

newsletter

No 249

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Jan 2012

The Garrett Ladies of Gower Street – designers

Thurs. 19 Jan, 7.30pm

2 Gower Street WC1 (east side, near Bedford Square)

Our speaker this evening, Elizabeth Crawford, recently published a book about three ladies closely related to the famous doctor and hospital pioneer, Elizabeth Garrett Anderson. They chose, however, an entirely different career, once again one much dominated by men in the late 19th century. They established a well-known firm of designers of furniture and textiles.

The talk will be given in the house where the Garrett ladies lived, which is now owned by Royal Holloway College. However, accommodation is limited to 35, and the building is secure, so that the doorkeeper will need to have a list of members attending. At the time

of writing we have 25 applications for entrance - so if you would like to be there, please contact Peter Woodford soon - details on p4 of the *Newsletter*.

We are also promised a viewing of a spectacular ceiling in the building.

Charles Dickens and the Cleveland Street workhouse

Thurs. 16 February, 7.30pm

Camden Local Studies Library, Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road WC1

In 2012 there will be numerous events to celebrate the 200th anniversary of the birth of Charles Dickens. No doubt radio and television will also do him proud. Our talk in February, by Dr Ruth Richardson, touches upon one aspect of his life. For the last two years Dr Richardson has been prominent in a campaign to save what was once the Strand Union Workhouse in

The old Strand Union Workhouse. Photo: Ruth Richardson.



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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!

Cleveland Street, probably the oldest surviving workhouse building in London. It had been used by Middlesex Hospital for many years, but with the removal of that hospital to merge with UCH in the new building off Euston Road, its future looked bleak. Indeed developers had some sort of permission to demolish it – and it wasn't listed.

The chances of saving it were not good. There was not a large volume of support and the building, though handsome, is not remarkable. However Dr Richardson by chance discovered that Charles Dickens lived just around the corner from it in his early years and she has proposed that there is a good chance that the old workhouse was indeed the model for the one in *Oliver Twist*. Having persuaded enough people of that, the building is now listed!

We are meeting at Camden Local Studies where there will be an exhibition on Charles Dickens and his life in Camden - he lived at numerous addresses in the borough, so if you want to view that at leisure please come earlier than 7.30pm.

Please note: the main library closes at 7pm. There will be no entry to the building from the Johns Mews entrance, and entry at Theobalds Road will be near the main entrance by a side door, where someone will let you in.

Things to Come

Please put these dates in your new diary:

15 Mar: Karen Butti, architect. *The History and significance of the Mary Ward Settlement*

19 Apr: Prof. Michael Port. *The pre-Fire Survey of the Palace of Westminster, 1834.*

24 May: Monica Gros-Hodge. *Arts and Crafts Protagonists in Queen Square and surroundings.*

21 June: AGM. Rosie Caley. *Thomas Cubitt's Woburn Walk.*

19 July: David Hannah. *History of the Cumberland Basin.*

August: Annual Outing

September: To be decided.

18 October: David Taylor. *A Hampstead Coterie: The Carrs and Lushingtons.*

The Camden Town School of Photography

Caroline Hotchin wonders if anyone has information of this school of photography. It was run by Diviani and Monte in the early 1900s from a studio behind the Mother Red Cap (now the World's End). Monte was her great-great-grandfather.

Her email is caroline_hotchin@mac.com

New Blood

Our Treasurer, Henry Fitzhugh, has told us that membership of the Society has grown to 368, the highest it has been for quite a few years. Furthermore the Society is in good financial health. This is very good news and it indicates that the Society is doing well in its 42nd year.

The Society, however, will only remain robust and active if your Council and officers can be joined by younger members. I do urge those of you who would like to be on our Council – we meet six times a year - to please put your names forward.



To actually swim in a Highgate pond requires resolution, but to swallow dive from this height takes courage as well. This is a Mr Mauritz. Date unknown.

A Better Life

The Society has recently published a paperback called *A Better Life*, by Olive Besagni, which is based on oral histories of 40 Italian families who settled in what became known as 'Little Italy' in the area of Clerkenwell Road, during the 19th and 20th centuries. Vestiges of that settlement survive - shops and a large church, and an annual procession, and still a number of Italian residents.

The book, designed by Ivor Kamlish, and priced at a modest £7.50, is profusely illustrated. It has already sold 800 copies. It may be obtained either at CHS meetings or else direct from our Publications Secretary Roger Cline whose contact details are on page 4.

The Changing face of Tottenham Court Road

Before and after the last war Tottenham Court Road was particularly noted for its furniture shops, in particular Maple's and Heal's. Nowadays, it is more identified, at least at its southern end, with computer technology shops. But in 1802 it was a street of many types of businesses, as Holden's 1802 Directory shows, and certainly varied enough to please Mary Portas. The numbering is of the period.

| | |
|----|--|
| 1 | shoe warehouse |
| 2 | coal warehouse, baker |
| 3 | hairdresser, tallow chandler |
| 4 | cheesemonger |
| 5 | pawnbroker |
| 6 | surgeon |
| 7 | tailor, |
| 8 | confectioner, chandler, chemist |
| 9 | smith and bellhanger, dairyman, tea dealer |
| 10 | umbrella maker |
| 11 | wine and brandy vaults |
| 12 | straw and Leghorn manufacturer, carpenter and undertaker, sadler |
| 13 | organ makers, apothecary, |
| 14 | plumber, glazier, tailor, stationer, writing master |
| 15 | calenderer, carvers, tailor |
| 18 | china dealer |
| 19 | baker |
| 21 | tallow chandler |
| 26 | potato warehouse |
| 29 | carpenter, currier |
| 30 | ironmonger |
| 31 | linendraper, hosier |
| 34 | hosier |
| 35 | wheelwright |
| 37 | cheesemonger |
| 39 | sadler |
| 42 | bootmaker |
| 43 | waistcoat and breeches maker |
| 45 | tallow chandler |
| 49 | baker |
| 51 | china dealer |
| 52 | brush warehouse |
| 54 | stationer |
| 55 | potato warehouse |
| 56 | bread and biscuit bakers |
| 60 | bootmaker |
| 61 | chandler |
| 63 | cheeseman |
| 65 | tobacconist |
| 71 | cabinet maker |
| 75 | tailor |
| 80 | goldsmith |
| 81 | bookseller |
| 87 | coal merchant |
| 88 | tea dealer |
| 90 | tin man, perfumer |
| 91 | grocer |
| 94 | cheesemonger |

| | |
|-----|--------------------------|
| 95 | tobacconist |
| 97 | bricklayer |
| 100 | china dealer |
| 103 | bootmaker |
| 105 | grocer |
| 107 | pawnbroker |
| 110 | candle supplier |
| 111 | cabinet maker |
| 113 | oil and pickle warehouse |
| 115 | surgeon |
| 118 | tinplate worker |
| 120 | cornchandler |
| 122 | bootmaker |
| 126 | carpenter |
| 127 | saddle maker |
| 133 | cheesemonger |
| 134 | tallow chandler |
| 135 | surgeon |
| 136 | bread and biscuit baker |
| 137 | chemist |
| 138 | oil warehouse |
| 142 | tea dealer |
| 143 | bootmaker |
| 144 | chandler, tea dealer |
| 145 | surgeon |
| 148 | upholsterer, undertaker. |

Unnumbered

cornchandler
tea merchant
upholsterer
timber merchant
saddle-tree manufacturer
horse dealer
musical instrument maker
iron founder
haberdasher
composition ornament maker
engine makers
dealer in Russian tallow
glass maker
mason
statuaries

John Richardson

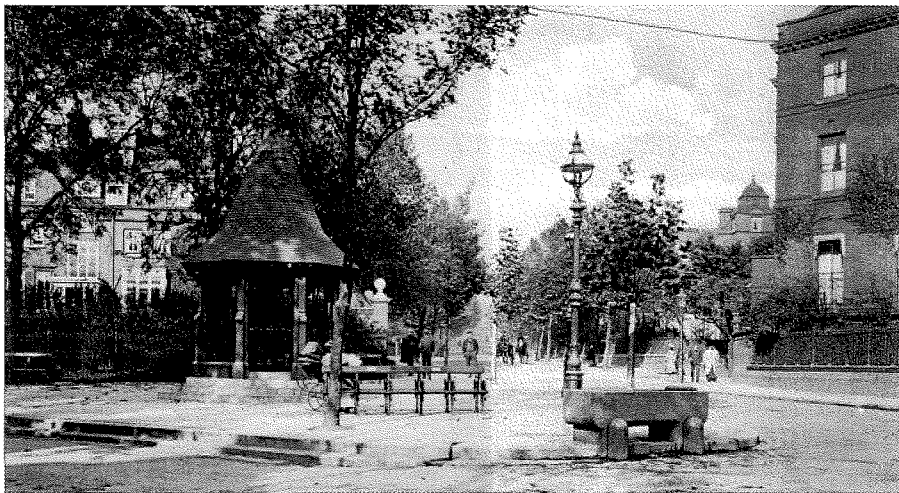
A COACH OUTING?

In the last *Newsletter* we showed a group of men, all respectably dressed and hatted, standing outside the shop of Herbert Slator in Warden Road, Kentish Town. They obviously were not staff. But who were they and why were they there?

Leslie Goulding suggests that they were gathered for a coach outing and notes that the figure at the extreme right of the group seems to be wearing some sort of uniform cap - a coach driver perhaps?



Scenes from Bagnigge Wells. These two satirical illustrations of Bagnigge Wells appeared c. 1778. The establishment was in King's Cross Road, north of today's Mount Pleasant post office, with the River Fleet running through its grounds. It enjoyed a long and quite fashionable life during most of the period when spas and medicinal wells were in vogue.



Fitzjohn's Avenue, c1905, complete with gazebo shelter and a horse trough.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) e.mail roger.cline@gmail.com

The Publications Editor and Meetings Co-ordinator is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

No 250

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Mar 2012

A Touch of Colour

This is the 250th edition of the *Newsletter* – the first one appeared in 1970. So, we are marking this in colour and with an extended number of pages.

