplex', by Allen Eyles. It explores the development of cinema buildings in London. It starts at 2.15 and admission is free. At the same venue on 9 March David Sullivan will be talking about 'The Westminster Circle' the title of his new book (published in October by Historical Publications) which deals with the mediaeval town and abbey of Westminster. The manor of Hampstead, which belonged to Westminster, merits its own chapter in the book. This talk is also at 2.15 and admission is free.

## Books for Sale

Christina Gee, who has now lived in Brighton for a number of years, is reluctantly putting up for sale her collection of books about Camden to make room for others. She is selling them at moderate prices.

Titles available include:

*The Vale of Health* by Helen Bentwich  
*Hampstead Heath* by Alan Farmer;  
*Hampstead Antiquarian and Historical Society Transactions* from 1899-1903 (5 volumes)  
*Hampstead Guide and Almanack* 1907  
*Hampstead in Light and Shade* by Mary Hill  
*Hampstead Wells* by George Potter (1904)  
*The Medieval Manor of Hampstead* by David Sullivan.

There is a long list. If you are interested please contact Christina on 01273 570720, or else on email [cmgee@waitrose.com](mailto:cmgee@waitrose.com)

## A plethora of new books

The last two months have brought us some new and valuable additions to the library of Camden books.

The Society's brand new publication is *The Life and times of the Brunswick, Bloomsbury*, by Clare Melhuish. The Brunswick Centre, a product of the 1960s, near Russell Square station, was built by Camden Council. In the process a good deal of the old and quite often run down Foundling Estate was demolished. It was both admired and lambasted at the time and it was not built quite how Patrick Hodgkinson originally envisaged, and has left much to be desired ever since. Contrary to the tower blocks so beloved of borough councils at the time, it was a low-rise high density development

However, the whole complex has been recently renovated, together with new shops - unfortunately only chain stores - and is now a much livelier place.

The story of its genesis, political and architectural background, is told in this thoroughly researched book. It is based on official archives and anecdotes, press coverage and interviews.

*Large format paperback, 104 pages, illustrated.*  
ISBN 0 904491 67 6. Available at our bookstall at meetings or else in bookshops for £7.50. By post from Roger Cline (below) £9 inc. pp.

Another feature of Camden that has recently been refurbished is Waterlow Park. To mark this has come a splendid self-published A4 format book by Pam Cooper, full of colour and illustrations, very nicely designed and printed. An additional benefit here is that Ms Cooper is a keen gardener and brings to the book a great deal of appreciation of what garden features and delights there are in the park.

Peter Barber in his foreword sums it up well: 'Pam Cooper has distilled years of research into these well illustrated pages and gives answers to such questions as why there are so many ponds in such a relatively small space, and why so many hidden corners (they mark the sites of vanished houses), why are there old walls and what purpose did they serve and even why individual trees are there, what species they are and how they came to be planted in the first place. Her learning is conveyed with a lightness of touch and as you go through the book you will also get glimpses of long-vanished worlds, of figures such as the architect John Nash and Charles II, find links to parks in Liverpool, to forts on the Thames and old gardens in Wales.

*Waterlow Park: A garden for the gardenless* is available from Highgate Bookshop and the Owl Bookshop. It might also be obtained direct from the author on 8341 6157. It is 82pp, colour throughout, £12.95. the ISBN is 0 9554400 0 9.

*Flask Walk NW3*, a book by Michael Lee, Marianne Colloms and Ellen Emerson for the Flask Walk Association, is a history of this short street, which runs into Hampstead High Street. It deals with its genesis c.1700 when The Thatch'd House sold bottled water from the nearby Hampstead Spa at threepence a flask. It featured in Richardson's novel *Clarissa* (1747-8). As a result, Horace Walpole commented: "Foreigners of distinction have been known to visit Hampstead, and to inquire for the Flask Walk, distinguished as a scene in Clarissa's history...."

Residents and frequent visitors have included Tennyson, Sid Vicious, Kingsley Amis, George Harrison and Ringo Starr.

Replete with many illustrations this 82pp paperback is available from the Association for £10. Contact CHS member Marianne Colloms on 7794 2839 for details.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 220

Mar 2007

## The Oldest House on Bankside

*Thurs. 15 March, 7.30pm*

*Burgh House, New End Square, NW3*

Resisting modern development, and standing between the vast Tate Modern and the replica Globe Theatre on Bankside, is a small terrace which contains the oldest house in that neighbourhood. Allegedly the residence of Christopher Wren when viewing the construction of St Paul's Cathedral opposite across the river, it is a remarkable survivor of all those houses that once clustered along what was once the unfashionable bank of the Thames.

Our speaker, Gillian Tindall, who is also a Vice-President of the Society, has recently published a book about the property entitled *The House by the Thames and the people who lived there*. It is a social and topographical history that spans from when a pub, the Cardinal's Hat, was on the site in Tudor times – its cellars are still there in the reconstructed property – until the present day. In Tudor and early Stuart times no doubt the customers at the inn would have included the performers and audiences at entertainments such as the original Globe and the bear pit. From the Cardinal's Hat the occupants would have had a grandstand view of the Great Fire.

The present house appears to have been built upon the base of the inn in the time of Queen Anne. It is remarkable that it withstood the ravages of industrial development and the dockside role that Bankside was to have, let alone modern intrusions. Those of us who remember Bankside even so recent as forty years ago will remember its degenerate condition and the dirt and pollution. No-one could have forecast its present attraction for tourists.

Gillian Tindall's book is based on meticulous research and her ability to illuminate that with social history comment. No doubt, in her talk she will debunk the Christopher Wren legend.

Her book, published by Chatto & Windus, is on sale at bookshops price £20.



*View from the first floor window at 49 Bankside.*

## The Swedenborg Society

*Thurs. 19 April, 7.30pm*

*Swedenborg House, 20 Bloomsbury Way WC1*

Emanuel Swedenborg (1688-1772) was a scientist, philosopher, theologian and visionary – in other words a 'Renaissance Man'. Born in Sweden he began his career as an engineer and inventor, later becoming interested in anatomy and religion.

He was a prolific writer and left behind nearly 30 published works on themes ranging over science, anatomy, philosophy and theology. He is said to have influenced, among others, Yeats, Jung, Coleridge, Baudelaire and Blake.

The Swedenborg Society was established in 1810 for the purpose of printing and promoting the works of Swedenborg. Its headquarters in a Grade II listed building in Bloomsbury contains a bookshop and a fine library.

Our speaker on the history and work of the Society is Richard Lines, its Secretary.

## Advance Notice

Please put the following dates in your diary:

17 May: Nigel Watson, *From Gower Street to Frognal - the centenary of University College School*. At the School in Frognal.

21 June (AGM) Roger Cline on the *Centenary of The Hampstead Tube*, at the Crowndale Centre, Camden Town.

19 July: Launch of the Society's new publication on the Brunswick Centre. Venue to be announced.

August: Annual Outing.

## SUBSCRIPTION RENEWAL

Subscriptions for the year to 29 February 2008 are now due. Most members pay by standing order or several years in advance and so do not need to take action.

However, if you find a subscription invoice in this *Newsletter* or if the label on the envelope has a coloured stripe on it, please send your £10 cheque off to the Membership Secretary at Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH. No further *Newsletters* will be sent to unpaid members.

## Lissenden Gardens Exhibition

Edwardian mansion flats have played an important part in the development of urban living, and in Camden, Lissenden Gardens Estate stands witness

to their adaptability and enduring popularity.

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre is host to an exhibition to mark the centenary of the building of the estate. It includes old and newer photographs, and a film featuring interviews with older residents.

The estate was built, owned and managed by three generations of the Armstrong family, on land acquired at the lower edge of Parliament Hill Fields. When it was put on the market in the 1970s, developers saw it as an opportunity to turn what had become an established and diverse local community into an exclusive enclave. They were seen off by Lissenden Gardens Tenants' Association, which successfully petitioned Camden Council to take over the flats, securing the future of both the buildings and the community.

The exhibition runs until 5 April.

## Malcolm Holmes

The Society presented Malcolm Holmes, who recently retired as Camden's Archivist, with a laptop computer at our February meeting. He has written to us the following:

'I hardly know how to begin to express my thankyou for the incredibly generous gift from the Camden History Society. Another generous gift from the Heath and Hampstead Society enabled me to buy additional software for it. I last bought a computer when Windows 95 was launched, and a replacement was now urgently needed.

I have to say that I know that I could not have achieved as much in my job or been able to deliver such a high standard of service without the constant help I received from members of the Camden History Society who were always available to supply information, advice or who deposited invaluable material in our collections. But it has been the publications

*Parliament Hill Mansions, Lissenden Gardens c.1906, soon after they were built, with new-planted trees.*





programme which always has helped so much by making available to me and my colleagues authoritative material which provided answers to so many questions and provided the ideal starting points for so much local history research.

Camden may be now one of the most published boroughs in the country for local history material, much of it from the CHS or publications from individual members. This has both promoted interest in local history and at the same time provided resources to answer the vast number of enquiries received in the Local Studies and Archives Centre. The staffing levels in the centre are the same as over 30 years ago but the number of enquiries shows a 500% increase in that time and the resources produced by the CHS have always been so essential in helping us to cope with this massive increase in use.

