

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 231

Jan 2009

The Stationary Winding Engines at Camden Town

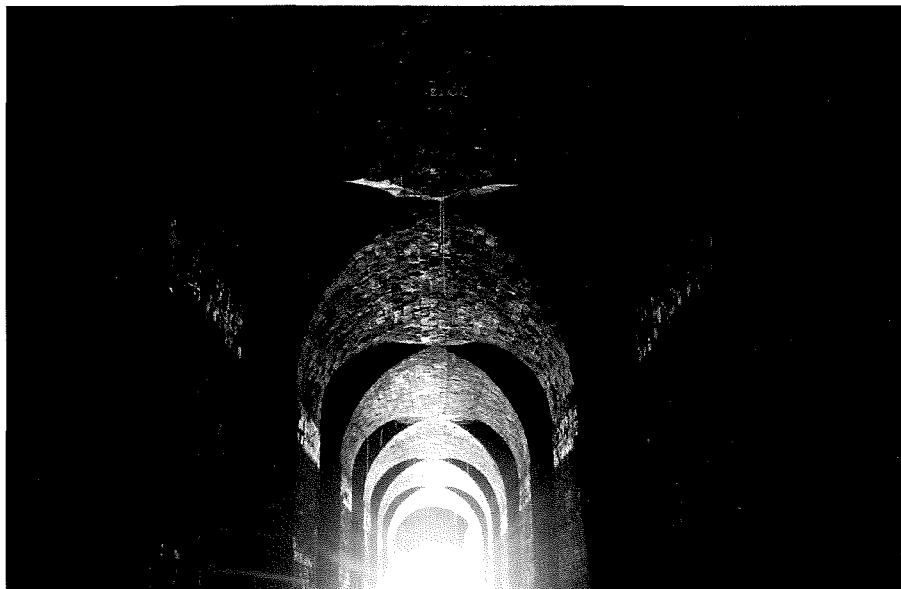
Thurs. 15 Jan, 7.30pm

Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre,
Belmont Street, off Chalk Farm Road, NW1

The 1830s saw the construction, under Robert Stephenson's supervision, of the London & Birmingham Railway, London's first main line and the largest civil engineering project yet attempted in the country. One of the major features of the approach to Euston was the Stationary Winding Engine House, which pulled trains by means of an endless rope out of the London terminus to Camden where they met their locomotives for the onward journey to Birmingham.

The massive vaulted structure beneath the West Coast Main Line that housed the engines remains in remarkable condition, and Camden Railway Heritage Trust (CRHT) recently made a photographic record of the engine house during a six-year structural audit. Peter Darley, Secretary of CRHT, will describe the planning design, construction and operation of the winding engines, and the present condition of the engine house, in an illustrated talk that will touch on other elements of Camden's remarkable railway heritage.

The extant vaulted structure at Camden Goods Yard, that once contained the Stationary Winding Engines.



The Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre in Belmont Street (a road opposite the Roundhouse) is a new venue for us. It is named after the leader of both St Pancras and Camden Councils in the 1960s.

The Strange History of Dr Thomas Southwood Smith of Highgate

Thurs. 19 Feb, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Southwood Smith (1788-1861) was a celebrated physician and sanitary reformer at a time of population explosion in London. In 1830 he published what became a standard work on fever, which demonstrated how the complaint often derived from the living conditions of the poor. He also helped to bring about the passing of the 1832 Anatomy Act, a controversial piece of legislation which made available to anatomists the bodies of unclaimed corpses from workhouses - this virtually ended the scandal of body snatching from new graves. Smith also achieved notoriety by carrying out the dissection of Jeremy Bentham, whose remains are today on display at University College. He also helped to found the Metropolitan Association for Improving the Dwellings of the Industrial Classes.

Smith was an occasional resident of Highgate, staying with relatives at a house called Hillside in Fitzroy Park between 1846 and 1856.

Our speaker in February is Isabel Raphael, the former headmistress of Channing School.

Advance Notice

Please put the following dates in your new diaries:
19 March: Steven Denford on Hornsey Past. At the Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre
16 April: John Liffen of the Science Museum, on Trevithick's London Railway of 1808. Venue to be announced.

21 May: Howard Spencer on the London blue plaques scheme. Venue to be announced.

Joan Barraclough

We are sorry to report the death of Joan Barraclough on 15 November. Joan joined the Camden History Society in 1982 and was a dedicated member until her death. Despite failing eyesight and frailty she attended meetings to virtually the end of her life, however offbeat the venue. She was also a regular on Camden outings and invariably reported on them. She was our publicity officer from 1996 to 2007.

In the absence of her parents in China, Joan and her sister Molly, were brought up by her grandparents in Newcastle. Their father was a naval officer. Joan herself was in the WRNS for six years, but did not enjoy it, liking neither routine nor communal life. After the war she pursued a writing career, eventually becoming editor of a trade journal. Active in charity work, such as Christian Aid, she was also the Secretary of the Hampstead committee.

CHS Council members attended her funeral at Christ Church, Hampstead, which she regularly attended.

A New East of Bloomsbury

This month a completely revised and updated streets survey appears. *East of Bloomsbury* was first published in 1998, but over the last ten years there has been a good deal of change in this fascinating area which stretches between Holborn and King's Cross. Most noticeable perhaps is the aspect of streets near to King's Cross and the new St Pancras International station which have lost their previous, somewhat seedy, feel. The changes have been detailed in the new volume, renamed *Streets East of Bloomsbury*. The book also provides more extensive information on former residents of the area including, among many others, Carlyle, Dickens, Keynes, Ruskin and Thackeray. The research team has uncovered several new illustrations for this volume from the rich collection held at Camden Local Studies.

The book will be available from Camden Local Studies and our own bookstall at £7.95



A Plaque in Endell Street

'Site of Endell Street Military Hospital 1915-1919. Established in former workhouse buildings during the First World War under the command of Dr Flora Murray and Dr Louisa Garrett Anderson, this 573-bed hospital is the only British army hospital to have been staffed entirely by women. More than 24,000 soldiers were treated here.'

So reads the commemorative plaque unveiled on 7 November 2008 at Dudley Court, the block of flats now standing on the hospital's Covent Garden site. Sculpted by Alec Peever, the plaque incorporates the suffragettes' motto 'deeds, not words' and their colours of purple, white and green.

The project to erect the plaque was masterminded by Jennian Geddes (pictured, right), whose article on the hospital appeared in the latest issue of the *Camden History Review* (No. 32, 2008). The unveiling was performed by Colonel Hilary Hodgson (left), the highest-ranking female officer in today's Royal Army Medical Corps. Also present were members of the Anderson and Murray families, and a descendant of Vera Scantlebury, the junior surgeon featured in Dr Geddes' article. Indoor refreshments were provided by the Dudley Court Tenants' Association, who also helped mount the exhibition of photographs of the hospital that was on display.

Photograph and text kindly supplied by David Hayes.

The Bainbridge Papers

A recent acquisition by Camden Local Studies is the box of papers of the late Mr Clement S Bainbridge, who served the St Pancras Council for over 40 years as Borough Surveyor and Engineer. He also drew up the borough's Air Raid Precautions Scheme in the late 1930s and then served as ARP Controller 1939-45.

Bainbridge had joined the staff in 1919 after serving in the army for four years in Mesopotamia then Russia. He eventually led the Metropolitan District of the Association of Municipal Engineers. Unfortunately the papers include little on his years as ARP Controller (other than a copy of the first issue of the St Pancras ARP Wardens magazine) as these would doubtless have complemented Cllr Charles Allen Newbery's *Wartime St Pancras*, published by the CHS in 2006.

The box comes with several interesting mounted or framed photographs. One shows Mr Bainbridge and the early wartime ARP Committee including the journalist Cllr Mrs Charlotte Haldane of Fitzroy Road NW1 (see *CHS Review* 23) before she departed with her official St Pancras 'tin hat', to report from wartime Moscow.

After the war Bainbridge was responsible for a number of projects including the award winning major reconstruction of the Prince of Wales Road Baths. He may well have been particularly interested in the restoration of the baths as their wartime use (until 1943) was as the HQ of the No 2 Group of the London Civil Defence Region – covering St Pancras, Hampstead, Paddington, St Marylebone, Islington and Stoke Newington.

Mr Bainbridge was also the borough's town planner and, for some reason, his box of papers contains an illustrated brochure on the post-war New Town of Harlow. Its inclusion can best be explained by recalling that Harlow's town planner was Mr (later Sir) Frederick Gibberd, who was also the architect and town planner used by post-war St Pancras to plan its Euston Road Relief Road, a new road and tunnel system parallel with the Euston Road, but some hundreds of yards south of the old road and running through and under Bloomsbury. But shortage of funds after the war meant that, like Sir Patrick Abercrombie's 1943 County of London Plan, Gibberd's plan never materialised.

Perhaps the most interesting photograph is a large and very formal May 1938 mounted sepia print of the council meeting in their Chamber, presumably to commemorate the first, or an early, Council Meeting in the new Town Hall. The elected member closest to the camera is a young, tiny and slim woman in a striped dress who is surely none other than Cllr Miss Barbara Betts, later Baroness Castle (see *CHR* 24).

An interesting set of papers, but don't expect much

on those wartime years when Clement Bainbridge served the Council so well.

Robin Woolven

The London Nobody Knows

This 1967 film, based on the book by Geoffrey Fletcher, is now available on DVD. *The London Nobody Knows* is narrated by actor James Mason and starts with him inside the derelict old Bedford Theatre in Camden High Street, after which we see a couple of streets in Camden Town and then he is on the railway lines by the Roundhouse. Thus the first eight minutes of this 46-minute film will be of special interest to members but there is much, too, of a London now long gone. The second film on the disc is a 27-minute item, *Les Bicyclettes de Belsize*, an enchanting musical love story shot on location in NW3 in 1969.

The DVD is released by Optimum (OPTD1142) and the RRP is £17.99, but check with www.find-dvd.co.uk – the price has been as low as £9.99 from Camden Town-based MovieMail.

Lester May

GOING SLOANE

Three events are to take place in January-February in recognition of the bequest of Sir Hans Sloane's collections to the nation which eventually became a major part of the British Museum, opened to the public 250 years ago, on 15 January 1759. They are: a talk by Ian Foster, organiser of the events in conjunction with the Bloomsbury Association, at 7pm on Friday 16 January in the Undercroft of St George's, Bloomsbury Way, *Sir Hans Sloane – his life and times*; an exhibition 12-26 January, concerning Sloane and the genesis of the British Museum, at a gallery in Museum Street (details to be announced); and a performance of Handel's *Messiah* at 7pm on Saturday 7 February in St George's Bloomsbury to commemorate Sir Hans, who lived and housed his collection in Bloomsbury Street (see Peter Woodford's article in the current *Camden History Review*).