Building for a social purpose: the Mary Ward Settlement

Thurs. 15 March, 6.30

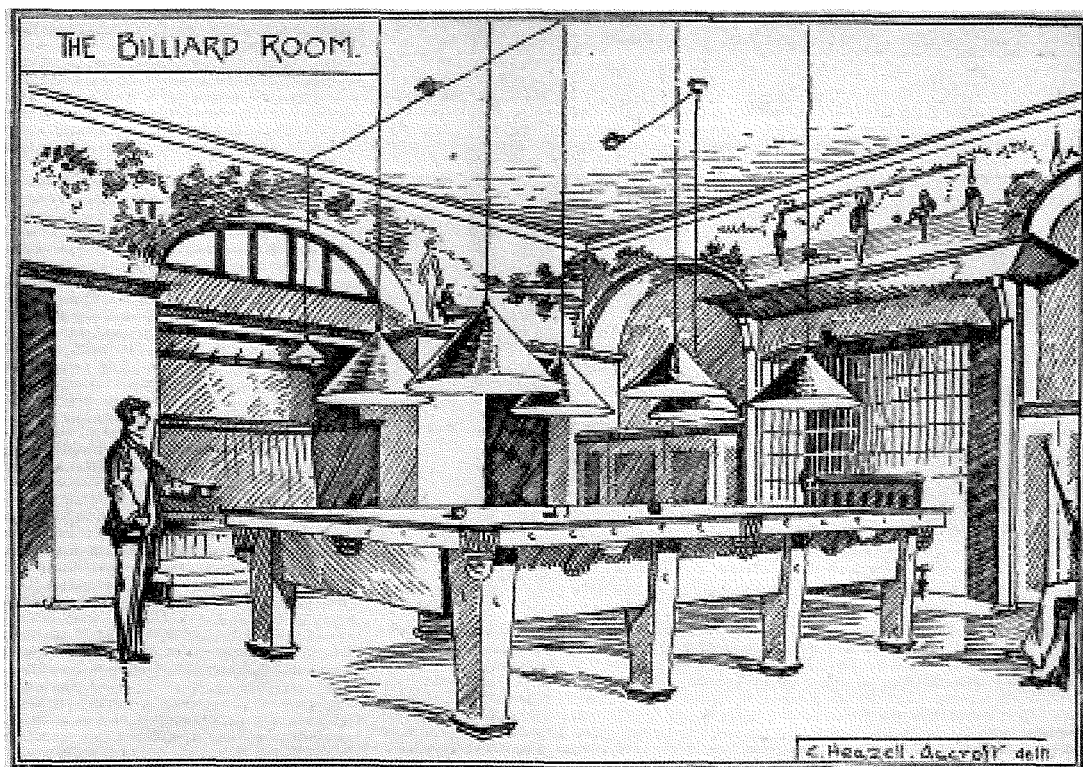
Burgh House, New End Square NW3

The Passmore Edwards Settlement (later the Mary Ward Settlement) opened at 5-7 Tavistock Place in 1898. Now in private hands, the building is distinctively Arts and Crafts, designed by Arnold Dunbar Smith and Cecil Brewer. Mary Ward's social project

began in Gordon Square in 1890, and attracted the attention of philanthropist Passmore Edwards, who funded the new headquarters in Tavistock Place. Mary Ward was a pioneer in the field of education for disabled children, and in play centres, but her idea, fairly unusual at the time, was to set up a local community venue offering education, playtime, advice and legal services. Mary Ward (1851-1920), a grand-daughter of Thomas Arnold, was also a popular novelist. Surprisingly, despite her commitment to social reform, she was a vehement opposer of female suffrage.

The subject of our talk in March is the building itself, and our speaker is Karen Butti who has made a detailed study of its funding, building and social significance. The Mary Ward Centre itself moved to 42 Queen Square in 1982. Ms Butti was also kind enough to supply the illustrations we show.

The billiard room at the Mary Ward Settlement in Tavistock Place.



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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!



The Library in the former Mary Ward Settlement building.

Things to Come

Please put these dates in your diary:

24 May: Monica Gros-Hodge. *Arts and Crafts Protagonists in Queen Square and surroundings.*

21 June: AGM. Rosie Caley. *Thomas Cubitt's Woburn Walk.*

19 July: David Hannah. *History of the Cumberland Basin.*

August: Annual Outing

20 September: Robert Thorne. *The Restoration of St Pancras station and the Midland Grand Hotel.*

18 October: David Taylor. *A Hampstead coterie: the Carrs and Lushingtons.*

15 November: Marian Kamlish. *Unearthing Redpath.*

13 December: Caroline Barron. *Celebrating Christmas in medieval London.*

CHS on Twitter

Lester May has registered the CHS on Twitter. Those of you who are internet savvy may have already found the Camden History Society's first venture into the world of social networking and microblogging. Occasional tweets from our account @CamdenHistory will keep 'followers' aware of meetings, publications, key dates in Camden's history and other information about the Society. Go to www.twitter.com/CamdenHistory and follow us.

TRACKING A RAILWAY WORKER

David Thomas is trying to track relatives of Walter Looney, who worked in the railway stables off Chalk Farm Road. Thirty-five years ago, when he was aged 78, he gave an interview about his work there. Anyone who can help should let David know on 020 7928 8702, or on davidthomas36@talk21.com

Survey of the Palace of Westminster before the 1834 fire.

Thurs 19 April, 7.30pm

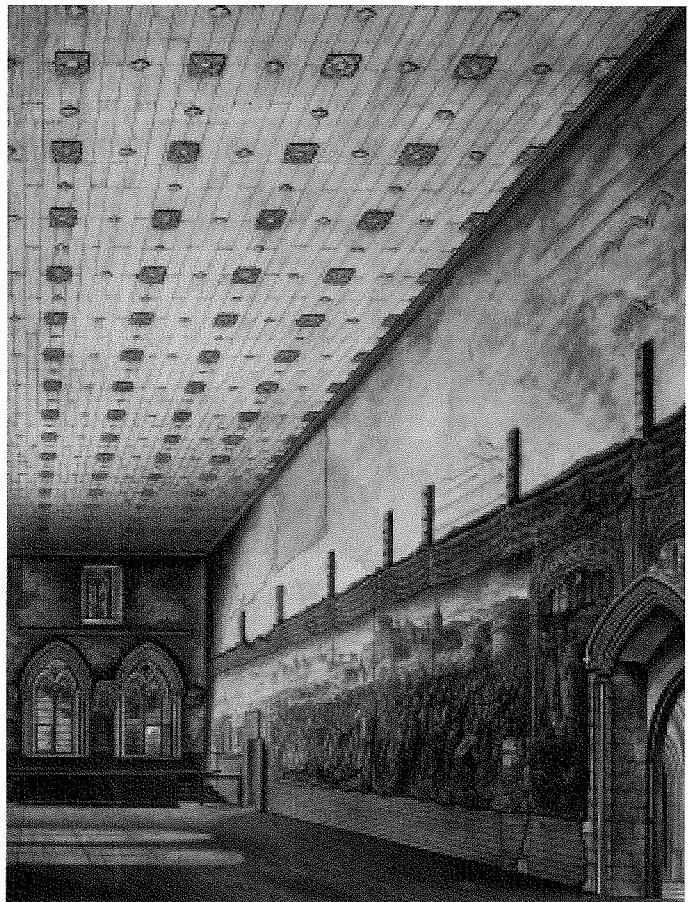
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

Much of the medieval Palace of Westminster burned down in a disastrous fire in 1834. The present Houses of Parliament, together with the surviving Westminster Hall, are a magnificent consequence, but our picture below of the old Painted Chamber shows us some of the splendour that was lost in the blaze.

Fortunately, before the fire a large-scale survey of the condition of the old Palace of Westminster was undertaken with a view to extensive restoration work. The reports of the surveyor have only recently been uncovered and studied by Professor Michael Port, who is our speaker in April. The facsimile plans will be available for inspection before and after the talk, although they will of course be projected in the course of the lecture. Members can also buy Professor Port's publication on this subject, published by the London Topographical Society last year.

William Capon's 'View of the interior of the Painted Chamber, looking east', a watercolour of 1799. Before the medieval wall paintings were exposed in 1819, the walls were hung with tapestries. The king's state bed stood at the far end of the room.

© Society of Antiquaries, London



Local Studies and Archives

As previously reported, Camden Council set up a working party, for some reason called a Reference Group, to make recommendations to the Council, as to the future of Local Studies and Archives. This was subsequent to the decision to agree with CHS, that the department and its archives should be kept in Camden and not be exported as was first tentatively proposed.

The Reference Group, on which the CHS was represented, consisted mostly of members who themselves were archivists from outside the borough, plus others from local Library Users Groups. They included Malcolm Todd from National Archives, David Mander from Archives for London and Tamsin Bookey from Tower Hamlets Heritage.

We were faced with the firm proposal from the Council that the budget for Local Studies and Archives (LSA) as from April 2012 had to be cut by £70,000. It was perfectly obvious that it would not be possible to raise this in income generation. Therefore it had to be taken as read that two posts in Local Studies would be abolished. This left Local Studies at its lowest staff numbers for many years - with only one professionally qualified staff - the invaluable Tudor Allen, the Archivist. We were opposed to this, but the Council's mind was made up. The Council was also resolute that there should no longer be a Local Studies Librarian, but only staff on the enquiry desk who, if required, could be transferred to less specialised duties in other libraries. This meant, as we pointed out, that this acted as a deterrent to staff to commit themselves to local studies and the collection so as to be of greater use to members of the public.

Despite this, the overall aims of LSA were expansionist in the final Report to the Council Cabinet. However we, while understanding the present financial problem for Camden, could not see how the reduced LSA department could possibly cope with a programme of digitisation and increased outreach activities. Malcolm Todd in fact warned us that in the experience of National Archives digitisation was so successful that it brought even more visitors to the actual Search Rooms. As from April opening hours at LSA will be cut as well.

On the bright side, it does seem possible - I put it no stronger than that - that when Cockpit Yard to the rear of Holborn Library is redeveloped (it contains in one part of it the LSA archive store), a new archive store of proper standard could be included and that Local Studies could, via the main library building, be given a better public presence.

All of this has yet to go to Council at the time of writing, so it may of course be amended.

I found rather discouraging one aspect of the official approach to the function of LSA. We were reminded

a number of times of a per-visitor cost compared with that of a user of a general lending library. This seemed to me to show little understanding of the nature of research. It isn't taken up by enormous numbers of people, but those who do pursue it spend hours in search rooms and do need a reference facility to be comprehensive, with knowledgeable staff, so as to make their efforts fruitful. If public authorities are not to provide such a facility, who will?

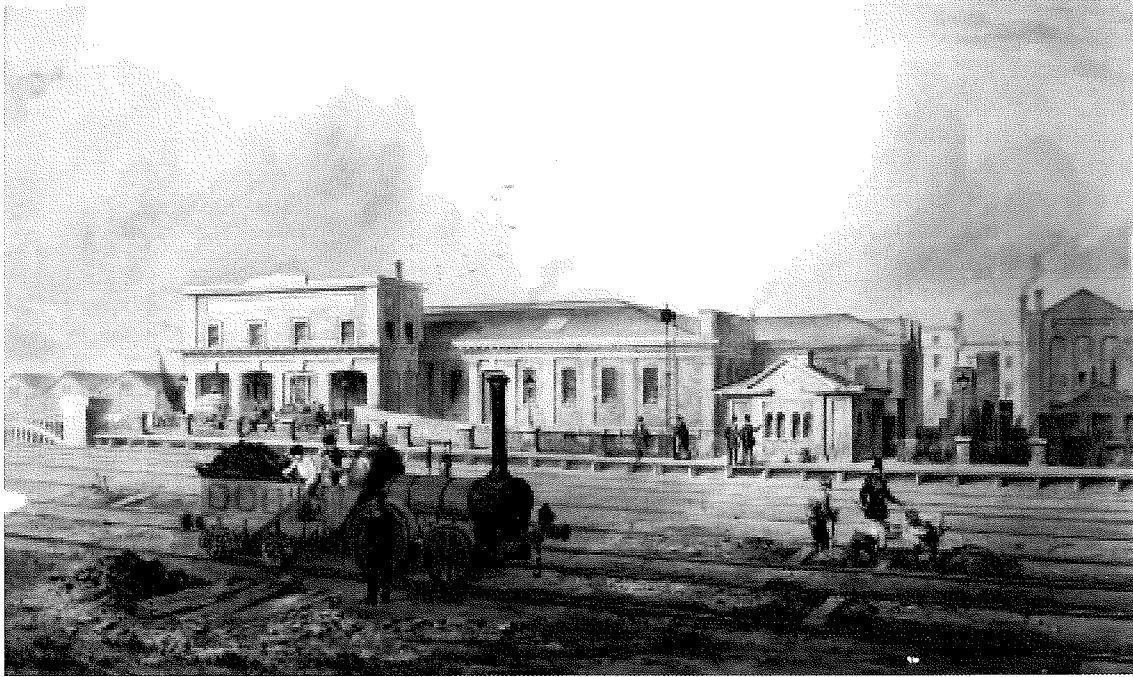
John Richardson

Many Cultures One Community? Kentish Town History Project

This project, which has been awarded funding under the Heritage Lottery Fund's Young Roots scheme, will study the social and cultural heritage of the Kentish Town West area, and the diversity which has characterised its development from 1945 onwards. The primary focus will be the struggles of the local community for resources and self-expression and the growth of community-based groups such as the Caraf Centre and the Talacre Gardens Community Centre.