I still find it difficult to accept that working 43 years for Camden and Holborn Councils has flown by so quickly but I really have been fortunate in not merely having a job but a whole way of life in Camden with interests spreading into so many projects and organisations.

Now that I am not working, particularly late nights, I actually envisage being able to attend many more CHS talks and events and continue to enjoy the excellent company of CHS members for very many more years.'

At the presentation ceremony the Chairman remarked that the Society's gift was mainly funded by individual donations – a much smaller proportion came from the Society's central funds. This again emphasised the regard in which Malcolm is held.

## THE BIN MEN AGAIN

Jean Rossiter writes re the item in the two previous *Newsletters* regarding refuse disposal:

Your writer Roger Martyn referred in his article in *Newsletter* 219 to 'Tottenham Pudding'. This did indeed come from Tottenham in North London where during the war, the bin men collected household rubbish (mostly potato peelings) and it was cooked up once or twice a week on their collection site. The smell while this was happening was dreadful and permeated an area for a mile around. Nonetheless, Tottenham Council made quite a profit from its sale. So it became one of the two things by which Tottenham became nationally known – its Pudding and the Spurs!

## Archaeological News

There have been some important finds during the restoration of the church of St Martin-in-the-Fields and in an excavation in Covent Garden. Both sites are within the area called *Lundenwic* populated by Saxons after the departure of the Romans from the City of London.

We know very little about *Lundenwic*'s cemeteries. This makes the recent excavation of at least one richly furnished Saxon burial, beneath and alongside St Martin's, especially significant. By the deceased's left hand lay a silver ring; over his feet was a blue glass cup and a hanging bowl with enamelled escutcheons, containing hazelnuts. Elsewhere a cluster of amethyst and glass beads, and a gold pendant with a blue glass setting seemed to mark the position of another empty grave.

But what of the supposed Roman remains found there, so publicised in the press recently?

Amid the Saxon burials was found a limestone coffin containing a middle-aged man. His bones gave a radiocarbon date centering on AD410. Nearby was a tile kiln. It produced an archaeomagnetic date of AD400-450. If the kiln relates to a special building project in the closing years of Roman Britain – perhaps a villa overlooking the bend of the river, 2km from *Londinium* – the grave could be the last trace of the owner's mausoleum. Recognising the site's significance, Saxons two centuries later may have made it part of their own domain and graveyard.

Further light was shed on *Lundenwic* when excavations below the Covered Way, next to the London Transport Museum in Covent Garden revealed nine cremation and two inhumation burials. Preliminary dating of the cremation vessels places them between AD550 and 650. This makes them not only the first cremation burials to be found in *Lundenwic*, but also the only burials in *Lundenwic* definitely dating to the Early Saxon period.

Two of the vessels were recovered completely intact. Most of them were made in chaff-tempered ware, were rounded and had slight variations in profile. Some molten glass and copper alloy fragments were found, probably remains of goods burned on the funeral pyre. A silver brooch set with four cut garnets was also found, as well as a necklace of 19 amber beads.

The burials are of great significance. Previous evidence from the area had suggested that activity in *Lundenwic* might have first occurred in the 6th century. This discovery not only supports that theory, but also gives new clues to the extent and status of the settlement in its formative phases.

(Information from Andy Leonard in *Archaeology Matters*, Issue 23, published by the Museum of London.)

## FAMILY RECORDS CENTRE TO CLOSE

A shock for historians and especially for genealogists was the announcement recently that the Family Records Centre in Clerkenwell was to close. The facilities are to be transferred to the National Archives headquarters at the transport hub of Kew, though it

has not yet been determined what services will be on offer.

This curtailment of service has been put down to financial restraints and the growing amount of information now available online. Then again, the National Archives has the duty to recover the full cost of putting its records online. At the moment the charge for individuals is £3.50 per document.

At least, all this should boost traffic on the North London Line – as this *Newsletter* will continue to call it – it is soon to be taken over by Transport for London and no doubt the absurd name Silverlink will disappear.

### **GOLDSMITH GRANDEUR**

An exhibition entitled *Secrets of the Goldsmiths' Company* will be staged at the splendid Goldsmiths' Hall from 5-31 March.

On display will be silver, historical documents, architectural designs, paintings and a variety of other intriguing and miscellaneous artefacts and objects which illustrate the Company's long and distinguished past. The exhibits come from the Company's own collections.

One of the oldest items is a Roman altar stone dating from the second century AD which was excavated during the building of the current hall in 1830. The Hall is the third on the same site – the Company purchased the plot in 1339.

Visitors will also have the bonus of seeing the beautiful interior of the building. Entrance is free.

### **NEW PUBLICATIONS**

The Society continues to work on new publications. *The Life and Times of the Brunswick, Bloomsbury* has recently been issued. There are also Occasional Papers on the Greville Estate, George Morland and Edward Irving in preparation. *Buried in Hampstead* has been completely reset, and *The Streets of Highgate* is being researched for publication in 2008.

### **HAMPSTEAD THEATRE ARCHIVE**

The Society is supporting a lottery application by Hampstead Theatre to make their archives available to the public.

### **AN ABBOT MEMBER**

On 9 August 2006 the monastic community at Downside Abbey elected our member Don Aidan Bellenger OBE as their new abbot. The Abbatial Blessing was conferred on Abbot Aidan by the Bishop of Clifton, The Right Reverend Declan Lang, before a packed church of nearly one thousand people on 10 December 2006. The heart of the service is the solemn prayer of blessing, during which the bishop invokes the gifts of the Holy Spirit on the new abbot. He is then presented with a copy of the Rule, the mitre, ring and crozier.

The Society sends Abbot Aidan all good wishes in his future role.

### **THE MIDDLESEX HERALDRY SOCIETY**

*Dr Andrew Gray writes:*

Our Society, which has hitherto been active mostly in west Middlesex, is actually interested in the heraldry of, and visible in, the whole historic county – including the City. Recently we have had a campaign to get listed by all the boroughs north of the Thames and west of the Lea, Camden included, and have been making contact with many local history, archaeological and antiquarian societies to set up reciprocal web links and other mutual benefits. We have also been looking into extending our dormant project, to catalogue all the heraldry in Middlesex churches, which hitherto has not extended further east than Willesden. Much of this can be seen on or deduced from our website [www.middlesex-heraldry.org.uk](http://www.middlesex-heraldry.org.uk).

Any member interested in the Society should contact Dr Gray at 53 New Road, E 1 1HH, or telephone 7247 2258. His email is [webmaster@middlesex-heraldry.org.uk](mailto:webmaster@middlesex-heraldry.org.uk).

### **CAMDEN'S PHOTOGRAPHER**

The face and camera of Nigel Sutton have been seen at pretty well all the important and many less important events in Camden for over forty years. As a photographer for the *Ham & High* he has been despatched to make sure that history is illustrated.

An exhibition of some of his work is now on show at Hampstead Museum at Burgh House. It runs until 13 May.

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of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 221  
May 2007

## University College School

*Thurs. 17 May, 7.30pm  
at the School, Frognal, NW3*

UCS began as a secular feeder to the newly-established University College in Gower Street in 1830, but this talk celebrates the 100th anniversary of the senior school's move to Hampstead on 27 July 1907 – the junior branch had already settled at Holly Hill in 1891.

When the school was founded, educational reform was in the air, and UCS was one of the first schools to teach modern languages and sciences. In 1831 it banned corporal punishment, and it was known for its relaxed structure of discipline and tuition. The move to Hampstead was probably prompted by the exodus of sympathetic parents away from Bloomsbury into the suburbs.

Notable 'old boys' (called Old Gowers) include (apart from Peter Barber, who is our chairman for the talk): Roger Bannister, Richard Arnell, Walter Bayes, Dirk Bogarde, Joseph Chamberlain, Henry Doulton, Joseph Duveen, Ford Madox Ford, Frederic Leighton, Will Self, Walter Sickert, Stephen Spender and Arnold Wesker.

Our speaker is Nigel Watson, who is writing a history of UCS, to be published this year (possibly in time for the talk). He is also the author of a number of school histories, including those for Latymer Upper School and the North London Collegiate. Son of a Yorkshire farmer, Mr Watson lives in Wensleydale.