HANDEL THE PHILANTHROPIST

The composer George Frideric Handel, who died 250 years ago, is to be commemorated in an exhibition at the Foundling Museum, Brunswick Square from 16 January to 28 June. Exhibits include his will and a fair copy of *The Messiah*, which he bequeathed to the Foundling Hospital.

SERVING ON LAMAS

The LAMAS Local History Committee would like to promote a wider representation from London's local history societies and is seeking new members.

The Committee organises the annual conference and promotes local history research. If you are interested in being nominated, please contact our Secretary, Jane Ramsay (address on p4).

London's Bridges

An excellent new publication is this book on the 33 bridges spanning the Thames from Hampton Court to Tower Bridge. The author is Peter Matthews, of the Museum of London.

The volume, *London's Bridges*, is handsomely produced (176pp) with many colour illustrations and is on sale at a modest £12.99.

Details of the building of each bridge are given, but the author also treats us to a great deal more that probably we don't know. He tells us, for example, that Chelsea Bridge from the 1950s became a meeting place for bikers who put their machines through their paces there in the early hours of the morning. Their gatherings have been curtailed of late by the advent of articulate people in new luxury flats nearby.

The author reveals that there had been plans for a bridge on the line of the Millennium Bridge as long ago as 150 years. Known as the St Paul's Bridge, the plan envisaged tramway traffic, but was eventually abandoned as being detrimental to the cathedral precinct.

Waterloo Bridge was famous for its suicides, though as Matthews points out, there were far more suicides in the Serpentine. But Waterloo inspired a number of artists and writers who immortalised, for example,

fallen women who drowned there. Thomas Hood, in his poem *The Bridge of Sighs*, depicted the story of Mary Furley, who tried to commit suicide in the Regent's Canal, but the poet moved the event to Waterloo Bridge. The author also reminds us that Hammersmith Bridge has, oddly, borne the brunt of a number of attacks by the IRA, for reasons which are not known.

An informative and entertaining book, well worth the purchase. From Shire Publications ISBN 978-0-7478-0679-0.

John Richardson

EDITH DURHAM

Samantha Lucas is looking for information on (Mary) Edith Durham (1863-1944), who lived at 20 Ellerdale Road. She was well known in her day as a traveller and political mover and shaker in the Balkans. Ms Durham also lived at 116a King Henry's Road, 71 Belsize Park Gardens and 36 Glenloch Road.

Ms Lucas is at Flat C, 131 Peckham Rye, SE15 3UL (7635 7696)

CORRECTION

In our caption to the picture of Gordon House Road in the previous *Newsletter* we inadvertently said that the view looked east. It did, of course, look west.

A postcard issued by the London, North Western Railway, and entitled 'A Load of Manchester Goods', depicts Camden Goods Yard c.1904.



This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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Our website: www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety

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Mar 2009

Hornsey Past

Thurs. 19 March, 7.30pm

Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre, Belmont Street, off Chalk Farm Road - opposite the Roundhouse

Steve Denford, our speaker for this evening, and veteran of a good number of our Streets books, has turned his thorough attention to neighbouring Hornsey and published a new book entitled *Hornsey Past*, which rightly gives prominence to its most populous parts - Crouch End and Muswell Hill.

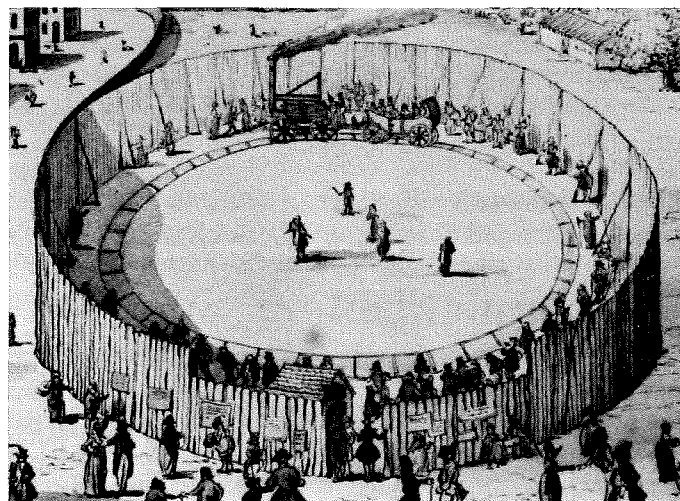
Crouch End, despite the parish church being at Hornsey, was the centre of village commercial life and was developed earlier than its neighbour, Muswell Hill, which is mostly late 19th/early 20th century. Though strictly speaking outside the parish, the development of Alexandra Palace had a great impact on Hornsey's development, as did the Great Northern Railway which opened a station at Hornsey in 1850.

Gradually development took over the great number of substantial villas the area boasted. What was unusual was that the local vestry did not allow sub-standard development and pursued an active campaign to enlarge public open space.

Please note that we are once again at the new venue of Charlie Ratchford's Resource Centre. It is comfortable and easy to get to and to park nearby.



Shown here is the parkland of Crouch Hall, which features on the jacket of *Hornsey Past* (160pp, 157 ills, hardback, £17.95).



Searching for Trevithick's London Railway of 1808

Thurs. 30 April, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

(Please note the later Thursday in the month!)

Richard Trevithick (1771-1833) was partly responsible for the railway revolution. A Cornishman, he was a bad scholar but liked arithmetic. From his experience of steam power being used in Cornish tin mines for hauling weights, he was the first to develop a satisfactory high-pressure steam engine. In 1803 he drove a steam carriage from Holborn to Paddington, and in the meantime he built a steam engine for Cornish mine rails.

But it was his 'Catch-me-who-Can' locomotive on which his fame rests. In 1808 he ran this steam locomotive and a carriage on a circular track in Camden - variously described as at Gower Street or Euston Square.

The above drawing, supposedly by Rowlandson, depicts the spectacle. However, our speaker tonight, John Liffen, curator at the Science Museum, thinks that the famous drawing is a forgery. First, the print is dated 1809 and secondly the full print includes the spire of St Mary, Eversholt Street, a church which was built in 1826. Mr Liffen has, however, found something else at the Guildhall Library which he thinks establishes the location of this elusive railway. Should be a fascinating talk.

Things to Come

Please put these meetings in your new diaries:

21 May: Launch of the newly revised *Streets of Belsize*. This will be at the newly restored St Stephen's church, Haverstock Hill.

15 June: AGM and Alan Dein on the history of the King's cross area.

23 July: Naomi Lightman on Anna Barbauld and friends in Hampstead. At Burgh House.

6 August: Annual Outing – see below.

17 Sep: Iain Manson (author of *The Lion and the Eagle*) on Tom Sayers, prizefighter of Camden Town. Venue to be announced.

22 Oct: Dr Joe Cain on Why did Darwin choose to live in Gower Street? At the Wellcome Collection, Euston Road.

19 Nov: Howard Spencer on the History of the London blue plaque scheme. At Burgh House.

The Annual Outing

This year's outing, organised as usual by Jean Archer, will be on Thursday 6 August. We shall be going to Down House in Kent (Charles Darwin's house for 40 years) and to nearby Lullingstone Roman Villa. This year celebrates the 150th anniversary of the publication of *The Origin of Species*. The Camden connection is that Darwin spent the first three years of his marriage in a house in Gower Street, and our October speaker Dr Joe Cain of UCL, just across the road, will explore the question 'Why did Darwin choose to live in Gower Street?' Lullingstone is only 11 miles from Down House and will be visited in the afternoon.

The cost will be approximately £25 per person (much less for English Heritage members). More details and exact cost, together with a booking form, will be in the May *Newsletter*.

Renewing Membership

All Membership matters are now handled by Dr Henry Fitzhugh (56 Aryle Street, WC1H 8ER, tel: 020 7837 9980, email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net). Subscriptions are due on 1st March and members who do not pay by standing order should pay by cheque to that address if they have received a Membership renewal form with this *Newsletter*. We would be extremely grateful if anyone paying by cheque would fill out the Standing Order Mandate and the Gift Aid Declaration at the same time. The May *Newsletter* will only be sent if subscriptions have been received by April 25.

POSTERS AT THE LONDON TRANSPORT MUSEUM

There is an exhibition of famed London Transport posters now on show at the London Transport Museum in Covent Garden. This runs until 31 March.

Mark Aston

Regular users of the Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn will be sorry to hear that Mark Aston is leaving. However, those of us who actually live in Islington will be the beneficiaries, because he is to become Local History Manager in that borough. We wish him well and thank him for his long service to Camden.

A New Streets East of Bloomsbury

Our dedicated research team, having successfully covered the borough with volumes upon the publication of their book on Highgate, are returning to old territories as the need for reprints arises. Inevitably, much has happened since in these areas. This new edition on the streets east of Bloomsbury, of 128 pp, is handsomely designed as usual by Ivor Kamlisch and edited by Steve Denford and David Hayes. The research team, apart from the editors, consisted of Sheila Ayres, Henry Fitzhugh, Rosemary Jeffreys and Ruth Hayes.

There is as always a wealth of wonderful and quite often obscure detail. For example we learn of Ellen Ranyard in Hunter Street, who founded there the Biblewoman Movement, an eventually international body that survived till the mid-20th century. Her aim was to supply London's poor with Bibles and this, she believed, would be best accomplished not by city missionaries, but by working-class women. The mission later ran a dormitory for watercress sellers.

Then there is the fascinating history of 277 Gray's Inn Road. In 1827-8 it was a rival to Tattersall's as the North London Horse & Carriage Repository. It was a grand affair but in two years it was converted to the Royal London Bazaar. Next came the socialist idealist Robert Owen in 1831 who helped to establish here an Institution of the Society to Remove the Cause of Poverty and Ignorance and in the following year he opened his Equitable Labour Exchange, a short lived co-operative enabling poor artisans to barter their skills for goods. Sharing the premises was the unpredictable Rev. Edward Irving who came here with much of his congregation after his expulsion from Regent Square. Then in 1833-35 the premises were taken by Madame Tussaud for her waxworks. Later the premises became a 'Palace of Hygiene' for the sale of quack medicines, then a concert hall, and in 1872 Whitbread's acquired the property and rebuilt it as a beer store.