The key aspiration of the project is to engage local young people in the rich history of their area and encourage them to take the lead in organising the planned activities. We are working closely with organisations such as the Camden Archives, the London Metropolitan Archives and the Bishopsgate Institute to enable youngsters to achieve outcomes such as the collection of oral history records, the creation of a mobile history exhibition and the delivery of local history walks. The project will culminate in a carnival procession in September 2012 through Kentish Town and an event in Talacre Gardens which will celebrate the post-war history of the area through music and the performing arts. In addition to stimulating young people's interest in the area's history, the project aims to equip them with skills to help them in the future such as archive research, data collection, and most importantly participation in the organisation and management of a wide range of activities.

We are very fortunate in having Jerry White on board as our guiding mentor and as much of the success of the project depends on source material, we would welcome support and participation from anyone who may have knowledge of the history of this area, relevant press or magazine cuttings, pictures etc. Or simply any members who would like to help in some small way to make this venture a success, and hopefully have some fun on the way! Contact manyculturesonecommunity@gmail.com or call Sara on 07792 143296 for more information.



Camden Town Station

Camden Town Station and Pickford's Shed, 1848 (W H Prior)

(Watercolour held at the National Railway Museum; use of image by kind permission of SSPL/Science Museum)

The watercolour drawing reproduced above provides a remarkable amount of detail. The general view is of the short-lived Camden Town Station passenger platform, taken from a south-westerly viewpoint near where St Mark's Crescent meets Gloucester Avenue. The station was located at the top of Camden Incline, the descent from the Regent's Canal to under the Hampstead Road Bridge north of the Euston terminus.

The railway tracks were raised some 14 feet above natural ground level to allow sailing barges to pass under the railway bridge. Oval Road, which provided road access to the Goods Depot at Southampton Bridge, was built up on vaults to the railway level, the vaults being used for goods storage. Access to Camden Town Station appears to have been via a passage off Oval Road between Pickford's goods shed and Collard & Collard's piano factory.

The mainline to Euston was built by Robert Stephenson for the London & Birmingham Railway (L&BR) Company, which merged with other companies to become the London & North Western Railway (LNWR) in 1846. Beyond the four rail tracks is the ticket collectors' office and the Bankriders' waiting room, built in 1846. Trains from Birmingham would stop at Camden for tickets to be collected. Bankriders were drivers of banking locomotives that assisted the main locomotive to haul the train of carriages from Euston up Camden Incline or Camden Bank.

Up until 1844 passenger trains had been drawn up Camden Incline by rope, powered by the winding engines located in the stationary winding engine

house (extant) under the mainline about 200 yards further up the track.

The locomotive in the picture is a 2-2-0 of Edward Bury's design first supplied in 1837 for the opening of the L&BR.

From the left, beyond the tracks, the painting shows:

- a) A pillar of the original 1837 bowstring arch railway bridge built by Robert Stephenson over the Regent's Canal
- b) The goods shed built in 1845 by the LNWR Company for Chaplin & Horne on the north side of the canal.
- c) The Regent's Canal represented by the sails of a Thames sailing barge
- d) Pickford's goods shed, after extension in 1845, leased from the LNWR (see below)
- e) Smoke rising over the centre of Pickford's shed from the tall chimney of the coke ovens in Camden Goods Depot
- f) The stucco fronted terrace of houses on the east side of Oval Road dating from c1835. This terrace was built a little before the Camden Flour Mills, located on the Canal in Oval Road, from whose chimney smoke is shown.
- g) Collard & Collard's piano factory and timber yard, established in Oval Road in 1847. In 1850 they added the Rotunda, which was destroyed by fire after less than a year. Towers of timber highlight the susceptibility of many buildings to fire.

The influence of public carriers of goods, of which Pickford & Co. were the largest, resulted in their obtaining the rights of carriage and distribution of goods on the L&BR. Pickford & Co. had purchased

land on the south side of the canal in 1839 and built a large goods shed, designed by Lewis Cubitt and constructed by W&L Cubitt, to provide interchange between canal, road and rail. A timber bridge over the canal, immediately on the west side of Southampton Bridge, provided a rail connection with the goods yard on the north bank. The shed had extensive stabling in the basement at wharf level, vaulted with brick jack-arched iron beams. It opened in December 1841.

Pickfords greatly increased the size of their shed in 1845, when a reduction in carriage rates caused a large increase in goods traffic volume. The enlarged shed is shown, its western façade stepped back twice from the canal frontage, where a horse road descends to stables for about 250 horses at basement level. Rail tracks entered the shed through the two openings shown left at ground floor level leading from a new wooden bridge immediately alongside the railway bridge.

The goods carriage policy was reversed in 1846, when complaints about the carriers reaping all benefits from reduction in tolls obliged the Company to purchase Pickford's shed, and carry out the rail carriage of goods through their own agents, as it had originally intended. The shed was reconstructed following a major fire in 1857 (graphically depicted in the *Illustrated London News*), after which time Pickford shared it with Chaplin & Horne. A second fire in 1867 may have persuaded them to vacate it.

Peter Darley

Aidan Flood retires

As part of the reduction of staff at Local Studies and Archives (see page 3) Aidan Flood, Local History Librarian, retired very much sooner than he would have expected. He joined Local Studies c.1995 and very soon authored a publication on Irish immigration into Camden. He became *the* expert on Camden's collection of pictures and photographs - a bank of knowledge that is going to be difficult to replace.

Always helpful and knowledgeable, he will be much missed and the Society wishes to thank him for all his assistance to us. He has written to say 'how impressed and grateful I have been for the work of the Camden History Society and its contribution to the Borough. It has been an absolute pleasure to work with members of the Society.'

A mystery picture

Aidan, before he left, sent us a picture which on the back is pencilled with the words 'Highgate see xviii bdf'. The *Survey of London* volume on Highgate is vol. xvii, but although the depiction is 'Highgatey' it doesn't seem to match any arrangement of properties in the village.

Aidan says the paper is probably early 1800s. There is no date or an artist's name.

Any member with suggestions, please let us know.



'Johnny the Gent'

Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms were intrigued by a short entry in the booklet '*Souvenir of St Pancras*' written in 1965 by John Richardson, which mentioned that in January 1951 one of the most famous crooks of the 20th century died in poverty in Camden Town.

Further research found an article in the *British Medical Journal* by Dr John Horder who at the time was a young GP. He was called to 39 Delancey Street: 'I was called one winter evening to a house in Camden Town, to a new patient. The door was opened by an old lady, who said nothing, but pointed to an upstairs room. There was no light in the room, but I could see a bed and a prone figure in it. This was an old man, complaining of chest pain. He was a lodger in the house and said that he ran a mission for children near King's Cross. Obviously ill and helpless, he refused to go to hospital then, refused again next day, but gave in on the third day on condition that he was admitted only to Bart's. There he went and died very soon. But he had given me a letter to post and it was addressed to a probation officer at the Old Bailey. As I was puzzled by this old man with a long and saintly face like an El Greco portrait, I rang the probation officer. "Oh, that must be Johnny the Gent," he said, "the most famous criminal of his day."'

In December 2011 Dick Weindling phoned Dr Horder, now in his 90s and still living in Regent's Park Road. While he remembered the incident he could not add further information.

'Johnny the Gent' was John Wood and there were numerous stories about him in the press. Supposedly, he was the son of a Yorkshire clergyman and as a young boy he went to America where for a short time he attended the Yale Divinity School. But he found he could earn a better living as a bank robber and he was one of the first people to use a stethoscope to listen to safe tumblers. In his first six months he took in more than a half a million dollars. He and a friend tried to rob a New York bank by tunnelling under the street, but it collapsed and his friend was killed.

Wood lived in luxury in America and Montreal where police and criminals nicknamed him 'Johnny the Gent' because of his smart clothes and genteel manner. After he returned to England, he made a large amount of money by gilding sixpenny pieces to look like sovereigns. He travelled on Atlantic liners posing as the Bishop of the Falkland Islands and conned passengers into giving him money for charity.

In 1907 the London newspapers carried the headline: *Mark Twain arrives, Ascot Gold Cup Stolen*. Johnny was questioned by the police about the theft but released. Later he said he had been involved, and the cup which was never seen again was melted down. But he could not always outwit the law and he spent almost half his life in gaol.

Dick and Marianne researched his family history and found that he was really John Bloomfield Wood, born in Shipley in 1872. His parents were Alfred and Fanny Wood who had moved to Shipley from Suffolk. Alfred Wood was not a clergyman but a labourer who stayed in Shipley.

John's death certificate, which was signed by Dr Horder, shows he died of kidney failure aged 78. At the time of his death 'Johnny the Gent' was living as plain 'Charles Waters' and earning only £7 a week as a clerk. He was buried in a public grave in St Pancras Cemetery.

If any member has further information please contact Dick Weindling at dweindling@blueyonder.co.uk

The Camden School of Photography

Subsequent to the enquiry for information on the Camden Town School of Photography in our last *Newsletter*, Dick Weindling has also spent time researching this.

The web, awash with very unusual information, provides some clues. It reveals that James Monte (1832-1902) was a Polish refugee who immigrated to England in the 1850s. He operated several photography studios in north London during the early 1860s until 1890. He then moved to Southend-on-Sea to open a studio there.

James taught each of his four sons the business. In late 1896, his three youngest sons, James, George and Dick, were employed by Haydon & Urry a firm that was developing its own cinematographic device and the Monte brothers were hired to produce 'animated photographs' for the new machine. The brothers made several of the films that Urry sold including a series of six films of Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee Procession on 22 June 1897.

The locations given for Monte studios are:
5 Sidney Place, Commercial Road E (1862-3) Jacob Montenev - presumably his real name.
Camden School of Photography, 172 Corner of High Street Camden Town 1867, facing the Mother Red Cap (Diviani & Monte)
Railway Place, Holloway Road, Islington
4 Greenland Place, Camden Town 1867-69 (back of the Mother Red Cap)
56 High Street, Camden Town 1868-86
Camden Town Portrait Rooms, 56 High Street, 1875. (Monte and Russell)
Parisian School of Photography, 78b Chalk Farm Road 1870-72
and then another eight addresses before the last in Southend.

The partnership between Monte and Diviani was dissolved by mutual consent, as noted in the *London Gazette*, 13 August 1867.



Pictures of Hampstead

Mary Hill was a prolific painter of watercolours of Hampstead, many of which were published (alas, only in monotone) in her book *Hampstead in Light and Shade* in 1938. However, she also had a number published in postcard form in colour. Two of these appear here. Above are cottages in Willow Road, and below is Downshire Hill with the church of St John in the background.



The Blind School at Hampstead

At the corner of Avenue Road and College Crescent, where now stands an office block numbered 100 Avenue Road, once stood a well-known school for blind children. It was built in 1848 and substantially enlarged in later years, and closed probably at the outbreak of the 2nd World War. The CHS in its Outing in 2005 visited Seal, where Dorton House is a school for the blind that traces its history back to the school at Swiss Cottage.

The Swiss Cottage school was the subject of a long article in the *Windsor Magazine* in 1900, together with a number of pictures.