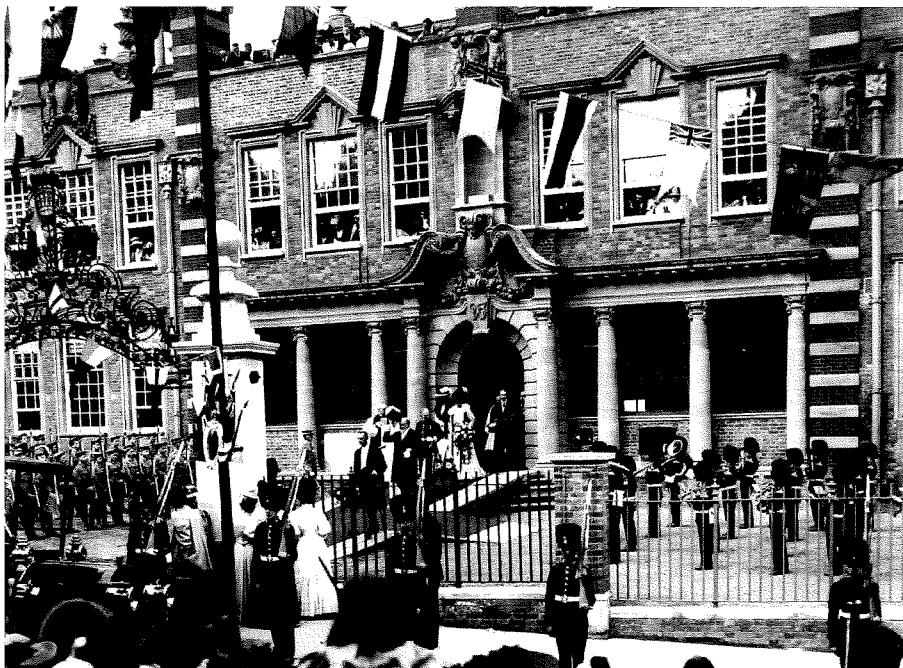
Members coming by car may like to know that there is car parking in the grounds of the school. Just ask the guard at the barrier off Lower Gate.

## The Annual Meeting and the Hampstead Tube

*Thurs. 21 June, 6.30pm  
Crowndale Centre, Eversholt Street, NW1*

Only a month before University College School was opened in the presence of the King and the Archbishop of Canterbury, Hampstead residents were able to view Lloyd George opening a section of what would be known as the Northern Line. The Hampstead Tube, as it was then called, ran from Charing Cross to Golders Green, with a branch at Camden Town to what is now Archway station. All of its original stations remain open, except South Kentish Town – but the building survives. There was a plan

*Opening of the new UCS building in Frognal, by King Edward VII, in July 1907.*



for a stop by the Bull & Bush in Hampstead, and indeed there are platforms there, though no station was built.

Our speaker on this underground railway that had so much effect on most of Camden is Roger Cline.

His talk will be at 7.30pm on the second floor of this new venue, which is at the northern end of Eversholt Street, appropriately near to Mornington Crescent station. The building, converted from a main Sorting Office, is above a terminus of the Pneumatic Dispatch Railway which once received mail via a tunnel from Euston Station.

As usual on AGM evenings, we will be starting at 6.30pm for refreshments, with the business meeting at 7pm.

Nominations are invited for officers and Council members. These should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay (address on back of *Newsletter*). The present holders are as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington  
VICE PRESIDENT: Dr Ann Saunders  
CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade  
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay  
TREASURER: Henry Fitzhugh  
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline  
RESEARCH TEAM LEADER: Steve Denford  
PUBLICATIONS (postal sales) Roger Cline  
PUBLICATIONS (bookstall sales) Sheila Ayres  
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Sue Palmer  
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough  
ARCHIVIST: vacant  
AUDITOR: Geoffrey Harris

Council members: Sheila Ayres, Caroline Cooper, Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven.

## ADVANCE NOTICE

Please put these dates in your diary:

19 July: Alan Powers, architectural critic of *The Spectator*, will discuss our new publication on the iconic Brunswick Centre. At the Education Centre of the Foundling Museum.

25 July: Annual Outing (see separate item in this Newsletter)

There are no events in August.

## The Summer Outing

This year's outing is earlier than usual and also on a weekday – this is due to availability at Moggerhanger Park.

The outing is on Wednesday, 25 July. We shall be visiting the village of Elstow in Bedfordshire, with guided tours around the Moot Hall and Museum and the Abbey Church of St Mary and St Helena. The Moot Hall is a 16th-century timber-frame market house and now a museum illustrating 17th-century English life. Elstow Abbey, founded in 1078, was one of the richest monastic institutions in its heyday, but was dissolved in 1539. It was reduced in size during the reign of Elizabeth and became a parish church in which John Bunyan was baptised.

In the afternoon there will be a guided tour of Moggerhanger Park. This house was remodelled by Sir John Soane and has recently been restored to its 1812 appearance. The grounds, currently under restoration, were landscaped by Humphry Repton.

A booking form is enclosed with this *Newsletter*.

## BELSIZE UPDATES

We are nearly sold out of *The Streets of Belsize* and are considering either a reprint (with notes) of the latest (1991) edition or a completely new edition. How much has the Belsize area changed in the last sixteen years? Can you help us survey the area and report changes. Comments, corrections, improvements etc will be welcomed by Christopher Wade, either by letter to 28 Willoughby Road, NW3 1SA or by email to christopherwade@hampsteadnw3.fsnet.co.uk

## HAMPSTEAD CENTENARIES

As mentioned earlier in this *Newsletter*, this year marks the centenary of both University College School in Frognal and the opening of the Hampstead Tube. It is also the centenary of the Hampstead Garden Suburb. To mark this remarkable trio, Hampstead Museum is mounting an exhibition at Burgh House from 10 June until 16 September.

## EMBARRASSING NAMES

It is interesting to note on page 68 of the Society's publication, *Streets of St Pancras*, that in 1983 Camden councillors proposed to drop the name of a block of flats opposite Old St Pancras Church. It had been named, since its erection soon after the war, Cecil Rhodes House, from the famous colonialist who had had connections with St Pancras and whose family have a monument in the churchyard.

The councillors proposed that the block be renamed Robert Mugabe House, but the plan was blocked by opposition from the residents. Now, if that had gone through .....

## Frank Cole

We have heard with much sadness of the death of Frank Cole, formerly Camden's Director of Libraries and Arts and vice president for many years of this Society.

*Jane Ramsay writes:*

Frank Cole (born 1921) died on 26 March at the age of 86. He was a founder-member of this Society, and has always been a loyal and enthusiastic supporter. We shall miss his friendship and advice.

He was an only child, from a humble background, always fond of books and reading, and won a scholarship to Colchester Grammar School. He left at 16, and in 1937 entered local government service in Colchester Public Library. During the war he served in the Royal Artillery and his postings included Burma - he was a strong supporter of the Burma Association.

On his return, he worked in Swindon and Great Yarmouth libraries, and in 1951 he was appointed as Deputy Librarian of Paddington. In 1959 he moved to Hampstead as Deputy Borough Librarian. When the London boroughs amalgamated in 1965, he became Deputy Director of Camden Libraries and Arts, becoming Director in 1975. He served on the Library Advisory Council for three years and helped to produce the report 'Future Development of Libraries'. He was a member of the committee of the VCH for Inner Middlesex.

He retired in 1982, with a reputation as an outstanding librarian and bookman, who could be approached for advice and guidance on all matters relating to the world of books, literature and libraries. His staff regarded him as fair, approachable, and encouraging of young and latent talent. His interests ranged widely, and included architecture and antiquities, churches, history, military history, and especially local history.

*John Richardson writes:*

I first encountered Frank when the boroughs were merged and I was chairman of the Libraries and Arts Committee. He was then deputy to Bill Maidment, and really there was no doubt at all that when Bill retired his replacement should be Frank Cole. Frank was a knowledgeable, kindly, funny and generous person and we shall miss him at annual meetings which he invariably attended.

### NEW ARCHIVIST FOR CAMDEN

Following upon the retirement of Malcolm Holmes as Camden's archivist, we welcome his replacement, Tudor Allen. He was previously, for eight years, archivist for the London Borough of Redbridge.

## Clive Smith

Clive Smith, the genial host of the monthly postcard fairs at the Royal National Hotel in Bloomsbury died in January, aged 70. He also ran the shop called 'Memories' in Brent Street, Hendon which was a wonderful place for serendipity, full of postcards, ephemera, pictures, magazines and who knows what else. You could spend an afternoon there, have a chat and a cup of tea with Clive and never be hurried or chivvied. He also had the distinction of pioneering local history publications in the modern era with his photographic booklets of north London areas.

I am always on the lookout for illustrations, and Clive was an enormous - and generous - help. He will certainly be missed in the postcard world, but there are many local people who liked to browse in his shop and who will remember his knowledge and cheeriness. A sad loss. His sons, David and Phillip will, we hope, carry on the business.

**John Richardson**

## An Archbishop re-interred

Martin Morton has sent us a cutting from *The Tablet* which records that the last Archbishop of Narbonne, Arthur Richard Dillon, was finally laid to rest in his old cathedral recently amid great pomp after lying in St Pancras churchyard for more than 200 years.

His remains were found in 2004 during excavations of the churchyard for the new terminus for the Channel tunnel link. They included a set of finely wrought gold and porcelain dentures - a French innovation of the time.

Dillon, the son of an Irish Jacobite officer, was born in France in 1721 and became Archbishop and Primate of France in 1763. After the French Revolution, he refused to swear allegiance to the Republic and fled to London where he died in 1806. The archdiocese disappeared with his departure.

The enlightened prelate presided over all manner of public works, such as the construction of canals, dykes, roads, bridges and harbours. Fittingly, his coffin was placed on a barge which sailed in state along the Canal de la Robine - one of the canals he had had built - to Narbonne, where it was then conveyed in colourful procession along medieval streets, to the cathedral.

