

# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 285

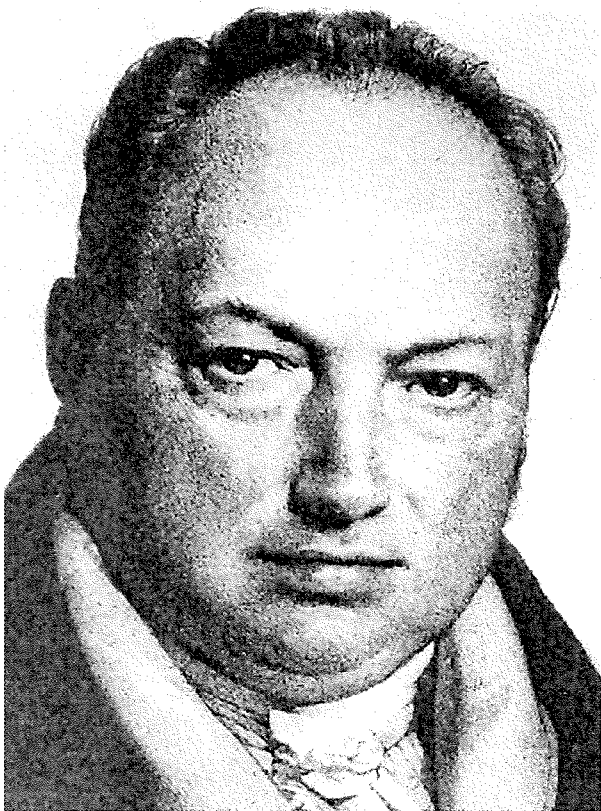
Jan 2018

## Iron Men: the 19th-century Engineer Henry Maudslay and his Circle

*Thurs. 18th January, 7.30pm  
Camden Local Studies, 2nd floor Holborn Library,  
32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA*

In the early nineteenth century, Henry Maudslay, an engineer from a humble background, opened a factory in Westminster Bridge Road, Lambeth, a stone's throw from the Thames. Maudslay invented precision engineering, which made the industrial revolution possible, helping Great Britain to become the

*Henry Maudslay*



workshop of the world. His factory became the pre-Victorian equivalent of Google and Apple combined, attracting the best in engineering talent. The people who left to set up their own businesses included Joseph Whitworth, who moved to Manchester, and by the time of the Great Exhibition in 1851, was deemed the world's foremost mechanical engineer. There is a strong Camden connection, in that Maudslay began his career at the workshop of locksmith and inventor of the hydraulic press, Joseph Bramah, in Denmark Street. Maudslay's factory manufactured the stationary engines that hauled the first trains up the incline from Euston to Camden Town. In 1794 he designed a new form of slide rest for the lathe, which is described as 'the most important and epoch-marking step in the world's industrial history'.

Our speaker David Waller is an author, business consultant and former *Financial Times* journalist. His most recent book is *Iron Men: how one London factory powered the Industrial Revolution and shaped the modern world* (Anthem Press 2016).

## Belsize Remembered

*Thursday 8th February, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3 1LS*

Just over five years ago, our speaker Raneë Barr embarked on a community project, culminating in the publication of its book, *Belsize Remembered*, on 27 October 2017. The project has drawn on personal memories from residents past and present. The book is richly illustrated with archive images, also contemporary photographs by David Percy, from whose collection of Belsize pictures, such as that of Belsize Parade c.1906, come (*see next page*). In this illustrated talk, Raneë will take the audience through this unique book, which charts memoirs of Belsize from the 1930s to the present day.

### The Society's Website

[www.camdenhistorysociety.org](http://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  
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*One of the many illustrations in Belsize Remembered. This is Belsize Parade, a group of shops on Havrstock Hill, c1906. Note the Sainsbury shop fourth from the left.*

## 2018 Anniversaries

A good number of anniversaries occur this year.

### 300 years - 1718

First mention of an Open Vestry meeting in St Pancras parish. The earliest extant minutes of Vestry meetings are also of this year - they are available at Camden Local Studies.

In this year the Vestry - an unelected gathering of ratepayers - appointed John Wigmore as Vestry Clerk at a salary of £4 per annum. He was a Highgate schoolmaster.

### 200 years - 1818

John Keats moved into Wentworth Place, in what is now Keats Grove, Hampstead.

The River Fleet flooded the Battle Bridge area near Old St Pancras Church. The waters were very high one night and swept two men out of their beds.

An Ophthalmic Hospital, designed by John Nash, opened in Albany Street, Camden Town. It was intended to treat soldiers with eye injuries in the Egyptian campaign. The premises were later used by Goldsworthy Gurney for the manufacture of steam road vehicles.

### 150 years - 1868

The King's Cross Potato Market opened on 7 August off York Way in part of the Great Northern Railway lands. It became the largest potato market in London.

St Pancras station opened on 1 October. This remarkable building was designed by William Barlow. The track enters the station over the Regent's Canal: thus the station platforms are above ground level, leaving room for an enormous warehouse beneath to store merchandise, particularly beer barrels. That storage area is today's shopping arcade and the rows of pillars to be seen holding up the floor above were precisely placed to house a given number of Burton barrels between them.