Also we read about scandalous transvestites in Wakefield Street, and St Chad's Well, which dispensed healing waters to 1000 people a week, and much, much more in this series of walks around a non-tourist area of London.

Streets East of Bloomsbury at £7.95 is available from our bookstall at meetings, or else by post (£1.50) from Roger Cline – his address on page 4 of this *Newsletter*.

Digitising London history

The London Metropolitan Archives and the Guildhall Library Manuscripts Section are soon to launch an ambitious project to put more than 10,000 Greater London parish registers from 1530 to the 20th century online. Also the project will include Poor Law documents, London school admissions, Bishops' transcripts, non-conformist baptisms, marriages and burials, electoral registers, overseers' returns and poll books. This project is in association with Ancestry.co.uk, but you will be able to consult the records free from the terminals at the two libraries concerned. For latest news check on: www.history.ac.uk/gh/digitisation.htm

Also online now are the early records of BTelecom and its predecessors. Of particular interest, as pointed out in the excellent Newsletter of Archives for London, is that the 999 emergency number was not established until 1937 – the first such in the world. Details are on www.bt.com/archivesonline.

Camden housing of the 1960s and 1970s

Professor Mark Swenarton, an architectural and urban historian is researching the housing programme undertaken by Camden in the 1960s and 1970s, particularly in the years 1965-1973 when S A G Cook was the Borough Architect. This was the time when notable schemes like Alexandra Road, Branch Hill, Mansfield Road/Lamble Street, Highgate New Town, Maiden Lane and many others were designed – schemes that are still regarded as benchmarks in high-density low-rise urban housing. He is interested in both the political and the architectural aspects, ie the political objectives and programme of the Camden Labour Group as well as the architectural ideas and innovations of the Camden architects. He would be interested to hear from anyone with recollections from the time, eg anyone who was active in Camden politics, whether on the Labour or Conservative side, or who worked in the relevant departments. Mr Cook was born in 1910 and it is hoped to mark his centenary in 2010 with an exhibition and conference.

Mr Swenarton can be contacted by email on mswenarton@brookes.ac.uk or else by telephone on 020 8201 9588, or write to him at the Department of Architecture, Oxford Brookes University, Gipsy Lane, Oxford OX3 0BP.

MONITORING THE THAMES FORESHORE

The Thames Discovery Programme has been set up to monitor archaeological remains found in the Thames foreshore over the next three years. Archaeologists will be involved but the Programme is also looking for volunteers to assist in the work. Any member interested should look at the website www.thamesdiscovery.org for details of how they might help.

A taste for Gilbert & Sullivan

Tony Obrist has written to tell us how he became interested in Gilbert and Sullivan.

He writes:

I attended Manchester Street Junior Boys' School in the 1930s – this stood opposite St Pancras Station. A Mr Basil Hodges taught the class singing. He also produced the annual School Play, in which the 1936 production, *The Rose and the Ring*, saw the stage debut of comedian Kenneth Williams – as Princess Angelica. Kenneth, born in 1926, was a year ahead of me, and so I didn't know him well.

One day around 1935, Mr Hodges arrived in class carrying what looked like a small black suitcase and a large thick book which he placed on the table. "Once upon a time," he began, "there was an Emperor in Japan – the Mikado – who liked nothing better than to see chopped-off heads rolling across the floor." With that, of course, the artful blighter had our eager attention. We were, he announced, going to sing some songs about this Japanese emperor on Parents' Day.

The suitcase, which he then opened, turned out to be a portable clockwork gramophone, and the book was an album of 78rpm records. And so he played us *The Mikado*, explaining the story as we went along. Rehearsals were put in hand at once. We also visited an afternoon matinée given by D'Oyly Carte Opera at Sadler's Wells. Mr Hodges had told us how ugly Katisha was, but I found the Mikado much uglier and suitably alarming.

I was entranced by the whole spectacle: the music, the movement, the costumes and the jokes. As we were filing out of our gallery seats at the end, I exclaimed to my pal, "Wasn't Ko-Ko fun!" An old gentleman nearby overheard this, and beamed at me. I do believe he realized at that matinée a lifelong G&S fan had been born.

HANDEL THE PHILANTHROPIST

There is an exhibition at the Foundling Museum to mark the 250th anniversary of the composer's death. As members will probably know, he was a generous friend of the Foundling Hospital in its early days (and indeed bequeathed the score of *The Messiah* to it), and this exhibition deals with the philanthropic aspect of the great man.

The exhibition runs until 28 June. Admission 10-5 Tues to Saturday, Sunday 11-5pm. Entry £5.

A NEW PLAN FOR HIGHGATE CEMETERY

A new management plan has been launched for the cemetery by the Highgate Cemetery Trust. It is based on a report which can be viewed either in hard copy at Chester Road library, or else online at www.highgate-cemetery.org, by clicking on 'about us'.

A Threat to Athlone House

Members will know the large and eccentric Athlone House just east of Kenwood House. It has been the subject of a number of sales typical of the property boom of the period and there is now a proposal, spearheaded by the architect Robert Adam, to demolish the building considered to be of 'little value' by the developers. In its place it is proposed to build a vast white palace with green domes. The same architect is also behind the presently stalled scheme to replace Fitzroy Farm, further to the east. Here the old building has already been demolished and the proposed replacement is considerably larger. Camden Council is opposed, as too are the Heath and Hampstead Society and the Highgate Society. There is also considerable opposition emanating from the determined women who use the Ladies' Bathing Pond opposite Fitzroy Farm.

These two developments are examples of the aggrandisement of the new breed of rich clients. Hopefully, the recession might reduce their ardour.



Two more postcards. Above is a grocery/dairy at '51 St George's Road' – now Chalcot Road in Chalk Farm, run by the Griffiths Brothers. They also had another shop at 162 Weedington Road, Kentish Town. Below are the premises of an early driving school – The London School of Motoring at 18 Stephen Street, off Tottenham Court Road. The main offices of the school were at 67 Shaftesbury Avenue. There is no date on the postcard but no doubt a knowledgeable member will be able to hazard that from the cars on view.



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May 2009

Launch of *Streets of Belsize* and a talk by Katherine Whitehorn

Thurs 21 May, 7.30

St Stephen's church, Rosslyn Hill, NW3

Our May event is a special one. It will take place in the newly renovated St Stephen's church on Rosslyn Hill, a building which has been derelict, vandalised, squatted and used for miscellaneous purposes since its closure many years ago. It is very good news that this imposing Teulon church building is once again being used to good effect.

It is appropriate then that our launch of a new edition of *The Streets of Belsize* should be held at St Stephen's. This completely revised edition contains 92 pages of compact information, selling for £8.95. It has been compiled by Christopher Wade, with major contributions from Sheila Ayres, Michael Ogden and Dr Dulcie Groves, and is designed by Ivor Kamlisch.

You will find in its pages characters as diverse as Agatha Christie, Elgar, Orwell, Dr Crippen and Jerome K Jerome living in the Belsize Park area. The book ranges from the Fitzjohns neighbourhood over to South End Green. There are gruesome happenings such as the Hampstead Heath Station disaster, the Ruth Ellis shooting, and the De la Rue murder. Happier items include the pleasure gardens of Belsize and the influx of eminent artists, musicians, authors and architects, including Moore, Hepworth, Nicholson, Norman Foster, Richard Rogers and James Stirling.

Christopher Wade will introduce the new book and he will be followed by Gordon McLean on behalf of the Belsize Residents' Association - Helen Cordell, immediate past chairman of the Association will also be present. Then Katherine Whitehorn, the distinguished writer and broadcaster will be giving a talk on Belsize Characters. Ms Whitehorn is well known for her *Observer* column from 1960 until 1996, and more recently the excellent observational talks on matters of the day she has given on Radio 4 in the programme *A Point of View*.

In short, a considerable evening in prospect.

The book will, of course, be available on the evening. It will also be on sale at Daunt's and other bookshops and some newsagents. It may be obtained by post from CHS Publications, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH (7388 9889) - plus postage £1.75. Or it can be bought online on our new website - see p.2.

The AGM and King's Cross

Monday, 15 June, 6.30pm

One KX, 120 Cromer Street, WC1

Our AGM this year will have Alan Dein speaking on the history of the King's Cross area - of great interest bearing in mind the substantial changes that are or will be taking place. Mr Dein has led a 2-year oral history project with residents of the area, one outcome being a broadcast on Radio 4 in January this year. The venue - a YMCA Club - is a new one. It is at the corner of Cromer Street and Judd Street, about 70 yards up Judd Street from the Euston Road, on the left. There is a lift down to the lower ground floor, best reached via the entrance furthest from Judd Street - there are two. Otherwise there is a perfectly good staircase.

As usual for AGMs we begin at 6.30 with refreshments, with the business meeting at 7 and the talk at 7.30pm. You are invited to make nominations for officers and council. These should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay - address on p. 4. The present office holders are as follows:

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

(Mr Harris has already notified us that he does not wish to be reappointed for the following year.)

Council Members

Sheila Ayres, Caroline Cooper (who has since resigned), Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Susan Palmer, Dick Weindling and Robin Woolven.

Our new Website

The Society has a new, independent website. Do visit it at www.camdenhistorysociety.org and enjoy its new features, which include a facility to **buy online** any of our publications (listed under General titles, 'Streets' books, *Camden History Reviews* and Occasional papers). You are able to download the currently out-of-print *Streets of Old Holborn*, several articles from earlier *Reviews*, and all the Hampstead Court Rolls that have so far been translated and transcribed, covering the period 1527-1684. Short titles of articles in each of the *Camden History Reviews* (Nos 1-32) are given and the whole website can be searched for subjects of interest. Coming events are detailed, but with an additional feature giving a year's overview. Past events going back to Septmber 2005 are archived but are still searchable. The same is true of News items – recent ones are displayed, but previous ones come up if you search for a topic.

Websurfers who are not (yet) members of the Society can still search for items of interest, and they can also become members by downloading an application form (which provides for Gift Aid Declaration and a Standing Order mandate), completing it and sending it to our Membership Secretary, Dr Henry Fitzhugh. They can also view the opening pages of several of our books as samples, and if they like the look of them can order the whole book online, when they will receive a copy from Roger Cline.