Alas, Archbishop Dillon was reburied without his dentures. They were exhibited in the Museum of London for World Smile Day in 2006 and now form part of a private collection.

## The York and Albany

We have in previous *Newsletters* mentioned the proposed conversion of the pub York and Albany, at the Regent's Park end of Parkway. It has been empty for many years, causing much consternation, in particular in the Camden Civic Society. Its future has been championed by Marion Kamlish, who was able to prevent internal modifications that John Nash, its architect, would not have approved. She writes:

'Sighs of relief all round when the news arrived that the new owner had reversed his decision to rename the tavern 'Magnolia', so thankfully the York and Albany it remains.

In just over a year Gary Love, and his architect Alan Chandler of ALT, have worked miracles. The state in which the Crown Estate had sold this building was far worse than anyone had realised, and without Gary's swift intervention it would soon have fallen to the ground.

Having now been inside the Y & A in person, rather than just in my head, I can report that Nash's original concept has only been compromised when planning regulations have so demanded. As much of the original fabric as possible has been either repaired, or rescued and used elsewhere. Lime plaster has been used throughout, the black pottery sets both outside and inside the coach-house re-instated, the listed, domed roof light meticulously repaired, and reclaimed wooden floor boards grace much of the interior of the main building.

The new tower pod is clad in matching stucco (and thankfully not in white tiles as we had feared) and has been skilfully designed so as to minimise its impact on Park Village East, its narrow frontage housing a lift, whilst the wider rear portion accommodates two innovative round bedrooms with circular beds.

Each of the hotel's ten bedrooms is to be 'styled' by a famous name from the worlds of ballet, theatre or fashion. This eclectic mix may prove not to be to everyone's taste, but at least these bedrooms won't be boring. The York and Albany's spacious basement incorporates an informal restaurant and a viewable kitchen, whilst the ground floor houses a bar and a more formal dining area which leads on to an expertly paved York stone courtyard.

Although it is highly regrettable that the Crown Estate reneged on their commitment to reinstate Nash's canted bays and colonnade, the new owner could hardly be expected to bear this financial burden when he was not required to do so. However, my hope is that, one day, a rich benefactor will appear and fund this reinstatement, so that once again, the Y & A can be viewed in its full glory.

In the meantime, Gary hopes to be open for business around the end of June, at which point we should all raise our glasses and thank him for having rescued a truly significant piece of our local history.'

### A SEAL HISTORY

Those of us who went on the outing to Seal in 2005, the village near Sevenoaks where the Marquesses of Camden had a country house, will remember that we were shown round the historic landmarks by a team of helpful local historians. They have now completed a history of the locality and the book, 272 pages, 60 illustrations, will be published this autumn, cost £20, but at a pre-publication price of £15 plus £3.50 postage/packing to members of the Society. Order forms can be obtained from Peter Woodford whose address is below.

### MEMORIES OF HEATH MOUNT SCHOOL

A booklet has recently been published by Douglas Farmiloe, now in his nineties, containing reminiscences of his time as a pupil at Heath Mount School which was once at the top of Heath Street. Mr Farmiloe entered the school in 1924, eight years after Evelyn Waugh had left, but they both had the same headmaster, J Granville Grenfell. Mr Farmiloe records that Waugh was a notorious bully, and was an especial nuisance to the young Cecil Beaton. Ian Wallace, who was a regular on the BBC's *My Music* programme, became a pupil a year after Farmiloe left.

The school is now at Woodhall Park, near Hertford.

Copies of the booklet entitled *A Memoir of a Hampstead Schoolboy*, (A5, 16pp text with illustrations), may be obtained from Patrick Streeter, Old Heath Mount School Association, Watermans End Cottage, Matching Green, Harlow, Essex, CM17 0RQ. It costs £2.99 inc. post and packing.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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Our website: [www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety](http://www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety)

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 222

Jul 2007

## The Brunswick Centre

Thursday, 19 July, 7.30pm

Education Centre, Lower Ground Floor, Foundling Museum, 40 Brunswick Square, WC1. (North side of the Square)

The Society recently published an excellent book on the building and subsequent history of the Brunswick Centre, by Clare Melhuish. As members may know, the Centre has recently been renovated and looks much better than before.

This month we will have two speakers to talk about the Centre. One is the author herself, and the other the architectural critic of *The Spectator* and historian, Alan Powers. The speakers will discuss the effect of this iconic multi-purpose building complex on architects in the past 35 years.

The Centre began as a private development, superseding some streets on the old Foundling Hospital estate. Designed by Patrick Hodgkinson in the early 1960s, it fell foul, unfortunately for the developers, to legislation that made it necessary for them to compensate the residents and tenants of the streets that were demolished. This made the project less viable. Camden Council then took over the housing side of the project, but hadn't the money to complete it to the architect's plan, such as painting over the concrete exterior. Thus, the borough was rewarded with a rain streaked concrete building that few people liked.

The publication, *The life and times of the Brunswick, Bloomsbury*, is available at £7.50 plus £1.20 postage if you can't obtain one at the meeting.

## OPEN HOUSE

That celebrated annual event, the London Open House, will this year be held 15-16 September. Unfortunately, they have not yet finalised the buildings that will be open, but hopefully, we shall have this information in the September *Newsletter*.

Meanwhile, the list of buildings will be available mid August on [www.openhouse.org.uk](http://www.openhouse.org.uk), or by sending an A4 SAE envelope (65p stamp) and a cheque for £3 payable to London Open House, 4th Floor, 297 Euston Road NW1 3AQ.

## The Annual Outing

Wednesday, 25 July

There are still some seats on the coach for this year's Outing. We are visiting the historic village of Elstow in the morning and nearby Moggerhanger Park in the afternoon. At Elstow we will have guided tours of the Moot Hall and Museum and of the Abbey church of St Mary and St Helena.

The Moot Hall is a timber-framed market house of the 16th century. It is now a museum illustrating 17th-century English life, with particular reference to John Bunyan, who was born and brought up in Elstow.

Elstow Abbey was founded in 1078 by Countess Judith, niece of William the Conqueror. It became one of the richest of the 106 Benedictine nunneries existing at the time. In its heyday in the 14th century it was twice its present size. The Abbey was dissolved in 1539 and during Elizabeth's reign the church was reduced to its present size.

An hour will be left free at lunchtime for exploring the rest of the village. On Elstow Green is the stump of a cross, damaged during the Reformation, which marks the site where the annual May Fair was held, described by Bunyan in *The Pilgrim's Progress*. Elsewhere in the village there is a row of Tudor cottages.

Members can bring their own packed lunch or eat at the Red Lion.

At Moggerhanger we will have a guided tour of the house, followed by tea. The house was recast for Godfrey Thornton and his son, Stephen between 1791 and 1812, by Sir John Soane. It was used as the Bedfordshire County Sanatorium from 1919 to 1987, but it has recently been rescued and restored to its 1812 appearance. It is Grade I listed and contains a wealth of Soane's characteristic interior detailing. The 33-acre grounds, currently under restoration, were landscaped by Repton.

A booking form with price and pick-up arrangements was included in the previous *Newsletter*. If you have lost this and want to come, please ring our Secretary, Jane Ramsay (7586 4436).



'Dido and Lady Elizabeth Murray at Kenwood'. Attributed to Zoffany. By kind permission of the Earl of Mansfield, Scone Palace, Perth, Scotland.

## Dido at 18th-century Kenwood

The story of Dido Elizabeth Belle, the beautiful young black girl who lived at Kenwood during the 18th century, has taken a fascinating new turn.

A description of her early life at Kenwood was first published twenty-three years ago in 1984, in *Camden History Review* 12, a small publishing coup for the Society. Many researchers and educators have since picked up on that story. An American law professor, James Oldham, unearthed a relevant letter from Lord Mansfield, Lord Chief Justice of the King's Bench: this is shown in the exhibition, noted below, now on display at Kenwood. Written in 1786, it begins "My head is so bad that I cannot pursue a thought" and ends "this letter is wrote by Dido I hope you will be able to read it". That indicates that Dido spent her last years at Kenwood employed as her great uncle's amanuensis when he was becoming too ill to manage without help. She had graduated by then from her useful employment in the fashionable occupation as dairy superintendent of her teen years to one that required a good education and brain. This indicated her eminent uncle's trust in her reliability. Four years later he died on 20 March 1793, and at the end of the same year on 5 December, she married a man called John Daviniere at St George's Hanover Square, and moved into her own home where she brought up a family. Sadly, Dido died when only 43 in 1804 and was buried in St George's burial ground, but her remains are no longer in existence due to 'modernisation' of churchyards in crowded London. Due to the forethought of Lord Mansfield in giving Dido her freedom, and leaving her a substantial bequest, it is now known that after Kenwood she led a comfortable life raising her family in London's latest fashionable West End.

These new facts, and many more, have been discovered by the genealogist, Sarah Minney. Some of the information has been published in a brief BBC programme, and also in magazine articles, but Mrs Minney plans in time to publish the full story of Dido and what happened to her after Kenwood, and of her family and their descendants.