The author, Philip Gibbs, writes:

'A visit to such an institution as the school at Swiss Cottage, maintained by the London Society for Teaching the Blind to Read, would do much to dispel the hazy ideas that are extant with regard to the helplessness of the blind. The first thing which astonishes a visitor, who has come with a heart full of pity, is the general happiness and even joyous air which seems to pervade the place. On a Saturday afternoon, for instance, when the students have free time, the grounds are full of merry girls skipping or running about, so that it is almost impossible for a sighted stranger to realise that they are blind. On the afternoon when the writer visited this school the girls were sitting in the grounds in horse-shoe form, knitting, sewing, playing chess or draughts, while their mistress was diverting them with sprightly gossip.

In the boys' playground the same cheerful air prevailed. A game of cricket was in progress among three or four younger boys, and they seemed to enjoy it as heartily as any English schoolboy. Truly a strange sight! How did these sightless youngsters know when and where to hit or throw the ball?

Some questions certainly frame themselves in the mind of any intelligent visitor to this school when he finds that the students possess a good elementary education and that many of them read and enjoy such difficult literature as that of Carlyle and Thackeray, and can write intelligently on any ordinary subject.

Even teachers of the blind cannot answer these questions fully. They can only tell you that their pupils learn to build up ideas by a comparative system through the medium of touch.

At the Blind School at Swiss Cottage the boys are taught clay-modelling. It is really remarkable to see the ingenious and intricate models which the boys build up. One of their latest achievements is a model which they call 'Portsmouth Harbour'.

Many ingenious systems have been invented to convey printed characters to the minds of sightless people. The most popular at the present day is the Braille system, which is the one in use at Swiss Cottage. At the Blind School the boys learn to print their own books [in braille].

Many of the pupils at this school are taught music, and they have achieved an excellent standard. When the writer visited, two young musicians were performing in the large concert-room, which is provided with a magnificent organ and a Broadwood which cost three hundred guineas. Many of the students are taught piano-tuning, and this knowledge enables them to earn their living in after-life when they have to leave the friendly shelter of this benevolent institution.'

Ropemaking at the Blind School



This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) e.mail roger.cline@gmail.com

The Publications Editor and Meetings Co-ordinator is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the *Camden History Review* is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 251

May 2012

Victorian Arts and Crafts protagonists near Queen Square

Thurs. 24 May, 7.30pm

Charlie Ratchford Resource Centre, Belmont Street, NW1.
(the road opposite the Roundhouse)

The Art Workers' Guild at no. 6 Queen Square was the centre of much inventive, sometimes revolutionary, activity in the designer world from its formation in 1884 and continues to this day to form a focus for artists and designers in all media. Contrary to popular belief, it was not founded by William Morris, though firmly wedded to his principles of truth and honesty in the arts; and also contrary to popular belief, it was not initially located in Queen Square, where it has been only since 1914. By curious coincidence in our programme of talks, no. 6 previously housed the architectural firm of Dunbar & Brewer, the architects of the Mary Ward Settlement so splendidly described by Karen Butti in our March talk.

Our speaker this evening is Monica Gros-Hodge, Secretary of the Art Workers' Guild.

The AGM and Woburn Walk

Thurs 21 June 6.30pm

The Place, 17 Duke's Road (off Euston Road, nearly opposite Euston Station)

This year's AGM is at a new venue, which in the daytime houses a group of dance studios and events, and which was once a drill hall. We will be in the Founders Room on the first floor: there is a lift if you need one. We begin at 6.30 with wine and light refreshments and the AGM starts at 7pm. The talk is at 7.30. It is a members only event.

Present office holders and council members are listed on the following page. Nominations should be sent to our Secretary, Jane Ramsay, at her address on page 4.

Our talk, to be given by Rosie Caley, will be about Woburn Walk, a picturesque and traffic free short road which runs from Duke's Road to Upper Woburn Place. It was built by Thomas Cubitt and has been carefully restored in recent times. A plaque on no. 5 commemorates the residence of the poet, W B Yeats.

Woburn Walk in 1922



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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!

The Society's present Officers and Council members are as follows.

PRESIDENT: Prof. Caroline Barron
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 CO-ORDINATOR: Dr Peter Woodford
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Vacant
LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Tudor Allen or his deputy

Council Members: Sheila Ayres, Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Richard Knight, Lester May, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Susan Palmer.

Please note that Dr Peter Woodford will not be standing again as Meetings Co-ordinator.

The Annual Outing – to Polesden Lacey and Claremont Landscape Garden

Saturday 18 August

The Outing will take place later than usual, to avoid the potential traffic problems of the Olympics.

We go first to Polesden Lacey, a Regency house extensively remodelled in 1906 by Mrs Greville, the Edwardian hostess, where she entertained royalty, politicians and members of high society. There are delightful gardens and views over the Surrey hills, stunning interiors and important collections of Dutch Old Masters and other paintings, Italian maiolica and English, European and Chinese porcelain, silver, bronzes and furniture.

Refreshments and lunch can be obtained at the coffee shop or the restaurant, or you can picnic in the grounds.

After lunch we move on to Claremont Landscape Garden. This is a tranquil 49-acre landscape, worked on at various times by Sir John Vanbrugh, Charles Bridgeman, William Kent and 'Capability' Brown. A lake is overlooked by a grassy amphitheatre and a grotto.

There is a licensed tearoom where you can get refreshments before the journey home.

The nearby Palladian mansion, which is not part of the Outing and now occupied by a private school, is the work of 'Capability' Brown, Henry Holland and the young John Soane.

The cost will be £33 which covers coach, tips and entrance charges. Both are National Trust properties, so NT members will be able to join the trip at a lower cost of £17.

A booking form is enclosed with this *Newsletter* and you are welcome to bring friends.

Another Royal Occasion

As we prepare in our own ways for the Queen's Diamond Jubilee, Robin Woolven thought we might like to have a local resident's very disgruntled account of George VI's Coronation Day in May 1937. This is taken from Anthony Heap's diary. He was then 27, unmarried, and had moved from Harrington Square to a flat in Hastings Street, to be nearer life in Central London. His mother's friend, Mrs Baxter, lived in Queen Alexandra Mansions, off Judd Street. 'Nigger' was the Baxter's dog.

'Coronation Day.

Up at 3.30 a.m. to go down and take up position on procession route with Mother.

Though still dark, lamps being extinguished on Russell Square as we walked through it at 4.0 on our way to Trafalgar Square. Too crowded already there (being the only point on the route which the procession passed twice both going and coming from the Abbey) so walked along a little way and took up our stand on what seemed a favourable view point at the bottom of the Haymarket. Here was a prospect of seeing the procession come up Cockspur St and pass into Pall Mall. And there we stood for ten hours. Mercifully the rain held off till the early afternoon though even then it caught the cavalcade on most of its journey. Cold and misty in the early morning, dull and warmer later, never bright at any time. As time went on we began to see the weakness of our position standing thirty or forty deep behind us in the Haymarket, the crowd kept moving us forward as pressure increased behind with the result that we in the front were continually crushed and cramped to an almost unpleasant degree. Women fainted by the dozen (or feigned fainting), ambulance men wading in to bring them out and so make the crowd worse. But what was even worse than this was the way the police with their usual inefficiency on these occasions, allowed people to come and stand in front of the barriers just in front of us at the last minute. Thus although they were only two deep in front of us when we arrived, they were three or four deep when the procession came along. Thanks to this sort of thing I scarcely [saw] anything of George V's funeral procession after waiting five hours. And thanks again to the wonderful way the police manage these things, I saw positively damn all of George VI's coronation procession today, either of the section of

troops which came by about 1.30 or the second main section escorting the carriages and coronation coach I did get a glimpse of the leading participants and even a glimpse of the King, fleeting as it may have been the Queen, by standing on tip toe and straining every muscle in my body to do it but for the rest, I just saw carriages with no view of their occupants at all. It was all most maddening. Very disappointed with things. I was glad when it was all over and we could get away, especially as it had started raining soon after 2.0 and a succession of heavy showers for the rest of the day. Must have spoilt things considerably.

Walked home and as soon as I got indoors I flopped on to the bed and slept for two hours. Got up at 6.15 and had tea, went out and bought papers, had dinner and listened to the King's speech on the wireless at 9.0, went round to Baxter's for me to take Nigger out while Mother stayed and chatted, intending to go up West to see the floodlighting after. But fate decided otherwise. For while running Nigger round I was beset upon by four hooligans outside a pub in Cromer St for no reason whatsoever, given a terrific punch in the left eye and another in the right jaw and sent sprawling in the muddy sand - had been flung at me and before I could recover from the surprise and collect my senses, found myself hurtled into Judd St by a few onlookers and advised to take my dog home as quickly as possible and mind my further consequences. Which I duly did rushing back to Baxter's and out again making a terrific noise, thereafter to go to police etc. However Mother and Mrs B followed me out and with the added inducements of some of the aforesaid onlookers, persuaded me to return to the Baxter's to repair the damage. By this time I managed to collect my senses and remembered that there was nothing else for it but to lump it. So sat round at Baxter's and had my eye bathed, dressed and drank some port and smoked a cigar. By a coincidence an old woman, a friend of Mrs B's, called to see her and recounted how she was set upon by two ruffians some time ago, robbed and seriously injured. So we seem to have come to a 'tough' neighbourhood. For all these years I never believed such things happened on London streets. Now I know. An experience anyway.

A minor consolation. By the time we left Baxter's it was too late to go up west (about 10.45) and raining hard. So it was just as well we hadn't gone. Came home and went to bed as soon as possible.

Total injuries: a painful swelling over left eye (I somehow missed a 'black' one) a lump on forehead and a very slightly stiff right jaw. And a slightly dirty mac, which, fortunately can be remedied more quickly than the other mishap, is that a lucky getaway? Or is it? The end of a perfect (Coronation) day!

Things to come

19 July: David Hannah. *History of the Cumberland Basin.*

18 August: Annual Outing

20 September: Robert Thorne. *The Restoration of St Pancras station and the Midland Grand Hotel.*

18 October: David Taylor. *A Hampstead coterie: the Carrs and Lushingtons.*

15 November: Marian Kamlish. *Unearthing Redpath.*

13 December: Caroline Barron. *Celebrating Christmas in medieval London.*

Book Review

Henrietta Barnett, Social Worker and Community Planner, by Micky Watkins, published by the author and the Hampstead Garden Trust, 2011, 320 pages (almost A4 size) in paperback, copiously illustrated, £14.95. Obtainable from Daunts or email mickywatkins@gmail.com. Postage extra £3.90. Her address is 50 Temple Fortune Hill NW11 7XS 8455 8813

This is a heavy book in all senses. Henrietta was born to well-off parents living in Clapham, but her mother died a few days after her birth (in 1851) and Henrietta, the eighth child, was not strong and bullied by her older siblings, but as a teenager gained the self confidence which took her through her campaigning adult life.

When her father died, the family moved to Bayswater and she attended St Mary's Bryanston Square where she undertook charity work in the parish of which Octavia Hill was an organiser. This brought her into contact with an unprepossessing clergyman, Samuel Barnett, whom she eventually married at the age of 21. They went to his living at St Jude's Whitechapel and for twenty years they worked to relieve the poverty and ignorance in the parish, founding Toynbee Hall in the process. She set up a school for children leaving the district schools to train for domestic service and eventually bought a cottage (which looks very substantial) nearby which she re-named St Jude's Cottage. The school and the cottage were close to Whitestone Pond and so the Hampstead connection began.