The website has been newly built and is still subject to improvement, so if you have difficulty with it or would like additional or different features, do write to Dr Woodford by email on drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk.

Roy Allen

Roy Allen, a long-standing member who died last year, has generously left the Society £1,000 in his will. This has been gratefully received. Roy, an expert and enthusiast on the subject of Belsize Park, would have been delighted at the prospect of our talk in May.

Members are reminded that they can make bequests to the Society – we are a registered charity, as noted on p4 of this *Newsletter*.

JOHN GAY IN HAMPSTEAD – AN EXHIBITION OF PHOTOGRAPHS

John Gay took many first-class photographs of Hampstead. There is an exhibition of some of them at Burgh House (until 21 June). Houses, street scenes and the Heath are featured.

Peter Barber in the news

Our member, Peter Barber, has been in the news recently. Head of Maps Collection at the British Library, he has re-identified a drawing of the siege of Boulogne in 1544, made in the reign of Henry VIII. The image, commissioned of an unknown artist, dates to 1545 and is one of four 'views' documenting Henry's second invasion of France.

For centuries art historians have pondered why there was never a final picture showing the surrender of the city. Just three drawings survived, one showing Henry landing in Calais, another of him on the way to Boulogne, and a third of the siege in progress. But no culmination. Evidently, that scene was lying in the British Library's archives, undiscovered and mislabelled until Peter Barber recognised it. The missing drawing will now go on display as part of a BL exhibition entitled *Henry VIII: Man and Monarch* (runs until 6 September).

Peter was also to be found – though unnamed – as the obituarist in *The Times* on 2 April of Peter Jacomelli. Members who have read our very successful publication *Continental Taste*, which dealt with the Swiss-Italian Ticinese restaurateurs who descended on London in the later 19th century, will recognise that surname as one of the foremost of this wave of culinary imports. In 1900 there were no fewer than nine Ticinese cafe-restaurants in Oxford Street alone.

Mr Jacomelli, born in 1917, died aged 91.

Memories of High Hill

Ian Norrie, an old friend of the Society and the first publisher of our 'Streets' series of books, was more famously proprietor of the High Hill Bookshop in Hampstead. Strung out over several properties in the High Street, it was in its time the most comprehensive bookshop in north London and attracted the custom and friendship of numerous literati. Ian has previously entertained us with *Mentors and Friends*, a series of portraits of eminent people in the book trade, including a splendid chapter on Christina Foyle.

However, his new book is Ian's autobiography, from his early days as an aspiring actor and playwright at the Mountview Theatre Club in Crouch End, to ill-paid and insecure jobs in bookshops in the West End, and then his long career at the High Hill. Many Hampstead people are described and, indeed, much of Hampstead's social history is touched upon in his pages. But Ian's activities encompassed the book trade as a whole and we have fascinating glimpses of many of the big names whose imprints are still around, even if they are owned by Americans nowadays. An enjoyable read.

The Business of Lunch: A Bookman's Life and Travels, 352 pages, hardback. ISBN 978-0-7043-7150-7 Quartet Books, £20.

The Annual Outing

As mentioned in the previous *Newsletter*, our Annual Outing will be on Thursday 6 August to Charles Darwin's home, Down House, in Kent in the morning and to Lullingstone Roman villa in the afternoon. The cost will be £28 per person, reduced to £17 for members of English Heritage, which owns both sites. A booking form is enclosed with this *Newsletter*.

This visit celebrates the 200th anniversary of Darwin's birth. He lived for a time in Gower Street, but his main residence was Down House, and the study in which he wrote his famous work, *The Origin of Species*, has now been put on view. There is a new exhibition there, *Uncovering Origins*, which charts the progression of Darwin's ideas and the controversy they provoked. Upstairs is a life-size reconstruction of his cabin aboard *HMS Beagle*, the survey ship he was invited to join in 1831.

Another Publication Award for the Society

A CHS publication has won an award at the annual LAMAS Conference for the third year running. Every year the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, the parent body for all local history societies in Greater London, holds a conference at which an award is made for a publication on local history considered by its Committee to be the best one published in the preceding calendar year. In previous years we have been awarded the prize (there is only one) for *Wartime in St Pancras* and *Streets of Kentish Town*. This year (2008) we could hardly expect to win the top prize yet again, but the Committee invented a new category, Specially Commended, which was awarded to *The Greville Estate, the history of a Kilburn neighbourhood* by Marianne Colloms and Dick Weindling. This we published during 2007. It is a highly original kind of 'Streets' book, covering quite a small area but providing biographies of residents in a virtually house-by-house account from the original small Kilburn Priory at its edge through to the two World Wars and beyond in the 20th century. Copies are still available at £7.50 from Roger Cline – address on p. 4. See also our new website for online purchase.

We have also been informed that our publication *George Morland*, by Marion Kamlisch has been nominated for consideration by the Assessors for the Berger British Art History prize for 2008, worth £5000.

... AND ANOTHER BOOK AWARD

Members who enjoyed the entertaining talk that Ruth Richardson gave in October to complement her book on the 150th anniversary of the publication of *Gray's Anatomy*, will be pleased, but probably unsurprised, to learn that she has won the book award given by the Medical Journalists' Association this year. Her book, *The Making of Mr Gray's Anatomy* (OUP), will be re-published in paperback in October.

THE MATCH GIRLS

A talk on the famous 'Match Girls' Strike of 1888, at Bryant and May in the East End, will be given at Burgh House on 5 June at 2.15pm. The speaker is Dr Louise Raw. Admission is free.

Things to Come

23 July: Naomi Lightman on Anna Barbauld and friends in Hampstead. At Burgh House.

6 August: Annual Outing – see this page.

17 Sep: Iain Manson (author of *The Lion and the Eagle*) on Tom Sayers, prizefighter of Camden Town. At the Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre.

22 Oct: Dr Joe Cain on Why did Darwin choose to live in Gower Street? At the Wellcome Collection, Euston Road.

19 Nov: Howard Spencer on the History of the London blue plaque scheme. At Burgh House.

THE LONDON SCHOOL OF MOTORING

The last *Newsletter* contained an early 20th-century picture of the yard of the London School of Motoring off Tottenham Court Road. The question was, what date was it. Chris Nottage thinks it is turn of the century and says that surely the car in the centre facing the camera is a 1902 Clement (French). A renovated example of this sold at Bonham's last year for £150,000.

Separated by War

The current exhibition at Camden Local Studies and Archives in Holborn revolves around the personal archives of a couple from Kilburn.

The items shown belonged to Peter and Lilian Hauselman of 12 Priory Terrace, Kilburn. They provide an illuminating insight into the impact of world events on the lives of a young local couple, some sixty years ago. When Britain declared war against Germany in September 1939, Peter Hauselman (not German, despite his name), like so many of his compatriots, was called up to serve. His wartime service took him around the world from France to Sierra Leone, from South Africa to Egypt. Meanwhile, his wife Lilian remained at their home, with their young child, her touching letters and cards revealing the depth of her love for her absent husband. Thankfully, this particular story was to have a happy ending. The exhibition runs until 6 June.

King's Cross Voices

Neatly complementing our AGM talk in June, at Camden Local Studies and Archives from 15 June to 26 September is an exhibition called *King's Cross Voices*. It uses extracts from oral history recordings and photographs collected as part of the King's Cross Voices project, to tell the stories of local people.

Website News

Bryan Diamond points out that the BT archive site noted in the previous *Newsletter* is really a catalogue of the actual records, rather than the records themselves online.

A useful website is that managed by English Heritage and the Institute of Historical Research, which makes available volumes of the *Survey of London*. It includes a search text facility and contains photographs and line drawings.. This is on www.british-history.ac.uk/surveyoflondon

Lester May has found a website describing a horror that might have been – the Motorway Box, proposed in the 1960s and which generated considerable opposition not just in our part of the world but elsewhere. The full awfulness of this scheme as applied to Hampstead and Camden Town, proposed by the LCC and later endorsed by the GLC, is shown on <http://www.cbrd.co.uk/histories/ringways/ringway1/north.shtml>.

The fact that this scheme was endorsed by London politicians should shame those still alive.

The Bloomsbury Project

The project to discover and research Bloomsbury's development and institutions in the 19th century proceeds apace. It is staging its second conference on 16 June at the Wellcome Trust in Euston Road. Attendance is free but must be booked in advance; please email d.colville@ucl.ac.uk to reserve a place. The event takes place between 10am and 5pm and has as its theme Bloomsbury People. A provisional list of speakers and subjects includes:

Rosemary Ashton, *Germans in Bloomsbury*

Deborah Colville, *From Aerodiphros to painless dentistry: Bloomsbury's notable inventors*

Caroline Dakers, *John Buonarrotti Papworth, architect-designer to the merchants, bankers and tradesmen of pre-Victorian London*

Richard Dennis, *Henry Ryecroft meets Henry Maitland: George Gissing in and on Bloomsbury*

Catherine Fuller, *Bentham and Bloomsbury*

Anne Hardy, *Great Ormond Street Hospital and the medical community of London*

Barbara Waddington, *Edward Irving: a shooting star in a Presbyterian pulpit.*

A mystery postcard. The group, which includes a large number of well-dressed women, is posed outside offices of the Borough of St Pancras, location unknown.

There is no date and no indication of what the event was about.

Suggestions welcome.



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Our website: www.casweb.org/camdenhistorysociety

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 234

Jul 2009

Anna Barbauld and friends in Hampstead – our July talk

Thurs 23 July, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Our July talk, to be given by Naomi Lightman, is on a one-time Hampstead resident, Anna Barbauld.

The career of Anna Barbauld (née Aikin) (1743-1825), poet, essayist, literary critic and children's writer, flourished until 1812 when she published a poem critical of Britain's participation in the Napoleonic Wars. Hostile reviews were printed and she published nothing after that.

She and her clergyman husband, Rochemont Barbauld, started a school in Suffolk, but in 1785 they moved to London and lived at 8 Church Row, Hampstead c.1787 to 1802 – her husband became a Unitarian minister at Roslyn Hill chapel. It was during this period that Mrs Barbauld achieved notice as a political writer. Her many friends included Joanna Baillie – another Hampstead resident, and Mary Wollstonecraft. During her Hampstead years, her husband's mental health deteriorated rapidly – he drowned himself in the New River in 1808. From Hampstead, she moved to Stoke Newington, where she is buried.