As well as these enticing developments, Dido's story and much more is currently on display in an exhibition at Kenwood called, *Mansfield, Slavery and Justice; a Public and Private Legacy* (until 2 September). Entry is free.

The exhibition centres on the famous picture, reproduced above, *Dido and Lady Elizabeth Murray*, borrowed from the present Earl of Mansfield's collection in Scone Palace. It depicts Dido as a young girl, dressed in rather fanciful but grand clothes, arm in arm with her half cousin, Lady Elizabeth Murray, with whom she had spent her childhood at Kenwood. Both children were brought up by the Judge and his wife, and his two older nieces, one of whom, Lady Anne Murray, kept the amazingly detailed Kenwood Account Book of 1785-93 (also on show). This contains information about the household life at Kenwood, including the provision for Dido. In the painting, presumably commemorating their friendship, the girls are strolling in the grounds of Kenwood with the artificial lake and its fashionable 'dummy bridge' in the background, and beyond that there is a view of St Paul's Cathedral which used to be visible from the slope at the rear of the house.

*Camden History Review* 12 is available from the Society or Camden Local Studies and Archives.

Gene Adams





*Goodall's yard behind Royal College Street.*

## Advance Notice

Please put the following in your diary:

*August:* No event

*20 September:* The launch of the revised edition of *Buried in Hampstead*. The book was first published in 1986 and has been extensively revised. Our speaker will be Richard Hill of Richard Griffiths architects, responsible for preparing the Heritage Grant application for for the ground's renovation. At Burgh House.

*18 October:* Launch of a new Occasional Paper, *The Greville Estate: the history of a Kilburn neighbourhood*. Speakers are the authors, Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms. At the Crowndale Centre.

## MORE CLOSURE AT THE FAMILY RECORD CENTRE

The excellent *Newsletter* of the Archives for London organisation has recently brought us up to date on the closure of the Family Record Centre in Clerkenwell. The General Register Office has announced that it will be closing its section of the FRC from April 2006. They expect that the public will in future use the electronic index to births, marriages and deaths on the internet. Unfortunately this will not be complete by the time the FRC closes. Those not available on the internet may be consulted in the usual index books or microfiche at National Archives in Kew.

As the *Newsletter* points out, for many researchers the ability to use an online index and then order the relevant certificate will be a boon. The millions who do not yet have access to the internet, are likely not to be so enthusiastic.

## The Playing Card People

It is not generally known that in the 19th century the biggest manufacturer of playing cards in the country had its factory and offices in run-down Royal College Street, Camden Town.

Charles Goodall, having been apprenticed to a card maker in Piccadilly until 1820, set up his own business in Lisle Street, Soho. He moved to Great Pulteney Street six years later and in 1833/4 leased 12-18 Royal College Street in some of the first premises built in that road.

His business expanded and he took on nos. 20 and 22 plus a former gun factory on land behind, which ran down to the Fleet river. When stamp duty on cards was reduced in the 1850s the business grew even larger and by 1913 Goodall's was producing 2 million packs per annum, more than all other British manufacturers put together. The firm used twenty horse-drawn delivery vans.

For various reasons the firm declined in the twentieth century and eventually sold out to its main rival, De La Rue, and the name of Goodall's disappeared in the 1970s.

An interesting book about the firm, written by Mike Goodall, details not only the history of the firm but a great deal about playing cards and their imagery. It is A4, full of illustrations, wire-bound, 192 pages. If you would like to buy a copy, please write to him at 2 Queenswood Road, St John's, Woking, GU21 8XJ. It costs £14 including postage.

## The Annual Meeting

A well attended meeting at the Crowndale Centre heard Roger Cline give an informative and entertaining history of the Northern Line. Roger was also responsible, together with Peter Woodford, for arranging the refreshments for the evening, for which we thank them.

Officers and committee members elected were:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington  
VICE PRESIDENT: Dr Ann Saunders, Malcolm Holmes  
CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade  
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay  
TREASURER: Henry Fitzhugh  
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Roger Cline  
RESEARCH TEAM LEADER: Steve Denford  
PUBLICATIONS (postal sales) Roger Cline  
PUBLICATIONS (bookstall sales) Sheila Ayres  
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Sue Palmer  
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Joan Barraclough  
LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Richard Knight or his deputy  
AUDITOR: Geoffrey Harris

Council members: Sheila Ayres, Caroline Cooper, Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Sue Palmer, Dick Weindling, Robin Woolven.

## Publication Update

With this *Newsletter* is a flyer detailing the many publications that the Society has on sale. Many new members will probably be unaware of the range of titles that we have in stock, covering the whole of Camden. In particular, the much admired 'Streets' series is the most detailed topographical survey of the borough available.

## EDWARDIAN HAMPSTEAD

Under the auspices of Burgh House Museum, there will be a guided walk on 17 August (10.30 am) which explores Edwardian Hampstead. It will be led by the Museum Curator, Carol Seigel. Meet outside Burgh House. It costs £6. Reservations 7431 0144.

## NEW INTERNET SITES

The following information was supplied by Archives for London:

Ancestry.co.uk, in association with British Telecom, has launched online the British phone books 1880-1984, the contents of BT's collection of directories. The first records to be included are the phone books for London. When the site is complete it will contain in excess of 250 million names.

It is sometimes useful to know the value of money in the past compared with today. Go to <http://eh.net/hmit>. It is an American site and it includes the exchange rates with America from 1791, and such things as the price of gold 1257-2005.

The Royal Society is now making a selection of its lectures and seminars available as podcasts. Please do not write in to this *Newsletter* to have explained the mechanics of this. The editor has no idea. Best check the web: <http://www.royalsoc.ac.uk>

## SHOPPING HABITS

Recently established is a new Arts and Humanities Research Council-funded project to survey the impact of the supermarket on shopping habits in the 1950s and 1960s. They want to garner information via questionnaires. If you want to take part in this please contact Dr Dawn Nell, AHRC Consumer Landscapes Project, School of Management, University of Surrey, Guildford GU2 7XH. Tel: 01483 683109, Fax 01483 689511, or email [d.nell@surrey.ac.uk](mailto:d.nell@surrey.ac.uk)

## RAILWAY HERITAGE TRAIL

The Camden Railway Heritage Trust, which seeks to establish a heritage trail in the railway land from Primrose Hill down to Camden Lock, has sent us their second newsletter. In particular the Trust is anxious to safeguard the various horse tunnels beneath the old Camden Goods Yard, and also what remains of the Stationary Engine which once used to haul trains up from Euston station. It is also interested in the renovation of the Interchange building and its immediate surroundings. The Trust will be giving a talk at Camden Town library at the Crowndale Centre on 27 July. Details from Camden Railway Heritage Trust, 21 Oppidans Road, NW3 3AG. Tel: 7586 6632. Email: [Darleyp@aol.com](mailto:Darleyp@aol.com).

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Sep 2007

## Buried in Hampstead – an encore

*Thurs 20 Sept, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3*

Just over twenty years ago the result of eight years' zeal and labour of a CHS Research Group was published. *Buried in Hampstead*, a survey of the tombstones in the two Hampstead churchyards, edited by Christopher Wade, was a distillation of eight years of work, begun in 1976. And not too soon, for despite the appearance of longevity, many monuments were deteriorating and becoming illegible during those years.

Some famous people rest in peace there. John Constable of course, and the magnificently wordy tomb of the clockmaker, John Harrison is notable. But there is also Cyril Joad, the Brains Trust man, Norman Shaw the architect, the actor manager Beerbohm Tree, George du Maurier, Hugh Gaitskell, Eleanor Farjeon and many others.

As Christopher wrote in his introduction about what they found, "Here was social history – attitudes to life and death and the hereafter, in varying styles of poetry and prose; art history, ranging from Georgian symbolism through Victorian sentimentality, to twentieth-century reticence".

The book has been revised and is issued appropriately at the time of a bid to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant to conserve the churchyards. Our speaker will be Richard Hill of Richard Griffiths Architects, who wrote the conservation plan.

## The Greville Estate

*Thurs. 18 October, 7.30pm  
2nd floor, Crowndale Centre, Eversholt Street, NW1  
(virtually opposite Mornington Crescent station)*

The Greville estate is on the far west of Camden, east of Maida Vale and south of Belsize Road. Greville Place, built by George Pocock, was its first development, c.1820, together with villas along the main road, called Kilburn Priory after the long disappeared convent dissolved by Henry VIII. Pocock's son, John Pocock, left a fascinating diary of his life in

his father's house there and his subsequent travels in South Africa and Australia, which our Society originally published in 1980. Another important resident in the area was William Friese-Greene, a pioneer of cinematography.

The Estate is the subject of our new Occasional Paper, and it will be presented by its authors, Marianne Colloms and Dick Weindling. Copies will be on sale at the talk.

## Advance Notice

Please put these dates in your diary:

*Thurs 15 Nov:* still to be confirmed

*Thurs 13 Dec, 7.30pm.* Launch of *Streets of Highgate*, at the Crowndale Centre

*Thurs 17 Jan, 7.30pm* Rickie Burman, Director of the Jewish Museum, talking about the Museum's past, present and future. At Burgh House.