Samuel was promoted to become a canon in Westminster Abbey and for a while they lived in Little Cloisters beside the Abbey. After Samuel died in 1903, Henrietta, always campaigning, became involved in the Hampstead Heath Extension Committee which hoped to save some of the land to the north of The Spaniards from building and her campaigning developed into raising the money to buy the land for and organize the building of Hampstead Garden Suburb. The definite character of that area which still provides controversy to fill the local papers each week is very much due to the inspiration which she spread about.

The emphasis of the book is on the personality of Henrietta Barnett. Inevitably there were failures as well as successes in the campaigns and she suffered from depression at times. The book discusses, rather too

fully for my taste, sexual feelings between Henrietta and her fellow lady colleagues (and also between the Suburb vicar and some choirboys), but by the end of the book you have certainly got to know better the character of a great lady who has left her mark on the northern borders of our borough.

Roger Cline

Basil Leverton

Basil Leverton, of the funeral director family, died earlier this year. Born in 1924, he was named after a local hero of the time, Basil Jellicoe, the priest who worked in the slum area of Somers Town and who was instrumental in setting up the St Pancras Housing Association. However he preferred to be known as Chris, from his favourite childhood book of *Winnie the Pooh* with its hero Christopher Robin.

At his death, he was the senior member of the Worshipful Company of Horners where his particular interest was in the carving of horn handles for walking sticks and he was instrumental in bringing the work of Norman Tulip to a wider audience. Tulip carved sticks are now used in Horners' Company ceremonies. He was a keen member of the Camden History Society and lent historic material for the exhibition celebrating the bi-centenary of the Royal Veterinary College in 1991. With his involvement in the local family business, he became chairman of a Rotary Club and was elected a borough councillor in his home area of Hendon. The firm of Leverton's are the oldest ratepayers in Camden.

The funeral was held on a Saturday, so that members of staff of the family firm would be able to attend and the full fleet of the LEV registration plate limousines would be available. Dr Ann Saunders and Roger Cline represented the Society.

CONGRATULATIONS

'I would like to congratulate you on the splendid 250th edition of the *Newsletter*. This one exceeds the usual high standard with unusual illustrations, even in colour. The article on the now defunct Camden Town Station was particularly interesting, together with the detailed watercolour illustration.'

Pauline Baines

New Opening Hours

Following upon the cuts made in the staffing of the Local Studies and Archives Centre at Holborn Library, the new opening hours are as follows:

Mon & Tues: 10-6

Wed: closed

Thurs: 10-7

Friday: by appointment

Alternate Saturdays.

The staff now consists of:

Tudor Allen, BA DAA, Senior Officer and Archivist
Frances Johnson, Ingrid Smits, Kate Brolly and Maryte Medelis (Conservator).

Two Exhibitions

Two exhibitions are currently on at the Local Studies and Archives Centre. One is 'Streets of Dickens' showing his relationship with the various parts of Camden. This runs until 21 December.

The second is entitled 'Foundling Voices', by the Foundling Museum, which runs until 31 May.

The Bedford

A project is afoot at the V & A on music hall. Laura Mitchison is particularly keen to contact people who have personal memories or family stories about the Bedford in Camden High Street. Any members with material to offer should contact her at 7942 2767, or else at the V & A, Cromwell Road SW7 2RL. The email number is l.mitchison@vam.ac.uk

STOP PRESS

Just received (26 April) is an email from Carol Lipman of Queen Mary College, University of London. It concerns a workshop on 12 May - it is possible that this *Newsletter* may get to you before then!

The College is launching a research project called 'Living with the Past at Home', which seeks to interview people who have an interest in the history of their homes. They are holding a 1-day workshop at the Geffrye Museum on 12 May, 10-4.15. It costs £10 (conc. £8) including lunch. Please telephone 7739 9893, or email bookings@geffrye-museum.org.uk if you want to attend.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 32 Ellington Street, N7 8PL (Tel: 7607 1628, E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk), to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) e.mail roger.cline13@gmail.com

The Publications Editor and Meetings Co-ordinator is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Editor of the Camden History Review is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 252

Jul 2012

History of the Cumberland Basin allotments

Thurs 19 July 7.30pm

Cumberland Estate Tenants' Hall, off Redhill Street, NW1 4BG.

The Cumberland Basin allotments are a little-known, and well hidden feature of Camden. They came into being on what was once a spur of the Regent's Canal, which ran from the main stream in Camden Town down to the Cumberland Basin. This latter was intended to service a market there which had been removed from Haymarket in central London, and would also be an amenity for John Nash's new buildings in Regent's Park and streets adjoining, such as Park Village East and West.

Our talk on this splendid horticultural oasis will be given by David Hannah, chairman of the Cumberland Basin Horticultural Society, and will also feature a tour of the allotments themselves, so we must hope for good weather.

The Hall is most easily reached by the C2 bus. Alight at the stop 'Cumberland Terrace' on Albany Street. Turn into Redhill Street and go under the archway straight ahead. The single-storey prefab Tenants' Hall is just to the left. Alternatively, by car, drive down Park Village East and park at the lower end of it (free after 6.30pm) and take the path immediately to the left of cream-stucco Richmond House. This leads directly to the gate of the allotments, and the Hall is just inside to the left. If you have sat-nav, then the postal code is given above.

Camden Town and Kentish Town Then & Now

Our members, Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms, are giving a talk at the Owl Bookshop, 209 Kentish Town Road on Thursday 12 July at 7pm, to launch their new book on the area. The public are very welcome.

The Annual Outing – to Polesden Lacey and Claremont Landscape Garden

Saturday 18 August

There are still some places on the coach to these two interesting destinations. An application form was enclosed with the last *Newsletter*. If you would like to go, or have lost the form, please get in touch with Jean Archer on 020 7435 5490.

The Annual General Meeting.

Our 42nd AGM was held on 21 June at The Place, Duke's Road and was followed by a talk on nearby Woburn Walk.

Officers and Council elected that evening were as follows:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Caroline Barron
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 CO-ORDINATOR: Martin Sheppard
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Vacant
LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Tudor Allen or his deputy
AUDITOR or EXAMINER: Vacant

Council Members: Sheila Ayres, Steven Denford, Ruth Hayes, Richard Knight, Lester May, Jeremy Noble, Michael Ogden, Susan Palmer.

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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!

Book Review

London's Statues and Monuments by Peter Matthews.
Shire Books, ISBN 978-0-74780-798-8. Paperback, 248pp,
numerous illustrations in colour. £12.99

Peter Matthews not long ago gave us an entertaining talk on London's bridges, drawing on his research for his book on the subject, also published by Shire Books. This time he has turned his attention to statues and monuments, and considerably enlarged on, and replaced, the old Shire Book on the subject by Margaret Baker, which was in print for 40 years. I predict that this new volume will have a similarly long life.

One of my favourite sculptors of London statues is Charles Sargeant Jagger (1885-1934). His is the vast Royal Artillery Memorial at Hyde Park Corner, and also the polar-clad statue of Shackleton outside the Royal Geographical Society. The one I like most is his great-coated soldier at Paddington station reading a letter from home. There are also fun statues in the book, such as Paddington Bear, very near Jagger's soldier in the station, and Charlie Chaplin as a tramp in Leicester Square. And there is the naturalist Peter Scott, making notes about the behaviour of a swan, in the London Wetlands Centre in Barnes.

There are plenty of statues in Camden. They include Freud, Gandhi, Peter Pan, Coram, Betjeman, and Joseph Priestley sitting over a doorway in Russell Square.

The book is arranged geographically, so you can if you wish set out with one of the Society's *Street* books and check on the statues in greater detail with the aid of Peter Matthews' new book. Well worth the money.

A Shoolbred Memorial

Sebastian Wormell, Archivist at Harrods, has written to say that they have recently discovered in their store room a First World War memorial recording the deaths and war service of men who worked for Shoolbred's, once a well-known furniture and department store at the northern end of Tottenham Court Road. Harrods acquired the assets when Shoolbred's closed in 1931. They now wish to relocate the memorial somewhere appropriate, and have been advised by the War Memorials Trust that it is best to re-place it near the firm's old premises. Mr Wormell says that the store at 151-162 Tottenham Court Road has been replaced by some shops and the Spearmint Rhino Club, and he doesn't think that would make an appropriate site now.

David Hayes points out that Shoolbred's did have other premises, particularly a warehouse at 262-270 Euston Road now taken by the new Prudential building, and in Midford Place two cabinet factories, facing each other. These appear to be the most promising alternatives.

The memorial is made of wood, with names inscribed in gilt.

A Better Life – a fast seller

We recently published a book about the lives of members of the Italian community in Clerkenwell. This has sold very well indeed and been the subject of much praise. It was even noticed by the august Society of Antiquaries which noted in its book reviews:

'For many years our Fellow, Peter Woodford, has been editing a stream of local history books for the Camden History Society. Peter's most recent production has proved to be something of a best seller locally: *A Better Life*, by Olive Besagni consists of forty oral histories telling the story of the Clerkenwell Italian community which, even after five or more generations still gives a distinctively Italian character to the Little Italy district, the triangle of streets bounded by Rosebery Avenue, Farringdon Road and Clerkenwell Road.

Suprisingly for so recent an event, the origins of Little Italy are somewhat vague. *A Better Life* tells us that artists, gilders and barometer makers from what we now know as Italy were here by the late 18th century, while the census records 2,000 or so people with Italian names here by 1851, mostly from the mountainous Trentino region of northern Italy and from Italian-speaking Ticino in Switzerland. Once in London, they made livings as ice-cream makers and sellers in summer, chestnut vendors in winter, as well as barrel-organ grinders and buskers.'

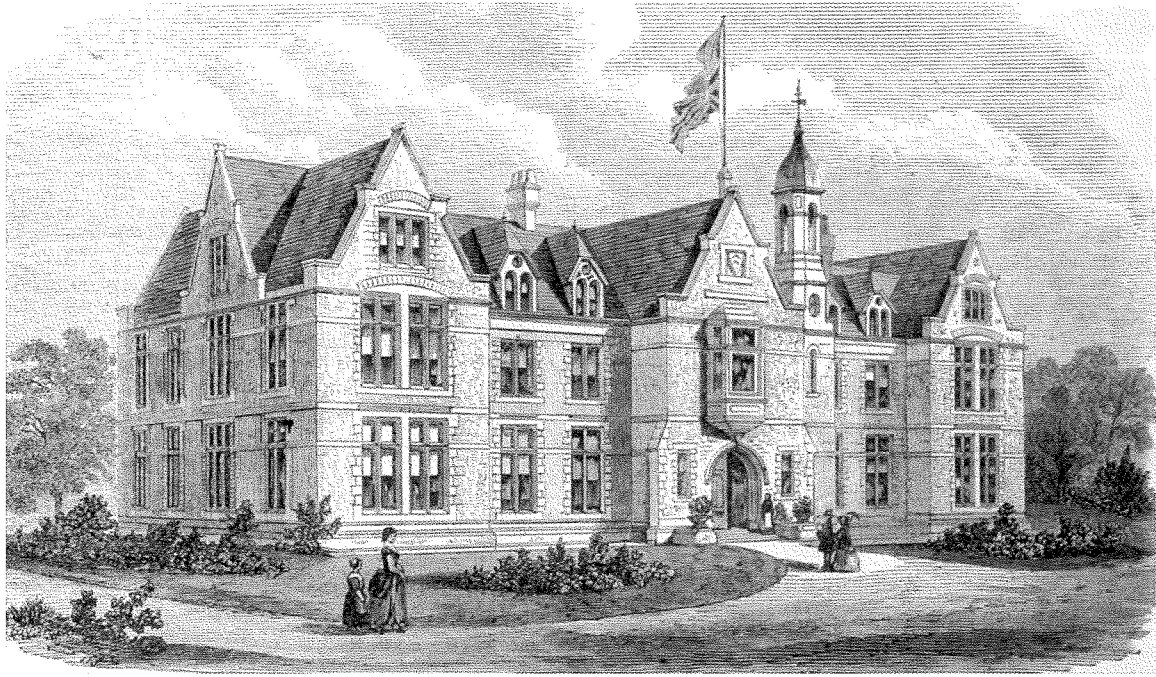
A Better Life is available for £10 (inc. £2.50 postage) from Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH. (Additional contact details on page 4)

WEBSITES AND EMAILS

At the moment the membership of the Society stands at a respectable 373. Many of the new applications for membership come from visitors to our website which, together with the sales also emanating from it, has made the website a good investment. It is an interesting site (details p.4) and we do urge established members to look at it occasionally as well, for news and events.

Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms have set up a Kilburn History blog. The first post is about a wartime murder at Kilburn Station. The site is www.kilburnhistory.blogspot.com.

Recently, when we inadvertently gave the wrong time for one of our talks in the *Newsletter*, we needed to circulate members at short notice with the correct time. We found that only about a third of our members had notified us of email addresses, and of those a good number were now out of date. For such circumstances it would be very helpful if all members who have an email facility could give their email to our treasurer, on henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net. These would be treated confidentially and would only be used for communication between the Society and members.



The Royal Sailors' Daughters' Home in Hampstead

We have been informed by Elspeth Bower, Archivist of the Hull History Centre, that it has acquired recently, as part of a much larger accession, some of the records relating to the Royal Sailors' Daughters' School and Home, which was at 116 Fitzjohns Avenue. The building, designed by Edward Ellis, was opened in 1869 by Prince Arthur of Connaught. Christopher Wade's *Streets of Hampstead* tells us that the Home was closed in 1957 and converted to old people's flats called Monro House, after the Home's long-serving secretary, FRD'O Monro. The Institution originated at 99 Frognal after the Crimean War, when one hundred girls were offered asylum and education as domestic servants.

Ms Bower relates that on the closure of the Home, the Sailors' Children's Society took over the welfare of any girls left uncared for and all remaining assets were transferred to that Hull-based charity. Only six girls from Hampstead came to the orphanage in Hull known as Newland Homes. Most of the others were either sent back to their families or found education and accommodation within the London area.

The records now at the Hull History Centre which relate to the Hampstead Home include details of the children transferred to Hull in 1957, admission records 1846-1956, correspondence from 1852-1964, annual reports from 1858-1938 (some gaps) and various committee minutes from 1852-1957. Records relating to individual children are closed for a period of 100 years, but the annual reports are invaluable as a source of material and they are freely available. They include a list of children in the School and Home as well as the rules that govern the admission of candidates. They also list subscribers and donors.

There are strong parallels between the Hampstead Home and the orphanage in Hull run by the Sailors' Children's Society. They were both established in the 1820s on a Christian footing and benefited seafarers and their families. They both grew from simply offering children an education to providing them with a home, some semblance of security and instruction for their future employment. The girls spent a portion of their day making and mending their own clothing and cooking and laundering. The Hull home also took in boys who were educated in navigational skills.

If you wish to research the records please see the Centre's website www.hullhistorycentre.org.uk or else telephone 01482 317500.

Things to come

20 September: Robert Thorne. The Restoration of St Pancras station and the Midland Grand Hotel.

18 October: David Taylor. A Hampstead coterie: the Carrs and Lushingtons.

15 November: Marian Kamlish and David Hayes. Unearthing Redpath.

13 December: Caroline Barron. Celebrating Christmas in medieval London.

17 January: Prof. Mary Orr, Science in Burton Street: Sarah Bowdich 1791-1856

21 March: Caroline Shenton, The day Parliament Burned Down

Change of Address

On 12 July the Editor of this *Newsletter*, John Richardson, will be moving to 14 Saddleton Road, Whitstable, Kent CT5 4JD. He will also have a London address, but it is best to send anything by post to Whitstable. No telephone numbers are yet fixed, but his email address, shown on page 4 of this *Newsletter*, will remain the same.

Old Hampstead Rediscovered:

Village Scenes

This is the second in a series of exhibitions by The Heath & Hampstead Society featuring local paintings, drawings, prints and photographs maintained by Camden Local Studies at Holborn Library. The exhibition will be at Burgh House and the Hampstead Museum from 29 June to 9 September.

We are fortunate that so many good, often local, artists captured the street scenes, in particular those painted by Mary Hill (1870-1947), John Philipps Emslie (1839-1913) and Patrick Lewis Forbes (fl. 1893-1914), who exhibited 11 times at the RA and lived locally in Willoughby Road and Rosslyn Hill.

Some paintings were undertaken to capture scenes prior to major changes. The most significant of these changes were the Hampstead Town improvements 1886-1888, which were to improve road systems and sweep away the dilapidated and slum properties between Little Church Row (now the lower part of Heath Street) and Hampstead High Street.

The photographer Andrew Morley has taken modern photographs to help viewers locate the scenes with their modern counterparts.

FORD MADOX BROWN

Ian Wilson has been exploring a different burial ground – that of the municipal cemetery at East Finchley where the painter, Ford Madox Brown (1821-93) was buried. He had at some time lived in Fortess Road and Grove Terrace in Kentish Town. Unfortunately, Mr Wilson found the railings that once surrounded his grave lying propped against the grave next door. Their decoration is Victorian – ivy stems, etc, and the gravestone was at an angle.

A scheme to renovate and repair was put in hand, supported by a descendant of Brown, Oliver Soskice, who is a son of Sir Frank Soskice, the former MP.

SMALL BEGINNINGS

Lester May has discovered that the entrepreneur behind the rise and rise of National Car Parks, Sir Donald Gosling (born 1929), began with a Holborn bomb site he and Ronald Hobson bought for £200 soon after the war. Here began Central Car Parks, and in 1959 he took over National Car Parks and co-chaired the business until his retirement in 1998. Lester was

particularly interested in Gosling's naval career – he served on the cruiser *HMS Leander* during the war and has since taken a close interest in a number of naval institutions. He holds the honorific title of Vice Admiral of the United Kingdom. Lester wonders where the car park in Holborn was.

VOLUNTEERING AT THE SOANE

Sir John Soane's Museum in Lincoln's Inn Fields is looking for front-of-house volunteers to help show round the increasing number of visitors to this magnificent house. If anyone is interested in doing this go to the Museum website www.Soane.org and via Volunteering you can get a registration form. Or else telephone the Museum on 7405 2107 and ask for Vashti Sime.

CONGRATULATIONS TO DAVID HAYES

David Hayes, who edits our *Camden History Review* has received an award from the British Association for Local History, for his article 'Homes of Hope in Regent Square' which appeared in *Review* 34 in 2010. Writing to David, the editor of *The Local Historian* said that 'there was strong competition but yours was the very clear winner from a shortlist of five'. The letter goes on to refer to CHR as having 'established such an excellent reputation'.

A Royalist Revolt

Excerpt from *Notes & Queries* 1856 Vol 2, quoting a quarto newspaper of 18 June 1649 (about five months after the execution of Charles I):

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

In a later edition it notes that 'St Pancras is said to be the last church that tolled the bell for mass after the Reformation.'

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 14 Saddleton Road, Whitstable, Kent CT5 4JD. E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk, to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) e.mail roger.cline13@gmail.com

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Meetings Co-ordinator is Martin Sheppard, 102 Gloucester Avenue, NW1 8HX, email martin.l.sheppard@gmail.com

The Editor of the Camden History Review is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

No 253

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Sep 2012

The Restoration of St Pancras Station and Hotel

Thurs 20 Sept, 7.30pm

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road WC1X 8PA

The restoration and conversion of the two iconic buildings of St Pancras Station and the old Midland Grand Hotel has been one of the most extraordinary modern architectural events in London. The station was at a low ebb for many years, and under threat of closure with its enormous single-arch structure proposed for exhibitions or for sports. The hotel, closed in 1935, and effectively vandalised during its subsequent use as offices, was, before Victorian architecture came once more to be appreciated, probably doomed to

Photo by Paul Childs.



demolition, for no one wanted to take on its costly restoration, and indeed no one could think of a suitable modern use.

But then came the decision to make the station the terminus for the Channel Tunnel Rail Link, a project that needed, given the restricted space, ingenious design by architects and engineers to match the skills of the men who built it in the first place. And then, remarkably, this gave impetus to bring the hotel back to its old use, with some of the building sold for apartments, and an extension to the hotel built to the west. At the same time the remarkable decor of the hotel's public rooms was renewed. It was a transformation that could hardly have been anticipated by all those in the 1970s who fought for the future of the two buildings.

Our speaker in September is Robert Thorne, the architectural and engineering historian, who for many years has worked for Alan Baxter Associates, a company which has been closely connected with what has happened. He has also added two new chapters to the late Jack Simmons' classic book on the two buildings, which has recently been published.

The Carrs and Lushingtons of Hampstead

Thurs 18 October, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square NW3

Dr David Taylor will reveal the interaction between these two families, connected by marriage, who were at the centre of a literary coterie in early 19th-century Hampstead which included Joanna Baillie and Anna Barbauld. Lady Byron, Queen Caroline and anti-slavery Wilberforce also come into the picture, as well as - in the next generation - Virginia Woolf.

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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!

Things to Come

15 November: Marian Kamlish and David Hayes. *Unearthing Redpath*.

13 December: Caroline Barron. *Celebrating Christmas in medieval London*.

17 January: Prof. Mary Orr, *Science in Burton Street: Sarah Bowdich 1791-1856*

21 February: Peter Woodford, *Tales from the Hampstead Court Rolls*.

21 March: Caroline Shenton, *The day Parliament Burned Down*

Joanna Baillie

Dr Thomas McLean, writing from New Zealand, reminds us that 11 September marks the 250th anniversary of the birth of the writer and Hampstead resident, Joanna Baillie. As it happens, as noted on page 1, the talk by David Taylor in October will feature the famous Scottish poet.

Dr McLean is researching the life and letters of Baillie. He has examined the collection of Baillie letters held at Camden Local Studies and other collections in the UK, but he wonders if anyone in the Society might know of any other letters related to her that are in private collections. If so, his email address is: thomas.mclean@otago.ac.nz

Shoolbreds Remembered

Mike Tucker has written following our feature on the Shoolbred war memorial in the last *Newsletter*.

'My great grandfather was a lighting engineer whose firm went into liquidation c.1898. However, my grandfather followed in his footsteps and in the early 1900s set up a business in Little Albany Street. In a short memoir of his early life he wrote "After four weeks I had an enquiry from Shoolbred for fittings for the London Union Club. I worked early and late on the drawing & estimate & put them in in good time. After about a week I heard they favoured the order and design had been accepted. The value of the order was £500 so this was a wonderful start."

Later my grandfather was to continue in business at Berkeley Works in Berkley Grove off Berkley Road. At one time I tried to trace the history of the site after Lord Southampton sold off a significant amount of land in 1840, but my research at London Metropolitan Archives failed to reveal subsequent sales/purchases.

Unfortunately, I do not get to London very frequently these days but do appreciate the time and effort which goes into the preparation of the *Newsletter* and the *Camden History Review*. Please pass on my thanks to all concerned.'

Founder of the Pearlies

Both Lester May and Philip Carter, Publication Editor of the *Oxford DNB*, have alerted us to one of the new names in the online edition of the invaluable *DNB*. This is Henry Croft (1861-1930), a St Pancras roadsweeper and founder of the pearly kings tradition.