The Annual Outing

Thursday 6 August

Details of this year's Outing with its Darwin theme have already been given in the previous two *Newsletters*. There are still some seats on the coach available. To book, ring Jane Ramsay on 7586 4436 for a booking form, or else contact the Outing organiser, Jean Archer, on 7435 5490.

Things to Come

Please put these dates in your diary:

17 Sept: Ian Manson on Tom Sayers, the Camden Town prize fighter. At the Charlie Ratchford Centre, Belmont Street.

22 Oct: Dr Joe Cain on 'Why did Darwin choose to live in Gower Street?' At the Wellcome Collection, Euston Road.

19 Nov: Howard Spencer on the History of the Blue Plaque scheme in London. At Burgh House.

17 Dec: Susan Jenkinson on London's shops.

King's Cross Voices

An exhibition already running at Camden Local Studies and Archives at Holborn Library is based on a large project called King's Cross Voices. The area is famous for its railway and architectural heritage, but until now very little has been written about its people – those who have lived and worked in the locality. Today, King's Cross is in the throes of massive redevelopment and is entering into an exciting period of its history.

The exhibition uses extracts from oral history recordings and photographs, collected as part of the Voices project. People taking part included workers, students, shopkeepers, market traders, artists, campaigners, politicians, sex trade workers, factory workers, housewives, publicans and many more.

The exhibition will also include a listening area so that visitors will be able to hear audio extracts of the interviews. Those members who attended the talk at our AGM in June, given by Alan Dein, will know that these recordings are of good quality and of immense interest. Very soon you will be able to listen to most of the recordings by logging on to the website www.camden.gov.uk/kingscrossvoices. The exhibition continues until 26 September.

NEW HOURS AT CAMDEN LOCAL STUDIES

There are to be extended opening hours at Local Studies and Archives. In future Camden will open Mon, Tues, Thurs and Friday 10-7pm and Saturday 10 to 5. They are closed on Wednesday and Sunday.

The Society's Website

www.camdenhistorysociety.org

buy our publications online • check on events to come and past • download currently out-of-print publications • consult index to our Review and Newsletter • access to Hampstead Court Rolls • view sample pages from our publications

The Annual Meeting

There was a good attendance at a new venue in Cromer Street for the AGM and a talk by Alan Dein on the King's Cross Voices project. Officers and committee members elected for the forthcoming year were as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Christopher Elrington
VICE-PRESIDENTS: Malcolm Holmes, Dr Ann Saunders and Gillian Tindall
CHAIRMAN: John Richardson
VICE-CHAIRMAN: Christopher Wade
SECRETARY: Jane Ramsay
TREASURER: Dr Henry Fitzhugh
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: Dr Peter Woodford
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Dr Henry Fitzhugh
RESEARCH TEAM LEADER: Steven Denford
PUBLICATIONS (postal sales) Roger Cline
PUBLICATIONS (bookstall etc) Sheila Ayres
MEETINGS SECRETARY: Vacant
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Ruth Jackson
LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Richard Knight or his deputy
AUDITOR: Vacant

Council Members

Sheila Ayres, Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Susan Palmer

The Chairman pointed out that Peter Woodford was stepping down as Meetings Secretary (although he would continue with his other responsibilities for the Society). This presented a large problem for the Society as it is unlikely that anyone else on the Committee would have the time to take on the job. He therefore asked for any member to volunteer. The talks themselves are suggested by the Membership Secretary and the Committee jointly and the venues are usually prebooked some time ahead. So the Secretary's duties are mainly contacting possible lecturers and arranging whatever is necessary for any slide/power point facilities. Generally a member of the Committee is appointed chairman of each meeting and is responsible for ensuring that all is well on the night.

Furthermore, Geoffrey Harris, our Hon. Auditor, unfortunately is also stepping down and we would be grateful for a volunteer for this post. The auditor does not have to be a 'professional' auditor, but simply to have a good idea of accounting procedure.

Also we would welcome new blood onto the committee. If you feel that you would like to help us in any of these matters, please contact Jane Ramsay at the address on the back of this *Newsletter*.



Alan Dein in his entertaining talk on local people of King's Cross mentioned that a boys' club, the Tonbridge Club, used to meet at the venue we were sitting in. The Club, unexpectedly, had a boys' ballet class. The archives for the club were rescued from being thrown out and given to Camden Local Studies and Archives and they include the above photograph of a boy's ballet production called *Whom the gods desire*, produced on 8 December 1935.

That mystery postcard

In our last *Newsletter* appeared a photograph of a group of people, male and female, posing in front of an office that evidently belonged to St Pancras Council sometime in the earlier 20th century. A number of members have sent information to identify it.

John Valentine was the first to respond. He identified the building as a Local Food Control Office. During the Great War, he said, the first food to be rationed was sugar, in 1917, and other foods were controlled under a Rationing Order of 1918. He suggested that the picture was of the staff celebrating the end of their work at the conclusion of the war. He followed this up with more information from the internet dug up by his wife:

'It soon became evident that separate schemes within large cities, each operating within arbitrary boundary lines, were causing trouble, particularly with the distribution of meat ... As a result London was brought under a single rationing scheme for meat, butter and margarine. The success of this scheme led to the adoption of a single rationing system for the whole country which remained in force until March 1921 when the Ministry of Food was wound up and the Food Control Committees ceased to function. 'So, perhaps the picture was c. 1921.

Malcolm Tucker suggested that the dress of people in the picture was circa World War I and the neo-Grecian building behind has the taste of areas south of the Euston Road. The ever useful Google supplied the information that the St Pancras Food Office seems to have been located at 25 Endsleigh Gardens, the number above the door. Mr Tucker guessed that the lady in the hat is Winefriede Fairless (Mrs Fairless Stuart), the Executive Officer of the St Pancras Food Control Committee, who was awarded an MBE in that year 'for services in connection with the War' and whose medal happens to have been auctioned by Spink & Son in 2003.

Rachel Dilworth of Camden Local Studies and Archives also identified the building as 25 Endsleigh Gardens. She says that the St Pancras Council Minutes of 24 April 1918 state that the office was moving from 18 Camden Street as "suitable offices had been found at 25 Endsleigh Gardens".

Robin Woolven wrote that the interesting thing about the Food Control organisation, and its Ministry of Food, is why it was not abolished in 1918. The answer was totally political, namely the magnitude of the industrial disturbances following the war which meant that Lloyd George could not afford to do away with the wartime Emergency Powers Act. But something had to replace the wartime organisation for ensuring the continuity of supply of food and other essentials of life to the public in the event of major strikes. The resulting, initially secret, 'Supply and Transport Organisation' was

acknowledged by Baldwin's and MacDonald's administrations and, suitably modified, proved itself during the General Strike - in fact the Milk Depot set up in Hyde Park in 1926 returned a good profit.

Needless to say, Robin goes on, the idea of dividing the country into Regions under civil commissioners in an emergency was resorted to during the 1938 Munich crisis and developed with great success during WW2, when local authorities again had Food Control responsibilities, all under regional direction.

He imagined that the preponderance of smart young ladies in the picture was due to the essentially clerical wartime duties performed by the local offices. In WW2, the issuing of ration cards was eventually integrated with National identity cards.

So, bearing in mind the office did not open at the building in the picture until 1918, it is most likely that the group picture was taken in 1921 when it closed. Many thanks to our contributors.

The Camden Railway Heritage Trail

The enterprising Camden Railway Heritage Trust which seeks to preserve heritage items around and near the Camden Town Goods Yard, has produced a very attractive Trail, designed by Ivor Kamlsh. It is in full colour, 20 pages, with a pull out map showing key locations. A very good publication if you are interested in railway history.

It is available from Peter Darley, 21 Oppidans Road NW3 3AG for £2.95 inc. postage. (Tel 7586 6632)

Cinema Memories

Rebecca Davies would like to hear from people aged about 70 and above who would be willing to share their memories of cinemas in Camden (or elsewhere in London) in the 1940s, so as to include them in her MA dissertation for UCL.

Her telephone number is 07793 743525.

More visitors at Camden Local Studies

Over 10,200 people visited Camden Local Studies and Archives in 2008-9, an increase of more than 16% on the previous year. However, the art of letter writing has almost vanished. The Centre had nearly 200 letter enquiries but more than four times as many emails. The majority of enquiries were answered with the week. The Centre's web pages had over 13,500 hits, an increase of 19% on the previous year.



Above, a virtually traffic-free part of Steele's Road in Hampstead, c. 1905.

Below is the King's Cross Mission, Charlotte Street, Brass Band. Presumably this was a missionary organisation based in Charlotte Street, Fitzrovia, to bring the message to King's Cross residents. Any information would be welcome.



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newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 235
Sep 2009

The Prize Fighter of Camden Town – Tom Sayers

Thurs 17 Sept, 7.30pm
Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre, Belmont Street, NW1.
Off Chalk Farm Road, opposite the Roundhouse

Tom Sayers (1826-65) lived at what became 51 Camden Street, but died at the home of a friend in Camden High Street of diabetes and tuberculosis. He was the most famous English pugilist of his day, having been a bricklayer in the making of King's Cross station. Despite being only 5' 8" and weighing under 11 stone, he became the first 'world champion' in a career that spanned 1849 to 1860. He was defeated only once, in 1853, when he lost in a contest which went on for 61 rounds of about 90 seconds each. His most famous bout was with the American John Heenan, which lasted for 37 rounds and at the end of it Sayers had a broken arm. The contest was called a draw when spectators are said to have interrupted the fight.

Our speaker in September is Ian Manson, who has recently written a book about Sayers entitled *The Lion and the Eagle*.