## A NEW VICE-PRESIDENT

We are pleased to announce that Gillian Tindall, writer and long-term member of the Society, has accepted our invitation to be a Vice-President of the Society.

## MARCHMONT STREET EXHIBITION

The Marchmont Street Association, in co-operation with Camden Local Studies and Archives, has mounted an exhibition chronicling the development of Marchmont Street from its inception in the early 1800s to the present day. It includes photographs of the entire street from 1903 and 1929-30.

The exhibition may be seen at Camden Local Studies at Holborn Library until 23rd October. The Centre is closed on Wednesdays and Sundays.

## RECORDING OURSELVES

It has been pointed out that for a history society we are very lax in recording ourselves – visually that is. We don't have photographs of outings, meetings and events that historians may want in a hundred years time. So, do please turn up with a camera sometimes and take pictures. Preferably, an old fashioned camera that results in prints, rather than a digital camera which somehow hardly ever results in anything permanent.

# The Camden Town Murder

Some idea of 1907 Camden Town is gained from the postcard of Great College Street in John Richardson's *Camden Town and Primrose Hill Past* (1991) (also in *Camden Town 1791-1991: A Pictorial Record* publ. by Camden Council in 1991).

The landmark public house, opposite Camden Town North London line station and its adjacent bridge, was the Eagle. These structures survive, the pub now the Grand Union, and the station is now Camden Road. Camden Town then was a seedy, noisy, smoky railway and transport centre. Yet this postcard conveys something different, with its shops and Edwardian ladies.

It was dark, of course, the fateful night of 11/12 September 1907, and its Camden Town demi-monde was about to be exposed in the red tops of the day.

Earlier that year Bert Shaw, a railway cook, and domestic servant Phyllis (christened Emily) Dimmock, had moved in to lodgings in Great College Street. Months later they switched to two rooms at 29 St Paul's Road (now Agar Grove). They got by, but there was rather less income than when Phyllis had been working the streets. She again sought men that earned her money. Bert's night shifts, and the landlady's early-to-bed, late-to-rise routine, contrived to allow covert 'business' in her lodgings.

Phyllis liked the Eagle, especially its automatic gramophone. On 6 September she was there with Robert Wood, an artist, and both were seen by a friend. In the coming days Phyllis, Robert and other 'friends' again met in the Eagle. Robert liked to visit pubs and consort with prostitutes.

After noon on Thursday 12 September, Bert Shaw arrived home and found their rooms in a mess. Naked on the bed was the body of Phyllis, her throat cut.

For a fortnight there was no suspect in the mystery, but on 7 October, at Clerkenwell Magistrates' Court, Robert Wood was charged with murder. Marshall Hall KC was given the defence case and Wood's trial excited great public interest. The *Daily Mirror* front page of 13 December depicted "... the third act of the Camden Town murder drama ... Robert Wood ... in the dock at the Central Criminal Court ..." A great crowd was outside and the court was full.

Wood pleaded not guilty. Marshall Hall conducted a brilliant and successful defence, in which the accused became the first man to be acquitted of murder after giving evidence on his own behalf. It was the making of Marshall Hall and the saving of Wood.

Walter Sickert has perpetuated the Camden Town Murder in a large group of drawings and paintings.

## Daily Mirror

THE MORNING JOURNAL WITH THE SECOND LARGEST NET SALE.

No. 1,286. FRIDAY, DECEMBER 13, 1907.

See To-day's  
'DAILY  
MAIL'



CAMDEN TOWN MURDER MYSTERY: ROBERT WOOD ON TRIAL FOR HIS LIFE AT THE NEW BAILEY.



"What Shall We Do for the Rent?" and other works are suggestive of prostitution and seedy Camden Town. The male model used by Sickert is said to have been the accused, Robert Wood.

Sir David Napley recreated the story in *The Camden Town Murder* (1987). The same title was given to an episode of the television drama series *Shadow of the Noose* (BBC, 1989).

Lester May

### BIRTHS, DEATHS ... AND DELAYS

Due to a typing error in the last *Newsletter* we stated that the General Register Office would be supplying details of births, deaths and marriages since 1837 on the internet as from April 2006. We should have said 2008. However, the situation is now much worse for the latest estimate is mid to late 2009 – and that's a guess. Meanwhile, the traditional method of finding information from the paper volumes is soon to be a thing of the past, for the indexes are leaving the Family Records Centre this coming October and going into storage in Dorset. There will still be a micro-fiche facility at the Centre, but most people agree that that is a tedious and difficult way to research. Even this will be moved in March from Clerkenwell to Kew because the Clerkenwell building is urgently required for another purpose.

No doubt in 2009, or whenever, the internet site will crash from overuse on the first day.

## No-one at Home at Kenwood

In 1998 John Harris published his book *No Voice from the Hall: Early memories of a Country House Snooper*.

Harris, an inveterate enthusiast for country houses, began his travels around the country looking for them soon after the last war when many of them were at their lowest ebb, virtually abandoned by owners unable to afford their upkeep and without the servants needed to keep them up to scratch. Many architectural gems disappeared in this period. It is a fascinating, if very depressing book.

One story he tells concerns Kenwood House. In the winter of 1946 he was staying with a friend, Keith Blanchard, who was lodging at Lady Unwin's house, Wyldes. Blanchard, as part of his architectural training, had to do a measured drawing of a building and chose the convenient Kenwood House. The House was then closed to the public but Lady Unwin used her influence on behalf of her lodger and arranged an appointment with the House's caretaker. John Harris went along to help in the measuring task. He writes:

'Early in the morning we arrived, as requested, at a door on the stable side, to be let in by a caretaking lady of the Mrs Mop sort. We were given tea and then led upstairs, and further up, to the attic floor and into the roof space. I remember it was extremely cold. We were taken to a small door leading onto the roof and the cold really hit us.

'Mrs Mop retreated, but not before pressing a key into our hands. She was going to shop in Highgate Village: if we finished before she returned, would we let ourselves out and leave the key under the dustbin?

'The roof space was entirely taken up with Iveagh Bequest pictures. There they all were, with no protection, just one framed canvas leaning against another, not even with a sheet of cardboard between them. I lifted one frame back: it was Romney's *Lady Hamilton*; another - Turner's *Lee shore*; a third - no less than Vermeer's *Guitar Player*.....'

The two decided they needed to come back the day after next and told the caretaker this. She said she would be out but she would leave the key under the dustbin for them.

(John Harris's book, published by John Murray, ISBN 0-7195-5567-1, price when published in 1998 £17.99)

## London Remembers

www.LondonRemembers.com is a new site for historical research and genealogy in London. It is free to use, and the result of a hobbyist's love of the city and its history.

The site aims to map all of London's memorials - the plaques, monuments and statues that pepper the city and often go unnoticed. The famous blue plaque system, extensive though it is, only tells half the story. LondonRemembers treats all memorials equally: the rich and famous, the poor and humble, the well-known and the obscure, as well as those who have given their lives for our country.

In March this year, the 900th memorial was added to the site. Each is photographed and accurately mapped. The text is transcribed and contextualised with pictures and background information. All are cross-referenced, so you can see, for example, that there are already ten memorials to Dickens on the site and you can view each one.

**Richenda Walford**

### THE LAMAS CONFERENCE

This year's Local History Conference, staged by the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, has as its theme, Migration into London. It is on 17 November, 10-5, and this year is at the City of London School for Girls at the Barbican.

Subjects of talks include the Medieval Jewish Community, the Black Presence in the 18th century, Little Italy, and the Rise and Fall of the German Community.

Tickets cost £10 (£7 to members of LAMAS) and can be obtained from Local History Conference, 24 Orchard Close, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7LS. Make cheque to LAMAS and enclose sae.

### TERCENTENARY OF THE ANTIQUARIES

To celebrate its tercentenary, the Society of Antiquaries is staging a series of lectures beginning in September. Two of them are in London, the first being on 26 September (6.30) at St James's Church, Piccadilly, when the speaker will be David Starkey on the subject of *The Antiquarian Endeavour*. Tickets, if any remain, are £5. The final lecture will be at the BP Lecture Theatre at the British Museum on 26 June 2008, when the speakers will be Richard Bradley, David Cannadine and Carenza Lewis on the subject *The Future of the Past*. Tickets £10 including wine.

Other lectures are in Dublin, Edinburgh, Cambridge, Liverpool and Cardiff, all with eminent speakers. For further details or tickets contact The Society of Antiquaries of London, Burlington House, Piccadilly W1J 0BE, tel. 7479 7080, email: admin@sal.org.uk, or go on to website www.sal.org.uk.



*Englands Lane in quieter days – a postcard c.1905.*

## HUGH MATTHESON

Robert Leon, who many members will recall was the co-ordinator of the Society's Millennium project, is now living in the far west of Andalucia, from where he has sent us a copy of a very impressive local history magazine which covers the whole of Andalucia.

He tells us that he is about 15 minutes by car from Rio Tinto which the magazine will soon feature, and where there was a very big British presence when mining in the modern era began, until 1954.