Croft was born and baptised in St Pancras workhouse. He was the son of a musician, Henry, and his wife Elizabeth. Following the death of his father, Croft was sent to the St Pancras Orphanage and in 1876 began work as a road sweeper at the Barnaby Street department of St Pancras vestry, and he remained in that employment until the late 1920s.

In 1892 Croft married, at Bedford New Town chapel, Lily Newton, a domestic servant, of Kentish Town. During the 1890s he and his wife lived in what is now Chalton Street, moving in 1901 to 1 Edward Street with their three daughters and one son. At least four more children followed and they later lived in Phoenix Street near Euston station.

The origins of 'pearlies' is still rather obscure. Croft began adorning his clothing with mother-of-pearl buttons in the 1870s - these buttons were then mass produced in the East End. It seems that costermongers already decorated their clothes with such buttons, but only in a modest way. But Croft exaggerated the idea and his first suit from about 1880, was covered by many thousands of buttons. He appears to have done this so as to attract donations for charities at pageants and carnivals, particularly for working-class hospitals. His first appeal in pearly costume seems to have been for the London Temperance Hospital in Hampstead Road.

The *Strand Magazine* in 1902 notes his suit of 4900 buttons. Over the next decade a London-wide network of pearly dynasties was established, so that by 1911 each of the capital's 28 boroughs boasted a pearly king, queen, and family, numbering in total about 300 individuals. Croft was involved in numerous charitable events. He was also keen to maintain his title of *the* 'Pearly King' against other claimants.

Croft died from lung cancer in the place of his birth - St Pancras Workhouse in Pancras Road, and was buried in St Pancras Cemetery in East Finchley. The cortege was followed by Irish pipers, 400 pearly kings, queens and family members, and representatives of Croft's chosen charities. The *St Pancras Gazette* described the procession as nearly half a mile in length. His statue was unveiled at the cemetery in 1934, though it has since been removed to the crypt of St Martin-in-the-Fields where Pearly King families hold their annual harvest festival.

The *DNB* online is freely available if you have a local library ticket. This will give you a number to act as a password. There are 365 articles with ties to St Pancras. (Much of the article above is derived direct from the *DNB*, which is © Oxford University Press.)

A mystery teaspoon

Gareth Marklew has a query.

I have recently been given something that previously belonged to my late grandfather. It's a teaspoon (not silver, so far as I can tell!) commemorating the Silver Jubilee of King George V and Queen Mary on 6 May 1935. On the reverse it bears the inscription PRESENTED BY HAMPSTEAD BOROUGH COUNCIL 6TH MAY 1935, along with the motto NON SIBI SED TOTI, which I understand was the motto of the council.

I wonder if anyone knows who these spoons were issued to – if it was to school children in the borough, for example, it was probably issued to my grandfather, who would have been seven at the time. If, on the other hand, they were issued to council employees, I would guess that it was issued to my great grandfather.'

Mr Marklew's email is GarethMarklew@hotmail.com.

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOP

A workshop, organised by the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society and the Museum of London, is to be held on Wednesday 17 October, entitled Local History in Schools - The Local Historian's Role.

It is intended for members of local history societies, librarians and museum workers and others who visit schools or who explore historical and archaeological sites with young children and would like to exchange ideas and enhance their skills.

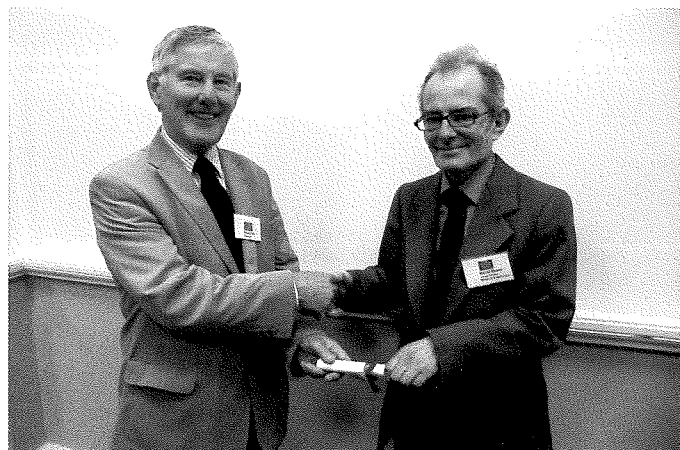
The cost of the Workshop is £10, and will be at the Clore Learning Centre at the Museum, from 2pm to 5pm. For more information please contact Eileen Bowlt at 01895 638060, or email c.bowlt@tiscali.co.uk.

GOING DANCING IN POSTWAR LONDON

Kevin Guyan, a postgraduate student in History at UCL, is conducting research in the Camden area about going dancing in the 1940s, 1950s and 1960s. He is currently visiting social groups to discuss his work and hear from local people about their experiences during these decades.

His research hopes to argue that the layout and design of dance halls 'part-constructed the relationships between men and women, considering to what extent the physical space shaped the behaviours and action of the young people who attended the dance halls.'

He is interested to hear the memories of people who went dancing during those years. If you have any contribution, or photographs, please contact him on kevin.guyan.11@ucl.ac.uk



Prize-giving

In our last *Newsletter* we announced that the Editor of our *Camden History Review*, David Hayes, had recently received an award from the British Association for Local History for his own article 'Homes of Hope in Regent Square' in *Review* 34. He is pictured (right) here receiving his award from the President of BALH, Professor David Hey.

TOMB WITH A VIEW

Sheena Ginnings has written to say that a new website is up and running. It deals with many of the graves attached to Hampstead parish church. Those buried are categorised – architects, politicians etc – and a brief life history is given. The site is www.tombwithaview.org.uk

HAPPENINGS AT THE SOANE

In July, the first phase of the Sir John Soane Museum's 'Opening up the Soane project' was completed. This was the restoration and opening to the public of no. 12 Lincoln's Inn Fields, Soane's first house in the square. It now houses the John A. and Cynthia Fry Gunn Conservation Centre, the new Soane Gallery and a Visitor Reception and Museum shop.

The Sir John Soane Museum, one of London's 'must-see' institutions, is open Tuesday-Saturday, 10-5. Admission is free.

LOCAL HISTORY TALKS IN LIBRARIES

Camden is keen to arrange more local history talks in libraries and is asking if there are members of CHS who would be willing to do this. If there are, they should contact Tudor Allen, Archivist at Local Studies and Archives at Holborn Library, on 7974 6342.

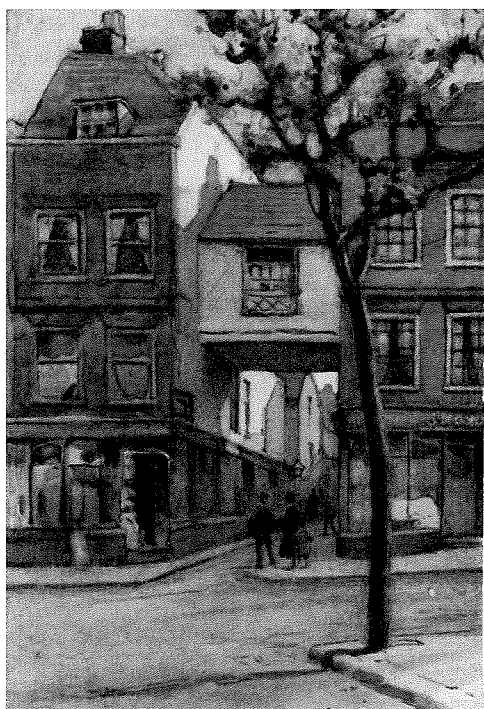
THE LAMAS CONFERENCE

This year's Conference has Death in London through the ages as its theme. It ranges through body-snatching, burials, epitaphs and mortality rates, with six talks by distinguished contributors. The Conference is on 17 November at the Weston Theatre, Museum of London, 10am - 5pm. Refreshments are available at the Museum. Tickets are £10 before 31 October, and £15 thereafter. Applications to Local History Conference, 22 Malpas Drive, Pinner, HA5 1DQ. Please enclose a stamped addressed envelope.

More Mary Hill



The Hampstead artist, Mary Hill, painted many pictures of a less sophisticated Hampstead from the early part of the 20th century. Pictured here are, above, Cannon Hall, bottom left, the much portrayed entrance to Perrins Court, and bottom right, White Bear Lane.



This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 14 Saddleton Road, Whitstable, Kent CT5 4JD. Tel: 01227 272605. E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk, to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) e.mail roger.cline13@gmail.com

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drswoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Meetings Co-ordinator is Martin Sheppard, 102 Gloucester Avenue, NW1 8HX, email martin.l.sheppard@gmail.com

The Editor of the Camden History Review is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044

newsletter

No 254

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Nov 2012

Changes of Plan

We have had to make some last-minute changes in our programme of talks. Unfortunately the speaker was not able for personal reasons to give his talk, on the Carrs and Lushingtons of Hampstead, in October. We hope that it will feature at a later date. Fortunately Martin Sheppard, our new Meetings Co-ordinator, was able to give instead a talk on *Duelling on Primrose Hill 1790-1837*. We are grateful to him for stepping in at short notice.

Also, it was decided it was better to move the talk 'Unearthing Redpath' by Marian Kamlish and David Hayes, from November to February to coincide with the appearance of their CHS publication on the subject. Instead, Peter Woodford will be giving a talk on the Hampstead Court Rolls (see below).

Twisted tales from the Hampstead Manorial Court Rolls

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

Over 100 years of Court Rolls of the Manor of Hampstead (16th-18th century), translated into English by commission of the Society, have been uploaded onto our website and can be viewed and downloaded from the Hampstead Court Rolls page. They afford interesting glimpses, sometimes distorted or dim, into the development of the manor, which originally belonged to the monks of Westminster Abbey, and stretched from Kilburn and Chalk Farm in the south to North End Way via the villages of West End and Pondstreet and the town of Hampstead itself. Lordship of the Manor was in the hands of a single family from 1620 to 1706, although by the time of their arrival the manor had greatly shrunk in acreage by the detachment of Belsize in the 12th century and Chalk Farm in the 15th. This didn't deter the Lady of the Manor in the 1690s from trying to extort rent from the owners of the detached parts.

Peter Woodford has been converting the translation of the Rolls into electronic form since the beginning of the project in 2005 and has some more intriguing tales to tell from their detailed perusal.

Celebrating Christmas in medieval London

Thurs 13 December, 7.00pm
Burgh House, New End Square NW3

Our Christmas talk is about Christmas a very long time ago. It will be given by our President, Professor Caroline Barron, a distinguished medieval historian, who will be presenting images and discussion of how the feast was celebrated in that era.

There will not be a roaring fire to match the atmosphere of the talk, but there will be wine and mince pies beforehand – hence we begin at 7pm.

Things to come

17 January: Prof. Mary Orr, *Science in Burton Street: Sarah Bowdich 1791-1856*

21 February: Marian Kamlish and David Hayes. *Unearthing Redpath*.

21 March: Caroline Shenton, *The day Parliament Burned Down*

18 April: Richard Kepley, *Alec Craig: Hampstead Crusader against Censorship*.

GOOD NEWS

Tudor Allen, Camden's Archivist, writes:

Seven years ago David Hayes, formerly Principal Systems Librarian in Camden, began to work for us as a volunteer. He took on the major project of digitising the data on our printed material card catalogue, transferring it on to our Adlib system and hence on to our online catalogue. I am delighted to say that David has now completed this mammoth task.

We have been very lucky to have someone of David's level of dedication and professional skills to carry out this massive project.

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

BARGAIN OFFERS FOR OUR PUBLICATIONS ARE ON OUR WEBSITE!!