Why did Darwin choose to live in Gower Street? – our October talk

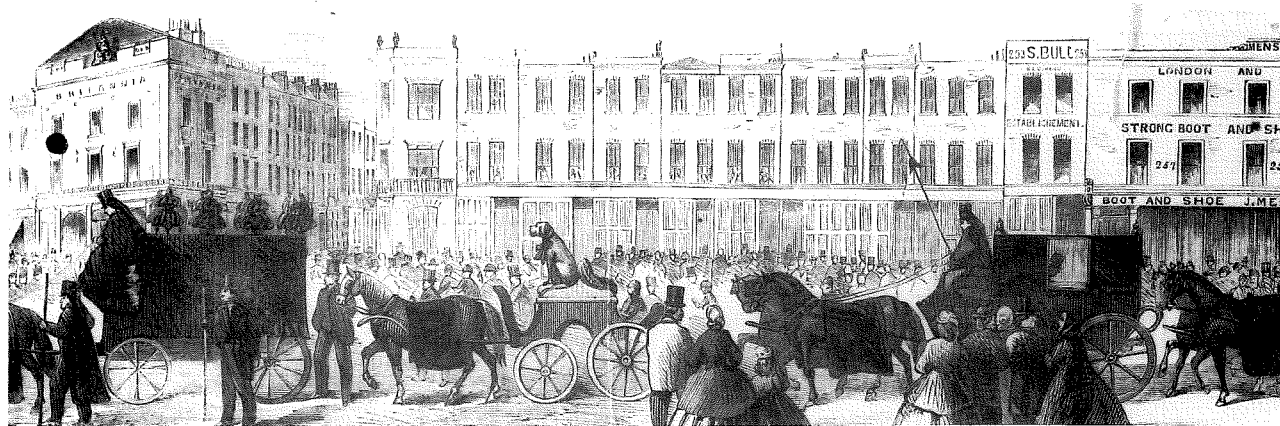
Thurs 22 October, 7.30pm
Wellcome Collection, 5th Floor, Wellcome Building,
183 Euston Road, NW1.

This year is the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Darwin, whose researches led to the theory of natural selection and the general acceptance of evolution. In August our annual outing visited his principal home, Down House in Kent. But why does Darwin have a blue plaque at 110 Gower Street, where he lived from 1838 to 1842? What made him choose this address?

This is the subject of our October talk, which will be given by Dr Joe Cain, who is a Senior Lecturer in the history and philosophy of biology, with a special interest in evolution.

Dr Cain is also an enthusiastic supporter of the restoration of Euston Arch – together with the screen of buildings that went with it.

The funeral procession of Tom Sayers at Camden Town, on its way to Highgate Cemetery. This is part of a panorama in the Illustrated Sporting News in 1866. Here the artist is on the site of the future Underground station looking towards the Britannia at the corner of Parkway – one of the fighter's favourite pubs. His dog, 'Lion', is a prominent mourner and was later the subject of a statue on Sayers' grave in the cemetery.



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Two private tours

The Society has been offered two private tours of great interest.

TURNER'S HOUSE

The Friends of Turner's House have invited us to a private tour of Sandycombe Lodge in Twickenham, the home of the artist J M W Turner from 1812 to 1826. While he owned it he regularly commuted the ten miles to Harley Street. It is a charming stucco villa, owned since 1948 by Professor Harold Livermore, who resides there and whose intention is to leave the house to a Trust so that it may be a monument for the further appreciation of Turner.

The free tour, however, can only accommodate 12 people, so it will be a strictly first come-first accepted arrangement. It will be on Saturday, 10 October, commencing at 11am. The tour will be led by Catherine Parry-Wingford, a noted expert on 18th-century visual arts who lectures at the V & A, Birkbeck and the Open University, and it will last about one hour. Ms Parry-Wingfield has also kindly offered to provide a light lunch for a modest £6.50, all profits to the Trust, at her house nearby.

If you wish to come please telephone Helen English on 020 7607 1628 or preferably email her on hwenglish@dial.pipex.com. She will want your address, tel. no and email address if you have one. Also please indicate if you want the lunch. Those included in the tour will be given travel guidance to the house. Although entry to the tour is free, a contribution on the day towards the Friends would be appreciated.

THE GARRICK CLUB

As some members may know, the Garrick Club in Garrick Street has now completed the restoration of its building, a project aided by the largesse from the licensing of Winnie-the-Pooh rights (which the Club shares) to the Disney Corporation. The famous picture collection has been restored, the main rooms have been repainted and rehung, including the magnificent front hall and staircase - now an early-Victorian green, sometimes called 'arsenic'. CHS have been offered the last available tour date for 2009 - the next vacancy will be late in 2010. This is scheduled for Thursday 3rd December from 10 to 12 noon, with coffee and biscuits provided in the morning room. Our tour guide will be Betty Beesley; there will be a talk by Frances Hughes, a NADFAS lecturer on Art and Theatre History. The tour takes in the main rooms of the club and the library.

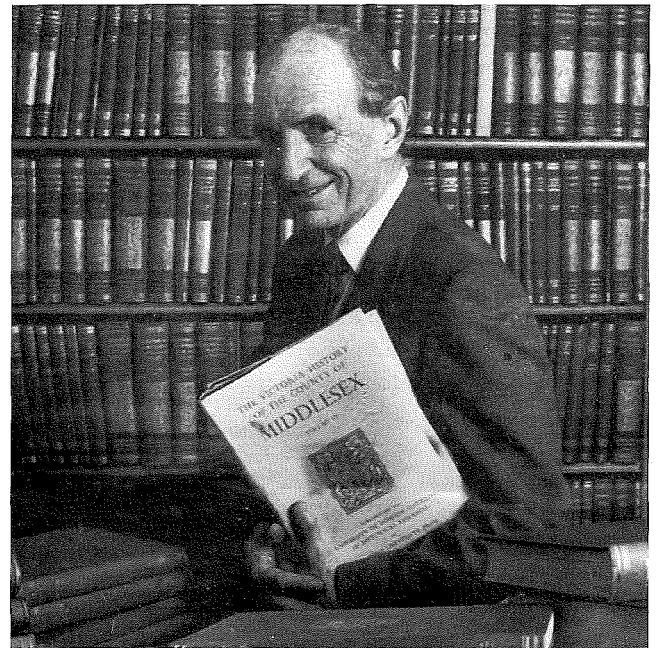
Numbers are limited to a minimum of 20 and a maximum of 30. The cost is £15, made payable to Camden History Society. Applications and cheques should be sent to John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL. Applications should be made as soon as possible as we wish to ensure that we can meet the minimum number required.

Christopher Elrington

Many members will have seen from obituaries in national newspapers that our President, Professor Christopher Elrington died on 3 August.

Christopher, born in 1930, was educated at Wellington College and after national service was at University College, Oxford. In 1954 he joined the Victoria County History project, one of the largest and most comprehensive academic studies in the world which, county by county, seeks to provide accurate and extensive information on every parish in the country. Founded in the 1890s, there are now over 200 volumes in their distinctive red bindings.

Christopher was appointed editor of the Gloucestershire volumes in 1960 and over the next



eight years he and his assistant editors produced two volumes containing histories of more than 50 places - an exceptional speed of scholarship and production. In 1968 Christopher became deputy editor of the whole VCH project under Ralph Pugh, and succeeded the latter in 1977. In the 1980s he headed a team of 30 professional historians spread across a dozen counties. Sadly, work on the Middlesex volumes ground to a halt for lack of funding some years back. Though Hampstead has been covered, St Pancras and Holborn have not.

In 1996 Christopher, to mark his retirement, set off on a 1,100 mile walk around the country, seeking to raise funds for VCH. He went through 39 counties.

Christopher became our President twenty years ago in 1989. He has been a regular and valuable attender at our committee meetings and he will be much missed by all of us and many people in the academic world. In his last months, despite the seriousness and prognosis of his illness, he remained as affable, humorous and self-effacing as he has always been, philosophical about what was to happen.

We extend to Jean, his wife since his time at Oxford, together with their two children, our sincere sympathy.

MEDICINE IN THE BLITZ Camden 1939-45

Historian Kevin Brown will be talking on this subject at Camden Local Studies and Archives at Holborn Library on Friday 25 September at 1pm.

Civilians were on the frontline in the Second World War and in as much danger as servicemen on the battlefield. The war placed unprecedented demands on civilian health services. Children and hospital patients were evacuated from inner London, involving unprecedented co-operation between such great voluntary hospitals located in what is now the borough of Camden as UCH, Great Ormond Street and the Royal Free, then run as independent charities, and the municipal hospitals. The Italian Hospital was closed down. While hospital services for wounded servicemen and air raid casualties were co-ordinated, health services for the average Londoner came under greater pressure. There were reduced school medical services and fewer midwives than before the war, doctors were called up, hospitals bombed, medicines in short supply and sanitary conditions in many of the public shelters horrendous. Yet it was patriotic to be fighting fit and Londoners were urged to stay as healthy as possible to help win the war. Kevin Brown discusses how the people of this area stayed healthy in an age of total war.

Admission is free. There are no bookings, so please arrive early to avoid disappointment.

'Up to no Good'

An exhibition at Camden Local Studies and Archives from 5 October to 4 December will showcase Groundwork North London's 'Up to no Good' initiative which aims to foster inter-generational relationships through exploring heritage and the arts. Between September 2005 and December 2008 six projects were run, two in each of the boroughs of Islington, Camden and Westminster. These allowed young and older people, who might not otherwise have met to get to know each other through various activities including photography, claywork and film-making. The participants also had the opportunity to explore local heritage and visit sites of historical interest.

This exhibition gives an overview of the programme as well as displaying some of the collaborative work created. The Centre is closed on Wednesdays and Sundays.

London Statues

Peter Matthews of the Museum of London is writing a completely new edition of Margaret Baker's book *Discovering London Statues & Monuments*, which covers the whole of Greater London. It is intended to include

all new statues erected since the last edition, published in 2002.

He writes: 'In my travels around central London I have already found a few new ones I wasn't expecting, so there may well be others put up in outer London I am unaware of. There may also be a few which deserve to go in and were missed in earlier editions of the book. This is where I need some help, as I want the book to be as complete as possible. If you know of any new statues or, if you know the book, any missed out previously, I would love to hear from you. I have also found that a few have been moved or even removed, so you might be able to update me on any in your area.'

I am talking here about commemorative statues, not public art. As well as statues and busts, this could include drinking fountains erected in someone's memory, wall plaques with a relief portrait, and war memorials - there are so many of the latter that I can only include a selection. I won't be including anything in a cemetery, or sculpture on the facades of buildings if it's only decorative (which it usually is), or statues inside buildings (with a few exceptions such as railway termini).

If you are able to help, you can contact me by email at: petermatthews674@btinternet.com or write to me at 20 Wenderholme, 68 South Park Hill Road, South Croydon, Surrey CR2 7DW.'

That Brass Band

In the last *Newsletter* we published a photograph of a brass band with a banner proclaiming King's Cross Mission Charlotte Street brass band. The question was, did this refer to Charlotte Street in Fitzrovia.

Rachel Dilworth of Camden Local Studies points out that the present Leeke Street off King's Cross Road was, until 1886, named Charlotte Street, as many streets in London were.