The founder and driving force of the Rio Tinto Company in the earlier years was Hugh Mattheson, a devout Scottish presbyterian but also a shrewd business man. He lived at Heathlands in Hampstead from 1855 until his death in 1898. He established and endowed the Holy Trinity Presbyterian church and one of his relatives was one of its early ministers. Does anyone have any more information about Mattheson that Robert might make into an article for the magazine?

## BACK IN TIME

For those who missed the story in *The Observer* and elsewhere, we report that the vast clock that used to adorn the interior of St Pancras station is alive and now well in a back garden in the village of Thurgarton in Nottinghamshire. The story is an extraordinary one.

In the 1970s British Rail, by then fairly intent on closing St Pancras, sold off the great clock built by Dent, to a US collector for £250,000. But as workmen were taking the clock down, they dropped it and it smashed into small pieces. Instead of it all being put into a skip, a Mr Hoggard, who was a rail worker, gathered up the debris and put it on a train to Nottinghamshire and for 18 months he put it all together again. London Continental Railways, who have rather more sensitivity about their possessions than British Rail ever had, were very keen to restore Mr Hoggard's clock to the station to meet Eurostar travellers but unfortunately it was too fragile despite Mr Hoggard's care, and so a replica has been made based on the real thing which adorns the outside of Mr Hoggard's cottage.

Mr Hoggard, now 91, will be at the official reopening of St Pancras on 6 November.

## THE LYNDHURST ROAD SOCIETY

John Richardson has bought at an ephemera fair a 1915-16 membership card for the Lyndhurst Road Society in Hampstead. They met at the 'Coleridge Room' in an unspecified building. Speakers for the year were to include E E Newton, well known to Hampstead historians, Ernest Rhys and a Mrs Nevinson, presumably a relation of the painter. Does anyone have more information about this society?

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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Our website: [www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety](http://www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety)

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044



# newsletter

No 224

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Nov 2007

## From Fields to Gardens: the History of Lincoln's Inn Fields

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

Sue Palmer, who is Archivist of the Sir John Soane Museum, is our speaker in November to talk about the celebrated open space and the buildings, of which the Museum is one, or rather, several.

The Fields consisted of Purse Field and Cup Field and remained in agricultural use into the 17th century when an application to build a house there was fought off by nearby Lincoln's Inn and local parishes who proposed that the land should be converted to recreational use. This was agreed, but the proposal bore no fruit. In the 1630s the leases of the fields were acquired by William Newton who was allowed by the Crown to build 32 houses, most of which were complete by the 1640s, although he did agree that the open space at the centre should remain open.

The fields had an unfortunate history as a place of executions, such as those of Anthony Babington and Lord Russell, but the buildings eventually became fashionable, ideally placed for lawyers at the various Inns of Court.

## The Streets of Highgate A Launch and a culmination

Monday, 17 December, 7.00pm  
The Crowndale Centre, Eversholt Street, NW1

Thirty-five years ago Ian Norrie of the High Hill Bookshop in Hampstead High Street published, in association with the fledgling Camden History Society, *The Streets of Hampstead* by Christopher Wade. Ian was also responsible for funding two further volumes on Belsize and West Hampstead. Since that first publication in 1972, and especially in a concentrated burst since 1997, there have been a further eleven volumes, culminating in *The Streets of Highgate*, due to be launched with this talk in December.

This is a major publishing achievement in local history

without parallel, so far as we know, in London or indeed in the UK. Long-time members will also have noticed that volumes have grown in size and detail. The first *Streets of Hampstead* was 72 pages - *Kentish Town*, published last year, was 160 pages. The series will, we feel sure, be regarded by future local historians as not only a model of its kind but a solid base for information and more research.

Many members have contributed over the years with the research, writing and design. On your behalf this *Newsletter* thanks them for their work and congratulates them on getting, aptly enough, to the top of Highgate Hill, to complete the project. In practice work will go on, revising earlier volumes as titles sell out.

The latest volume takes in some parts that are not in Camden. Highgate Village is spread over four local authority areas - Camden, Islington, Haringey and Barnet, and it would be perverse, for example, just to research and describe one side of the High Street. So, where it was logical to do so, some parts outside of Camden have been included.

At our December meeting members of the research team will present some of their findings and generally entertain us with anecdotes and views. As it is our Christmas meeting there will also be mince pies and wine etc. at 7pm before the talk at 7.30.

Please note the date and the day of the week. These have been changed since our last Newsletter.

## Advance Notice

24 January: (Again a change of date) Ms Rickie Burman on the Jewish Museum. At Burgh House.

## TALKS AT LAMAS

The London & Middlesex Archaeological Society have a number of talks arranged. On 8 November the lecture will be on Hinemihi: the Maori Meeting House at Clandon Park, Surrey and on 10 January details of the recent archaeological work at St Paul's Cathedral, by John Schofield.

Talks are at the Museum of London (Terrace Room), beginning at 6.30pm. Refreshments available at 6pm. Admission is free and visitors are welcome. More details Jackie Kelly at the Museum 7814 5734.

## Camden History Review 31

Accompanying this *Newsletter* is the *Review* 31. This edition has a definite political slant. John Collins tells us of the machinations that beset the building of the first public library in St Pancras, lost and tucked away as it then was in those virtually carless days, in Highgate New Town. Richard Franklin and David Hayes contribute an invaluable survey of past MPs in what is now Camden. There have been some illustrious names including Thomas Wakley, Kenneth Robinson and Henry Brooke. John Major stood unsuccessfully for St Pancras North on two occasions before beginning his parliamentary career elsewhere.

Dermot Greene's article is about Eva Gore-Booth and Maeve de Markievicz in Hampstead. Eva, sister of Constance, a prominent Irish Republican, was a noted poet, suffragette and trade unionist. Her niece Maeve (the daughter of Constance), was also a republican and suffragette, but in addition became a painter of note.

Robin Woolven continues his studies of wartime and post-war St Pancras with a detailed examination of the great anti civil defence revolt by St Pancras council in the late '50s. And Keith Scholey deals with the radical history of Gray's Inn Road.

Isaac Snowman, the artist, is the subject of an article by Marianne Colloms and Dick Weindling who also contribute an article on the artists of West Hampstead studios in Sherriff Road, a previously unexplored array of Hampstead artists that inhabited these studios over a period of 100 years.

Once again, the *Review* is edited by David Hayes and handsomely designed by Ivor Kamlish.

## The Greville Estate

Marianne Colloms and Dick Weindling have been very busy of late. Not only two articles in the *Review* (see above) but the publication of *The Greville Estate: the history of a Kilburn neighbourhood*. This area has received comparatively little coverage in histories of Hampstead and our authors are to be congratulated on bringing so much of interest into print.

We begin with Kilburn Priory and Kilburn Wells and then go on to the gradual development of the area, the most upmarket being that of George Pocock who first of all constructed Greville Place at right-angles to the Edgware Road but at the time leading nowhere yet pointing at Abbey Road. However, it was a disastrous financial project for Pocock and he had to sell his holdings there. An account of the troubles he bore at the time is contained in *Diary of a Schoolboy*, written by his son John, published first by the Society and then in an enlarged form by Historical Publications.

The authors have been remarkably diligent in track-

ing down numerous resident artists, writers and other professional luminaries. They include George Orwell, John Spedan Lewis, A A Milne and David Bomberg.

This quarto book of 112 pages and 29 illustrations is on sale now at the CHS bookstall at meetings price £7.50. Or else it is obtainable by post from Roger Cline (please telephone him first on 7388 9889 to obtain the latest postage and packing charge).

## TANKS FOR THE MEMORY

Mr P Jennings tells us that towards the end of the First World War, the 'War Savings Movement' arranged a scheme whereby cities and towns that had contributed sufficient funds to the war effort would receive a 'presentation tank'. According to the April 1919 issue of the *Silver Bullet*, the official journal of the Movement, both Holborn and St Pancras boroughs qualified to receive a war-battered tank, retrieved from the battlefields of France and Flanders. Not all boroughs had suitable sites to display their trophy and declined the offer. Mr Jennings asks if any photographs exist of the Holborn and St Pancras tanks and are there newspaper reports of their arrival and what is known of their ultimate fate.

Mr Jennings is at 2 Eleanor Close, Lewes, Sussex BN7 1DD. If you have information please let him know but please also copy the *Newsletter*.

## THE LYNDHURST ROAD SOCIETY

Christopher Wade suggests, re the Lyndhurst Road Society mentioned in the last *Newsletter*, that the Coleridge Room featured on the membership card may have been in St John's, Downshire Hill. Sarah, daughter of the famous poet, lived in the road c.1829-37 and was a keen member of the church's congregation.

## LOCAL STUDIES CLOSURE

The Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn library will be closed from Monday 3 December to Saturday 8 December inclusive, so that a number of tasks can be undertaken which can't be done when the Centre is open.

## WOMEN PIONEERS

In December it will be 100 years since the election of the country's first female councillor, Miss R E Lawrence. She was a Hampstead councillor so Camden Local Studies and Archives are marking the anniversary with a display about her and two other trailblazing women in the borough's history: Britain's first qualified female doctor was Elizabeth Garrett Anderson, whose pioneering hospital for women was located in Euston Road, and the famous early feminist Mary Wollstonecraft, author of *A Vindication of the Rights of Women*, who lived in Somers Town. The exhibition opens on 1 December, though there will then be a gap during the Centre's closure (see above) until it closes on 31 January.