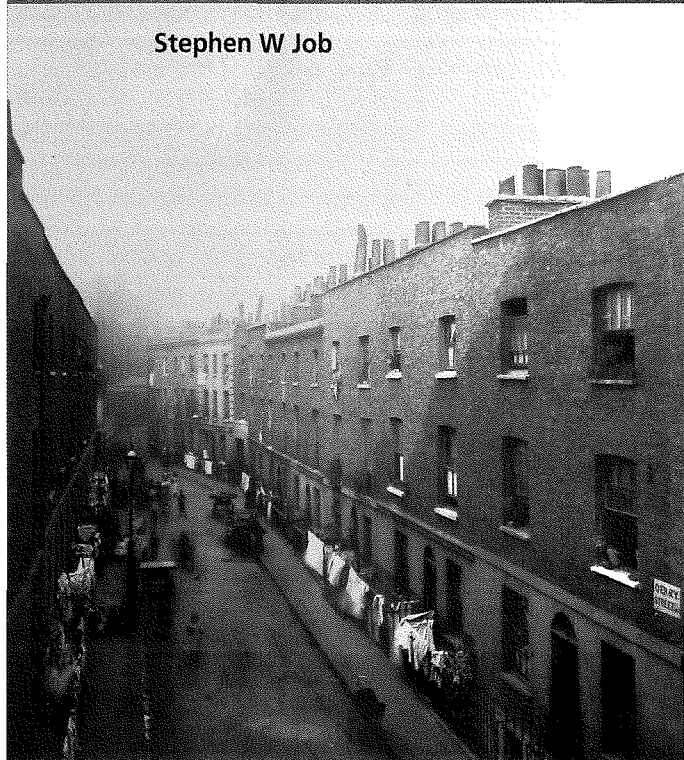
Cat's Meat Square

The Society's newest publication has an odd title and is unusual in its subject matter. It describes in detail the struggles over social and housing reform – or the scandalous lack of it – in an early-19th-century development of two thirds of an acre west of Gray's Inn Road and south of Sidmouth Street. By the 1870s the area, once of middle-class respectability, had deteriorated into an overcrowded, insanitary slum fully deserving the derogatory nickname 'Cat's Meat

Cat's Meat Square

Housing and Public Health
in South St Pancras 1810-1910

Stephen W Job



Square'. The source of the sobriquet is not known for sure; it may have been dreamed up by a local wag and it was repeated in the newspapers of the time. The area comprised Wellington Square, Wellington Place, Derry Street and Prospect Terrace, but was latterly denoted simply as Prospect Terrace.

Prospect Terrace was originally part of the Harrison Estate before its decline. The author, Stephen Job, reveals the herculean efforts of successive Medical Officers of Health who struggled for years to persuade St Pancras Vestry to relieve the overcrowding or at least mitigate the unhealthy condition of the local tenants. Their efforts were in vain, even though the vestry membership included such luminaries as Dr William Collins and George Bernard Shaw. Only with the advent of the LCC and the abolition of the vestries was the area regenerated. Westminster Kingsway College now occupies most of the site.

Stephen Job lived in the King's Cross area in the 1950s and 60s and attended local schools. The book was inspired by his family's roots in south St Pancras, including Prospect Terrace and the neighbouring streets of the Harrison Estate. He would welcome further information or comments on subjects covered in the book. (catsmeatsquare@hotmail.co.uk).

Cat's Meat Square: Housing and Public Health in South St Pancras 1810-1910, is available at our meetings for £6.50. It may be obtained by post from Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH for £6.50 plus £2.50 postage and packing. It is 80 pages, and is designed by Ivor Kamlisch.

The Mystery Teaspoon

In the last *Newsletter* a member told us of a teaspoon in his possession, evidently given to schoolchildren in Hampstead, to celebrate the Silver Jubilee of George V and Queen Mary. Brian Fee has a similar item:

'I think it is highly likely that Gareth Marklew's teaspoon was given to school children, as I have something rather similar dating from just two years later - a commemorative teaspoon with the inscription in gold leaf on the box lid reading:

*Coronation of King George VI, 1937
With the good wishes of the
Borough of Holborn.*

The spoon is decorated with a Coronation emblem, and the reverse bears the inscription 'Presented by the Borough of Holborn'. It also has the maker's name, Mappin & Webb, and by the degree of tarnishing appears to be silver plated. I remember my parents telling me in later years that these were given to all the school children in Holborn.

One thing puzzles me slightly – my birthday is in July and in May 1937 I was only four. So did Princeton Street school accept 4-year-olds? Or was the council still distributing these in September? (I notice the inscription only mentions the year.)

It is interesting to think that in the 1930s councils such as Holborn and Hampstead had money to spare for generous gestures like these! Did St Pancras, a less affluent borough – or other London boroughs even – do anything similar?'

Slave Owners in Bloomsbury

An exhibition entitled thus is running at Camden Local Studies and Archives at Holborn Library until 12 November. Alongside Bloomsbury's associations with cultural gentility runs a less comfortable story of exploitation and oppression, and the exhibition maps many of the British colonial slave-owners who settled in Bloomsbury. But slavery was only part of the connections between Africans and the area, and the exhibition also celebrates these other African presences.

Fitzroy Farm in Highgate

David Schenck writes:

'For seven years I have been researching the life and works of the distinguished architect, Blunden Shadbolt (1879-1949), RIBA. He was best-known for his 'wibbly-wobbly' timber-framed houses, which were constructed from ancient bricks and timbers and built 'by the judgement of the eye', without the use of plumb lines, levels, or straight edges, so that even on the day that they were completed they not only looked, but were at least a century old. They were so convincing that several were mistakenly listed by local councils as buildings of historic interest.

'Fitzroy Farm' at Highgate was completed [between the Millfield Lane extension and Fitzroy Park] at Highgate in 1929 for a Mr Cecil Pittman, who was first listed there in the 1930 telephone directory. In 1933, Shadbolt's younger daughter, Joy (Mrs Joy Rothwell-Walker) was born in 'The Granary', which was just completed at the time. Following Blunden's death in 1949, the family moved to another town in 1951, and the house was acquired by my late wife and I in 1953.

Knowing of my great interest in her father's work, Joy kindly loaned me her father's briefcase in which she had collected a wide range of information about him with the request that I copy all the contents to a CD and send complimentary copies to a number of institutions such as RIBA.

Among the documents in the briefcase I discovered a small clipping of his architectural sketch of the front elevation of Fitzroy Farm and, of course, the name of Mr C Pittman. I am now nearing the end of my

current research, the objective of which is to produce an illustrated archival record of Shadbolt's life and works. Of all the remaining 'wibbly-wobbly'-style houses designed by Shadbolt, this is the only one for which I have neither a coloured photograph, nor any description of the interior.'

Steve Denford has supplied further information which is in the Society's *Streets of Highgate* publication, in which he was involved in compiling. 'The Fitzroys ran their farmland as a dairy farm, at that time a fashionable pastime for noble ladies. There was great rivalry between Lady Southampton and Lady Mansfield over the quality of their respective dairy herds. The farm and yards were sold to Lord Mansfield in 1840, and tenant farmers - the Ward family - were here until WWI. Their farm was very picturesque, as old photos attest. Its flagged yard contained a quaint wooden granary on stone supports. The farm closed in 1923, Lord Mansfield having sold the freehold. Five years later the farmhouse was extended in Tudor style for residential use. It was mostly destroyed in a fire in the 1970s but reconstructed as before using many of the 16th-century timbers. In the 1980s the owner, Mr Tsavlis, a Greek shipping magnate, tried unsuccessfully to have street lights put along the lane outside. Camden Council decided that this would change the area's character. In recent years, planning permission was granted for the demolition of the house.

Harley Atkinson of the Highgate Society tells us that the proposed new Fitzroy Farm building, designed by Quinlan Terry, was opposed by the local amenity societies and the women swimmers who used the

A 1925 picture of the eccentric cottage in the grounds of Fitzroy Farm. The main house is in the background. Steve Denford notes that a cottage was shown on the 1804 map, south of Fitzroy Farm, overlooking a small pond. It is lot 132 on the Second Day sale of the Southampton Estate in August 1840, described as a 'very comfortable cottage'. It survived until the 20th century - the national authority on the treatment of varicose veins, William Turner Warwick, died there in 1949. It was replaced by the Water House erected in the late 1990s.



pool virtually opposite. Camden insisted on severe restraints on the use of the Millfield Lane extension route and also the lane leading from Fitzroy Park during building works, and in 2009 an appeal by the owner against such restrictions was turned down. Eventually the house was sold to a new owner, a Mr Levy.

After meeting local objectors, Mr Levy reduced the proposed size of the new house (though it was still much larger than the old one), omitted the major basement excavation and proposed only to use the Fitzroy Park route for transportation of building materials. Building work is now in progress, but the Highgate Society is disappointed with the new house; now partly on a raised ground level, it is more obtrusive than it was hoped it would be, introducing an urban air into a formerly rustic corner of the Heath.

More recently there are plans to demolish the Water House and build another property there.

The Astbury Diaries

Stephen Orchard has transcribed and put on the web the diaries of William Copeland Astbury (1783-1868), consisting of 9 volumes from 1829 to 1848. In the first six Camden Town and other parts of Camden are prominent, and there is an excellent index.

The originals are housed in the Cheshunt Collection at Westminster College, Cambridge. The index can be searched free of charge on www.astburydiary.org.uk but the main text, in nine books, can only be downloaded for £4.50 per volume (or £35 for a full set).

Mr Astbury was editor of the *Eclectic Review* and was a devout church attender. He moved to Delancey Place in 1829 and often attended Kentish Town Chapel. He was also a frequent long-distance walker, as many were from necessity in that era. One typical excursion, starting at 9.45, was Camden Town to Belsize House, then on to Shoot-up Hill and Willesden, then to Neasden, then home via Kingsbury and Kilburn. Back at 5.30.

He notes mowing and haymaking in Chalk Farm, and a serious fire at the Jolly Anglers in Kentish Town. The diary records all sorts of nuggets of information about our area, and of Islington.



George Pek, who lives in Ontario wonders if anyone can identify this road, shown on a postcard, so probably c.1905. He thinks it is Priory Road, West Hampstead, with St Mary's church in the background. On the back of the card are the words 'Evans Dressmaker... Mr Balie on side walk.' Mr Pek's address is 1968 Main Street West, Suite 908, Hamilton, Ontario, Canada L8S 1J7. His email is georgepek@yahoo.ca.

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

The Editor is John Richardson, 14 Saddleton Road, Whitstable, Kent CT15 4JD. Tel: 01227 272605.

E-mail: richardson@historicalpublications.co.uk, to whom all contributions should be sent.

The Secretary of the Society is Mrs Jane Ramsay, Garden Flat, 62 Fellows Road, NW3, 3LJ (7586 4436, email: jsramsay10@gmail.com),

The Treasurer and Membership Secretary is Henry Fitzhugh, 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net)

The Publications Secretary is Roger Cline, Flat 13, 13 Tavistock Place, WC1H 9SH, (7388 9889) email roger.cline13@gmail.com

The Publications Editor is Dr Peter Woodford, 1 Akenside Road, NW3 5BS (7435 2088; email: Drwoodford@blueyonder.co.uk).

The Meetings Co-ordinator is Martin Sheppard, 102 Gloucester Avenue, NW1 8HX, email martin.l.sheppard@gmail.com

The Editor of the Camden History Review is David Hayes, 62 Garrison Lane, Chessington, Surrey KT9 2LB (8397 6752)

Our website: www.camdenhistorysociety.org

The Society is a registered charity - number 261044