However, as the postcard was produced c.1905 it does seem unlikely that their banner would still be emblazoned with a street name that had been changed nearly twenty years earlier. The most likely solution comes from David Hayes, that there was a Charlotte Street off the lower end of Caledonian Road in Islington. The name of this road was changed in 1938 to Carnegie Street.

Selling Belsize

Our new publication, *The Streets of Belsize*, launched in May, is selling well. About 300 copies have already been sold.

THE LAMAS CONFERENCE

This year's local history conference is to be held on Saturday, 21 November 10-5 at the City of London School for Girls, Barbican. Its theme is Open-Air London - Pleasure, Parks and Protests. It includes 'Common People, Common Land: A History of London's Open spaces as places of protest', by Michael Berlin, and The Pleasure Gardens of London, a musical talk by Katrina Burnett with Kate Semmens and Steven Devine. See the website on www.lamas.org.uk for more details. Tickets, including tea, are £10, from Local History Conference, 24 Orchard Close, Ruislip, Middx HA4 7LS, or email annhignell@waitrose.com

WAR DEPARTMENT MARKINGS

George Richardson of Arkwright Mansions, notes in the *Camden New Journal* that at several places along Mill Lane, NW6 and at least one place in Frognal, there are what appear to be War Department markings on the old granite kerb stones, such as WD1940. Does anyone know why they are there? Do they signify some long-abandoned military use of the immediate vicinity?

Roger Cline thinks the answer probably relates to something geological rather than military. Robin Woolven doubts (though admits he could be very wrong) that the markings are related to the last war. From evidence at National Archives the London District's 1942 anti-tank lines (ATLs) planned around London was some distance north of Mill Lane. The exact position of the ATLs was supposed to be secret and the exact lines were to be kept from local officials so he doubts if kerb stones would have been inscribed with a WD. The only boundary Robin could see in his limited selection of maps is that the NW6 boundary appears to run along the north side of Mill Lane, while the 1888 northern boundary between Hampstead and Middlesex was not far away to the north.

LIFE AND DEATH PROJECT

Honorata Bor has written to say that she is leading a Heritage Lottery funded project in Hampstead parish churchyard, Church Row. Apart from improving the churchyard, she wants to involve volunteers in researching and collating historical information on people buried there. This will be used to design a guided walk and a sound trail. Volunteers can contribute just a few hours or take part in the 2-year duration. Her phone number is 7974 5178. Her email is honorata.bor@camden.gov.uk

Things to Come

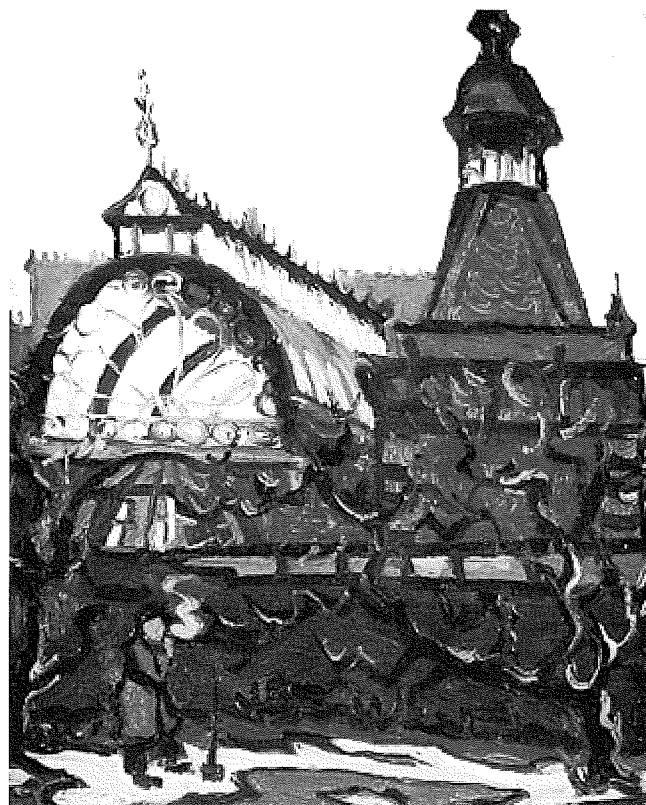
Please put these dates in your diary:

19 Nov: Howard Spencer on the History of the Blue Plaque scheme in London. At Burgh House.

17 Dec: Susan Jenkinson on London's shops.

A MYSTERY BUILDING

David Smith is trying to identify a building featured in a Kyffin Williams painting. It is thought to be in north London. Any information should go to him on djs@highgate.demon.co.uk.



Checking on War Memorials

The Greater London Authority has recently issued a report called *Not Forgotten - a review of London's War Memorials*. Of 6,000 memorials in London, 115 are in Camden. The GLA is anxious that these should be properly detailed and looked after. Lester May, who sent in this information, feels that possibly some members of the Society might be interested in helping out here. To see a copy of the report you can write to the GLA at City Hall, or else Lester, who is chairman for the talk on Tom Sayers on 17 September, will bring along a copy for inspection.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 236
Nov 2009

Peasants and Lords: 17th-century Hampstead

Thursday, 19 November, 7.30pm
Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre, Belmont Street, NW1
(road opposite The Roundhouse)

Tonight's talk is both a change of subject and venue from those previously advertised. This is because our original speaker, Howard Spencer, has had to postpone his talk on London's Blue Plaques until the new year. Peter Woodford has kindly at very short notice volunteered a talk based on the court rolls of Hampstead, the transcription of which he has been supervising for some time now.

The court rolls of the 17th century are fragile things in Latin: they have not previously been translated and transcribed. The CHS is paying for transcription to be done by an expert in such things, Mrs Pauline Sidell, and Peter Woodford is rendering her notes into type and putting them on our website. At the moment, transcription has reached 1693.

Peter Woodford's talk is about the life and times of Hampstead people as revealed in the rolls. We come across Golden Yard, the Hemispherium, Boades Corner and Syles. For the first time we have some contemporary glimpses of life on the farmlands in the tiny settlements outside of the then small Hampstead village centre. Several bits of information will require corrections to some of the official histories of Hampstead.

Things to come

Please put these dates in your new diaries:

21 Jan: Neil McIntyre *From Hatton Garden to Hampstead: buildings of the Royal Free*. At Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre.

Feb: To be announced

18 Mar: Alexander King on the history of the clockmaker, John Harrison

Apr: To be announced

20 May: Howard Spencer on London's Blue Plaques.

10 Jun: AGM with Sir David Cannadine.

London's shops - the world's emporium

Thursday, 17 December, 7.00pm
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Appropriately at Christmas time our December talk is about London shops - their history and the role they have played in Londoners' lives. The talk will be by Susan Jenkinson, a Blue Badge Guide, who some members will remember gave us an entertaining talk on relatively unknown London statues three years back.

Shops are not permanent establishments. Go through any directory of Oxford Street of fifty years ago and very few of the big names are left. And they are, of course, under threat today as never before. The pernicious advertisements in tube trains today, suggesting we go to either Harrods or Selfridges to view what we want to buy, then after discussing the merits of an item with an assistant, go and buy it cheaper online, is a clear warning to thoughtful consumers of the dangers ahead for the retail trade. The biggest threat to bookshops, for example, - even the big chain bookshops - is not illiteracy, but Amazon. As *The Times* revealed recently, in the first nine months of this year 731 independent bookshops stopped trading.

Well, that's the bad news. The good news, apart from the talk, is that for this Christmas meeting, which is pretty much 40 years after the preliminary meeting to establish the Society (see your new *Camden History Review*), we hope to have a celebratory cake to eat, as well as some wine to toast each other. Please note that such a junket will start at 7pm and the talk is at 7.30pm.

CLOSURE WEEK

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre will be closed from 7 December until 12 December inclusive so that the staff can undertake a number of tasks that they cannot do while open to the public. The Centre reopens on Monday 14 December.

The Society's Website

www.camdenhistorysociety.org

buy our publications online • check on events to come and past • download currently out-of-print publications • consult index to our Review and Newsletter • access to Hampstead Court Rolls • view sample pages from our publications

The Library Cuts

Members have been circularised with a letter written by me to Cllr Keith Moffitt, Leader of Camden Council, which protested at the proposals contained in a Report on the future of Camden's libraries, as they affected the Local Studies & Archives Centre at Holborn Library. Quite a few members also wrote to Cllr Moffitt on the same matter.

Since then the original proposal to delete one of the posts of senior librarian or archivist (in personal terms either the job of Aidan Flood or of Tudor Allen) has been dropped. Whether that is because of our opposition or that of the staff, I do not know, but those posts now seem safe. It seems too that the part-time job of Conservator, which also appeared to be under threat, is also to be retained.

However, the issue of the post of Head of Local Studies, at present held by Richard Knight, remained. I have been chided by Cllr Flick Rea for personalising discussions and for not restricting my comments to 'posts' - I have instead insisted on naming the personalities involved. I understand her position, but at the same time I do not believe that in discussion of this particular matter we can make our case and keep anonymous the identity, quality and attainments of the staff members involved. And in any case, we all know who we are talking about.

There was subsequently a meeting called by the Camden Public Libraries Users Group in early October to discuss the Report which as you may know covers the whole of the library service and proposes a good number of redundancies and a large expenditure on IT facilities, in particular the introduction of scanning machines to obviate the need for counter staff. This last proposal aroused considerable hostility amongst the packed audience, and in fact dominated a very unruly meeting that ended in disorder and confusion. In fact, it also led to great discourtesy to Cllr Rea and her colleagues.

Recently a final Report has been published on the internet and was the subject of a single member 'committee' meeting on October 28th at which, under the present system that now pertains in local government, only one councillor, the Chair of the committee that handles libraries, arts, sports etc, actually took part. No other member of the council, so far as I know, has been invited to comment on the proposals and by the time it comes to the full council the Report is pretty much a done job.

I attended this meeting and put the Society's final case. Again, I personalised our opposition to the proposal for Local Studies by naming the present head of Local Studies, because I don't think you can airbrush personalities out of this and ignore his many attainments by merely discussing a master plan. My statement, which was restricted to three minutes, ran as follows:

'I would first like to quote just one sentence from the Report we are discussing:

"The People work stream sits alongside service visioning, ICT procurement, spatial strategy, pilot RFID (radio frequency identification) enabled library and communications work streams."

I can only infer from this and much of the other language of the Report that not only have its compilers lost touch with the English language, but they have also stopped imagining their staff and public as human beings.