## THE SLAVE TRADE

At Burgh House is an exhibition *The Transatlantic Slave Trade: Hampstead Connections*. This does of course mark the bi-centenary of the abolition – at least by this country – of the slave trade.

This exhibition explores many surprising links to Hampstead, including William Davy, who defended a runaway slave in a landmark case and who indeed lived in Burgh House itself.

The exhibition will close on 27 January and then go on to Camden Local Studies at Holborn Library where it will reopen on 4 February and run until 22 April.

There is now online access on the CHS website to two articles by Gene Adams on Dido Belle (see *Newsletter* 222) and Olaudah Equiano (see *Camden History Review* 29). The Society's web site is as below:  
[www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety/](http://www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety/)

## They Came to London

The theme of this year's LAMAS Local History Conference is 1000 years of migration into London. The programme of talks is as follows:

*Some Images of the Medieval London Jewish Community c.1070-1190* (Joe Hillaby)  
*Holbein & the Hansa: a mercantile enclave in the heart of medieval London* (Dick Bluer)  
*The troublesome Black presence in 18th-century London* (Paul McGilchrist)  
*Little Italy in 19th-century London: Class or Community?* (Dr David Green)  
*The Rise and Fall of the German Community of London c.1815-1918* (Panikos Panayi)  
*Old Patterns, Fresh Faces: Recent Migrants to London* (Anne Kershen)

The Conference will be at the City of London School for Girls, Barbican on Saturday, 17 November, 10am-5pm. Tickets cost £10 (£7 to members of LAMAS) and can be obtained from Local History Conference, 24 Orchard Close, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7LS. Make cheque to LAMAS and enclose sae.

## HUGH MATHESON

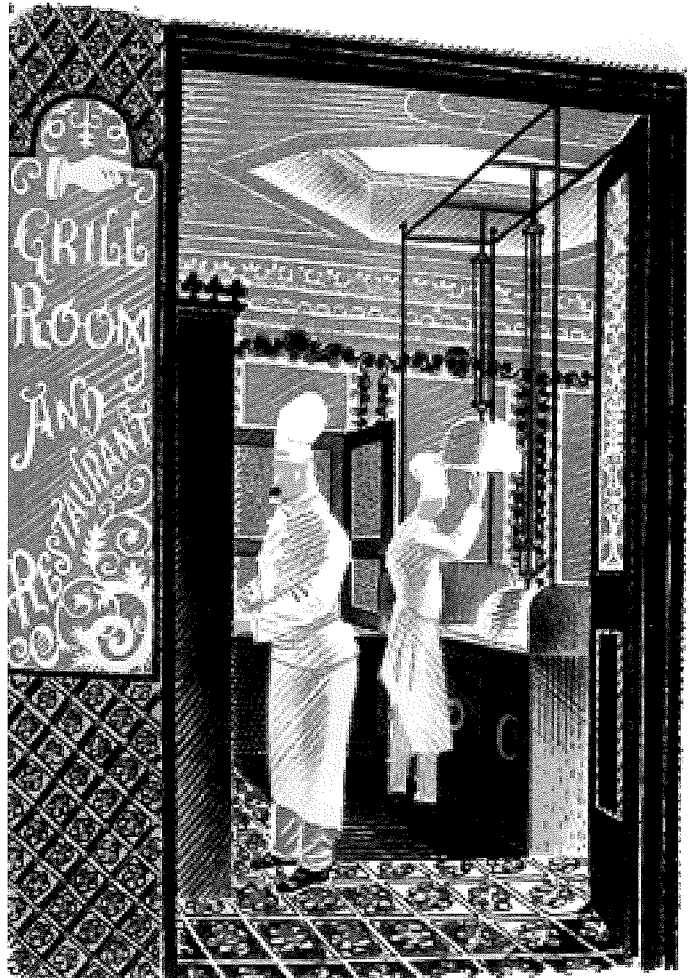
Robert Leon in our last *Newsletter* wondered if there was more information about Hugh Matheson, who founded Rio Tinto. Christopher Wade informs us of a comment about the religiously observant Mathesons, that "wherever business took them, they took the Gospel". Hugh Matheson's name is still on the foundation stone of what used to be a YMCA in Willoughby Road, but the building is now divided into luxury flats.

## Eric Ravilious

James Russell is researching material for a facsimile edition of *High Street* by Eric Ravilious, the celebrated artist. Originally published in 1938 the book contains lithographs of 24 shops and other businesses, and his job is to try and establish their identities and to explore their history.

He still has a few mysteries to solve, one of which is depicted here. It is a Grill Room, probably a West End restaurant. There could be artistic licence involved, but the skylight is particularly distinctive – it suggests Rules in Maiden Lane, but it is the wrong shape.

Does it ring any bells? If so, his address is 83 Quantock Road, Bristol BS3 4PQ (tel: 0117 966 2018). His email is [jdrussell2@hotmail.com](mailto:jdrussell2@hotmail.com)



*The mystery grill room, depicted by Eric Ravilious.*

## Another Centenary

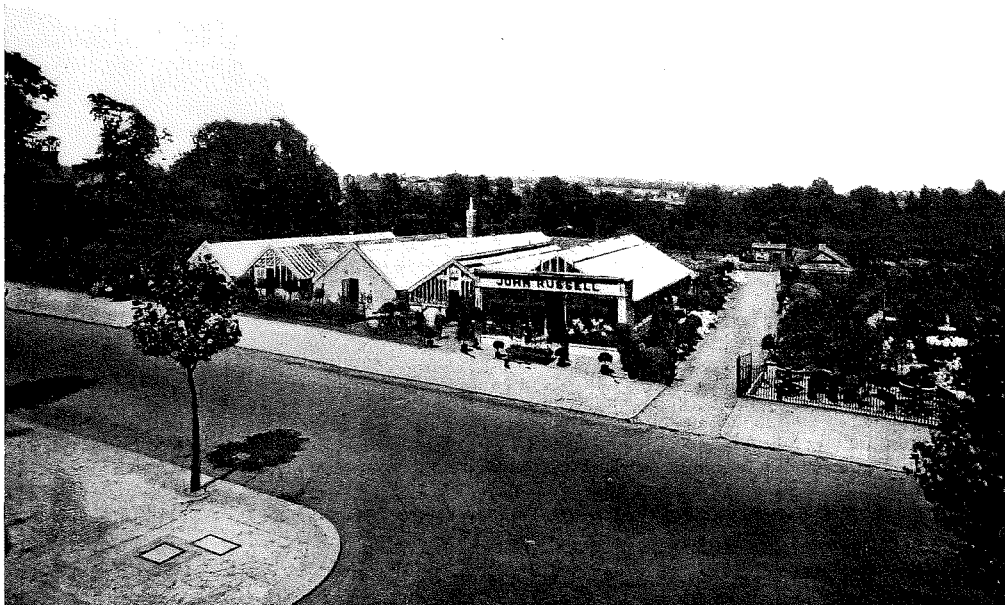
The *Newsletter* of the Heath and Hampstead Society reminds us that there is another Hampstead centenary this year, apart from the tube station, Hampstead Garden Suburb and University College School. This is the opening of the Quaker Meeting House in Heath Street.

In Hampstead the Quakers first met in the Vale of Health and then at the YMCA in Willoughby Road. They then bought Stamford House in Heath Street (where Constable had once lived), demolished it and erected the present Arts and Crafts building designed by Fred Rowntree - this was opened in November 1907.

There were three opening ceremonies, one for local dignitaries, one for local Quakers, and one for the workmen and their wives.

## The Russell Nurseries

Gene Adams has sent us the picture below of the old Russell Nurseries at Belsize Park c.1900-10. She says that it was presented to her by an elderly man at the time the Belsize Conservation Group was showing an exhibition of photographs of the building and development of the area, in 2000. The man said he had worked at Russell's in his youth. The tent-like building on the right marked John Russell survives,



and is still a florist. The railed enclosure with garden ornaments on the right of that, became and still is part of Belsize tube station.

## Walter Sickert and the Camden Town Nudes

At the beginning of the 20th century Walter Sickert (1860-1942) painted a remarkable series of female nudes which confirmed his reputation as one of the most important modern British artists.

An exhibition which has just opened at the Courtauld Gallery at Somerset House (runs until 20 January) is devoted to these radical works produced in Camden Town between 1905 and 1913. The uncompromising realism of the paintings, featuring iron bedsteads in the murky interiors of cheap lodgings, challenged artistic conventions and conveyed the tawdry atmosphere of Camden Town of the time.

They include four provocative paintings of the Camden Town Murder of 1907 (see *Newsletter* 223). To complement the exhibition a display of Sickert's drawings and prints will also be on show.

Also, Tate Britain is staging an exhibition from 13 February to 4 May entitled *Modern Painters: the Camden Town Group*. More details may be obtained online on [www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/11804](http://www.tate.org.uk/about/pressoffice/pressreleases/2007/11804).

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