This is a plan, admirably, to increase the number of users of the library service and more, to rationalise the structure of posts within that service to reduce costs. But to fit within that tidy plan it is proposed to do away with the post at present filled by Richard Knight as head of the Local Studies and Archives Centre. He is mistakenly described in the Report as a 'generalist' whereas he is a specialist of many years standing. His post will be replaced by a person at PO3 level who is also to supervise two branch libraries and the information service. This person will not necessarily have knowledge of, or commitment to, Local Studies and he or she will probably spend most of his or her time outside of the Centre and, when within it, will have little knowledge, because of that absence, of its functions, visitors and day to day issues.

It seems to me extraordinary that possessing a Local Studies Centre which is reckoned to be the best of its kind in London, and that has increased its number of visitors by 500% since 1974 with the same number of staff, that the council now wish to diminish it. For there is no doubt that this will happen. Furthermore in 2008-9 it had 10,200 visitors - an increase of 16% over the previous year. This department is indeed getting more people into the library - and a lot of credit for that must go to Richard Knight and his team. And his reward is the implementation of a plan of gradings that has not the imagination or goodwill to deal with the slight anomaly of the Local Studies Centre in a sensible way. Why not leave the Local Studies Centre as it is?

All of this has been proposed with no consultation with interested organisations such as the Camden History Society and is pushed through without democratic process.

To make Richard Knight redundant is a travesty. He is highly respected in his profession and by his staff and public, and he has dedicated most of his professional life to Camden. To make him redundant so as to conform to a tidy plan is to my mind shabby and shameful. And below the standard that Camden should maintain towards its staff.'

In the event the Report was adopted unaltered in principle though further consideration will be given to fine tuning. We must hope that Flick Rea's notable dedication to public libraries will result in a solution that everyone will approve. But your committee's view still remains, that though there might be some merit in reorganising the staff structure within the Libraries department, as regards Local Studies, if it ain't broke, don't fix it.

At the meeting on October 28 there were two other deputations, one from Unison and the other from the Holborn Library Users Group, both of which argued against the Report and its proposals.

John Richardson

Ian Norrie

A foundation member of the Society, Ian Norrie, died on 12 September, aged 82. A number of tributes have appeared in national and local newspapers noting his distinguished role within the bookselling world of which he was a keen observer and frequent commentator. In particular he ran the famed High High Bookshop in Hampstead High Street. In its day his shop was the most comprehensive in London outside of the West End, and was a sociable place to browse and chat.

Ian, who always protested that he hated committees, was elected to the first council of our Society as from 1970. More importantly it was Ian who funded and published the first three titles in our 'Streets of...' series in collaboration with Christopher Wade. These publications were to be the base of some prosperity for the Society and the beginning of our long publishing programme.

Ian was regarded by some as a 'difficult' character. By that they meant he spoke his mind. It is true that he disliked overbearing officialdom and quite a few of his customers and suppliers annoyed him, but in my experience he was an entertaining, kindly and gregarious person. His later years were difficult for him. With the establishment of Waterstone's in the High Street he realised that his day as an independent bookseller in Hampstead would become problematic and possibly uneconomic. Then, sadly, his wife Mavis died in 1998 and he himself became increasingly crippled by arthritis. And yet he continued to be active in many of the things he liked – the book world, the Garrick Club and writing. He will be much missed by many.

John Richardson

Visit to the Garrick Club

Enough members have enlisted to reach the minimum number required to visit the newly restored Garrick Club on 3 December 10-12 (£15, which includes coffee and biscuits). We are allowed up to 30 in the tour so if any more members wish to come, please send your application and cheque made out to Camden History Society to John Richardson at 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL. If you want to bring a friend please do.

Visit to Turner's House

The Society's visit to Turner's House, Sandycombe Lodge, Twickenham, on 10 October was much enjoyed. The house, once isolated, was built by Turner c. 1812, sitting on the highest point of a large plot which sloped sharply towards the Thames. It is now surrounded by other properties dating from the 1880s. Catherine Parry-Wingfield, an art historian, lecturer and chair of the Friends of Turner's House and a Trustee of the Sandycombe Lodge Trust, gave us first a tour of the outside (stucco and painted brick), in particular of the rear where the likely

influences of Turner's friend John Soane were pointed out. Then we had a room by room tour of the ground and basement rooms (5 in all). The top floor rooms are occupied, but the top-lit staircase can be seen from the hall – very Soane.

The house was intended by Turner as a rural retreat from his busy London life, and, with Soane, as a base for fishing. Though Turner enjoyed the company of fellow artists and others, he was not always at ease, our guide told us, with London's social scene.

The small villa consists of a central portion of 2 floors above ground with a basement half submerged, plus two side wings each of which had a storey added between 1826 and 1900. The ground floor wings were used for a dining room and, perhaps, a bedroom. Beneath the dining room is the kitchen and beneath the central ground floor room is a small eating room with original cupboards. The deep set window looking out on the rear garden has a curved upper frame, giving the view a frame similar perhaps to that under the arch of a bridge.

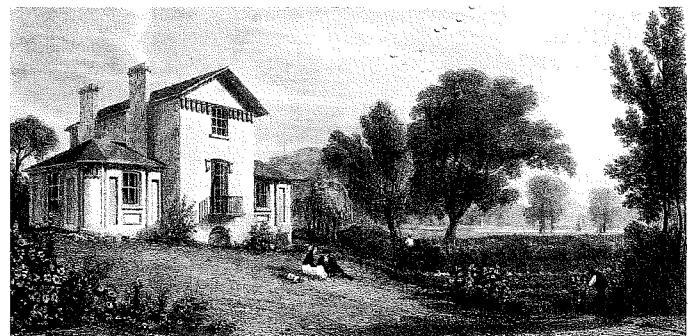
The main central room on the ground floor has a central 'French' window, retaining its original internal shutters. Professor Livermore, the house's owner, greeted us. He described his acquisition of the house in 1948. It had been used during World War II as a small factory for the making of helmets. His aim on purchase was to ensure that its fabric was sound and that it was decoratively in order but not otherwise to modernise or alter it, though he and his wife had it as their principal residence. Because of this it is easier to imagine the house in Turner's time. There is an elegant black and gold marble fire surround in the dining room, which is original, with carved roundels, another indication of Soane's influence perhaps. But otherwise decoration is sparse apart from the deeply recessed panels on the curved side wings, topped by a band of triglyphs (which may be seen in the engraving below).

The house was lived in for much of the time by Turner's father, William, a retired barber and wigmaker, who gardened enthusiastically and travelled, courtesy of local market gardeners, to the West End to open up JMW's gallery.

The Society members then had a generous lunch at the 1730s home of our guide in Montpelier Row, which overlooks the grounds of Marble Hill.

Helen English

A 19th-century view of the rear of Turner's house.



New publications

With this edition of the *Newsletter* is enclosed **Camden History Review** No 33, once again edited by David Hayes and designed by Ivor Kamlish.

To mark the 40th anniversary of the Society there is an account, discovered by Ann Saunders, of the inaugural meeting on 27 November 1969 which led to the formal establishment of the Society the following year. It includes details of the address given by Sir John Summerson and various questions and answers at that meeting, together with a list of those involved in the early committee.

The Women's bathing pond at Highgate is well-known, but the men's bathing pond gets less attention - perhaps because it is on public view. This is rectified by a long article on the pond, with some excellent illustrations. Dr Southwood Smith and his extended family, which included housing reformer Octavia Hill, are dealt with in two articles by Isabel Raphael and David Hayes. Marion Kamlish has unearthed an extraordinary story of a man who lived under an assumed name in Park Village East, who was dubbed the 'Napoleon of Crime'. Ruth Jennings contributes the story of Archibald Campbell Barclay in the early days of the sect called the Catholic Apostolic Church.

To Paradise by Way of Gospel Oak

by Rosalind Bayley

104pp 40 ills (many in colour) softback £8.50 plus £2 p&sp; published by Camden History Society (from Owl Bookshop, Kentish Town or by post from Roger Cline - address below)

The enthusiasm of the author for her home in Lissenden Gardens shines throughout this book. She recounts how a failing business in Swiss Cottage supplying electricity to local households in the early days of that industry was rescued by the owner marrying the daughter of an estate developer, who then built houses which became customers for the electricity. The electricity man bought up villas on the Highgate Road (opposite Grove Terrace and built in their grounds the now 100-year-old blocks along Lissenden Gardens. Arguments with the local planning department restricted the blocks to 5 storeys (to avoid providing lifts) and forced the purchase of further land leading down to Gordon House Road so that there was a street running through the blocks rather than a cul-de-sac.

The developer's family continued as benevolent landlords until rental legislation and advancing years prompted a sale around 1970. When it seemed one of those ill-famed huge landlord companies was going to buy them up, the tenants' association managed to persuade Camden Council to take them on and the arrangement still seems to be working.

After the sale, the original family disappeared from the scene, which made the author's research difficult, but she eventually traced a will which led her to descendants of one of the beneficiaries in Australia and Canada, who were able to fill in the history of the family's management of the estate before the sale.

There is quite a bit about the tenants and their varied lives. One of them is an artist whose paintings of life in the flats enliven the book. There is so much to enjoy here by everyone - not just those who live in the flats - from architecture, through planning history as flats became popular 100 years ago, wartime tales, social history of rented flats in the fifties to seventies, to the thriving community who clearly love the flats and their history.

Roger Cline

The Hampstead Book

144pp 160 ills softback £14.50

Historical Publications Ltd ISBN 978-1-905286-33-1

This A-Z of the history of the buildings and notable people and events of Hampstead is written by Society member, Steven Denford, author/ editor of a number of our 'Streets of...' volumes. Profusely illustrated, it covers the whole of the old area of Hampstead. A review of this will be featured in the next *Newsletter* and members are invited to a talk-cum-launch in the not too distant future. But in the meantime it is on sale (an excellent Christmas present) at bookshops.

A TALK ON WEST HAMPSTEAD

Marianne Colloms and Dick Weindling are giving a talk on West Hampstead at West End Lane Books, 277 West End Lane, NW6 on Thursday 10 December at 7.45pm. All are welcome.

YOUR SUBSCRIPTION

The last time the Society raised its subscription was in 2001, and the possibility of increasing it was discussed at the last AGM. Following views expressed by members, it has been decided not to raise subscriptions for 2010, but instead to increase the price of publications where it seems advisable.

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