The Tottenham and Hampstead Junction Railway opened on 21 July, from Tottenham North Junction on the Great Eastern Railway, to Highgate Road. Extensions were built to Kentish Town in 1870 and to Gospel Oak in 1888.

Haverstock Hill Station opened on the corner of Lismore Circus and Rochford Street on the Midland Line.

Plender Street Baths in Camden Town were opened on 19 May. 145,000 people used the facilities there, which included a laundry, in the first 49 weeks.

### 100 years - 1918

Palmer's Pet Store, a well-known shop at 35 Parkway, Camden Town, was opened by George Palmer. Its advertisements boasted a stock of monkeys and talking parrots.

### 50 years - 1968

The new Acland/Burghley school in Kentish Town was completed.

A statue of Gandhi was unveiled in Tavistock Square by Harold Wilson on 17 May. The sculptor was Freddie Brilliant.

The present Euston Station was opened by the Queen on 14 October. The architects were R L Moorcroft and William Headley. Unfortunately, despite furious opposition, it was thought necessary to demolish the magnificent Doric arch that stood in front of the old building.

The Victoria Line opened, with stations at King's Cross, Euston and Warren Street.

The Hare and Hounds pub in North End Way, Hampstead, badly damaged during the war, was rebuilt.

Open Space Theatre, the creation of Charles Marowitz and Thelma Holt, opened at 32 Tottenham Court Road.

Bloomsbury Theatre, part of UCL, opened.

**John Richardson**

## Anthony Heap and the Camden History Society

*Robin Woolven writes:*

Members who may be reading *The London Diary of Anthony Heap 1931-1945*, published by the London Record Society with financial help from Camden History Society, which was launched at our October meeting, will have noticed Heap's interest in 'his' St Pancras. They may have wondered if he would have been interested in this Society – founded 15 years before his death in 1985. The final decade of his diaries has the following entries, the second of which might be of interest to our Vice-President, Gillian Tindall.

*Thursday, 28 April 1977*

'To the Methodist Hall in Birkenhead Street for an illustrated talk by Charles Lee (elderly and wing-collared), on St Pancras Station and Hotel – under the auspices of the Camden History Society which has invited the King's Cross Community Association to it through the medium of a notice in the [Queen Alexandra] Mansions. [Heap enjoyed the illustrations shown but was disappointed that there were none of the interior of the hotel]. In the absence of anything on the TV, it whiled away an hour and a half agreeably enough.'

*(Long-standing members will remember Charles Lee (1901-1983) with much affection. He was our President for a number of years. He specialised in transport history and was punctilious in detail and dates, and was commissioned by London Transport to write a number of histories of various London tube lines. He was an expert on the Pneumatic Dispatch Railway, which, from Euston, enabled mail, parcels and light freight to travel underground unimpeded from 1863 to 1874, to various destinations. In 1955 he published the standard work on the Old and New St Pancras parish churches. Charles gave a number of talks to the Society. Always dressed, as Heap describes, in a winged collar and a black suit, he spoke in a concise way. He lived in Woburn Walk and was a churchwarden of nearby New St Pancras Church. JR)*

*Thursday 9 March 1978*

'Reading Gillian Tindall's *The Fields Beneath – the History of one London village*, has proved a most pleasant surprise.

Not being the sort of book I usually go for, I didn't suppose I would have even got it out of the library, hadn't Joe so warmly recommended it to me [Joe Allen, old schoolfriend]. His commendation was well founded for this history of the district of Kentish Town is no ordinary dry and skipworthy piece of local lore, but one of the most remarkable books of its kind I've come by. Possessed of a rare ability to connect past and present and one period with another, Gillian Tindall writes with extraordinary ease and fluency and renders her book no less fascinating as social than urban history.

I am grateful to Pal Joey for putting this book my way It has given me several hours of most enjoyable reading.'

## An increase in membership

Membership of the Society has now risen to 417, which is, we think, the highest total since the foundation of the Society in 1970. There is no doubt as to why numbers have gone up rapidly in the last few months — our attractive new website, created and maintained by our member Lindsay Douglas. Also there have been more online purchases of our publications. Lindsay is to be congratulated.

Our web address is in the panel on page one.

## Things to Come

Please put the following in your diary:

*15 March:* International Women's Day. Now and Then (and the centenary of the Representation of the People Act (1918), by Irene Cockroft.

*5 April:* Tunnels under Holborn, by Antony Clayton

*17 May:* 'This vexed question' – 500 years of women in medicine by Kristin Hussey.

*5 June* (note: this is a Tuesday), The Annual General Meeting. Talk to be arranged.

*5 July:* The Jewel in the Post-War Crown: a Retrospective for the 70th Anniversary of the NHS, by Kevin Brown.

## FROM KILBURN TO MOUNT RUSHMORE

Dick Weindling has just posted an item on his west hampstead site about the American artist Gutzon Borglum who lived and worked in Mortimer Road, Kilburn from about 1897 to 1902. His residence, now demolished, was on the site of Halliwell House on the Kilburn Gate estate. He is best known as the sculptor who produced the giant heads of US presidents carved into the summit of Mount Rushmore in South Dakota. A notable temporary resident at the Kilburn address was the young Isadora Duncan who, at a party, danced for Borglum on the villa's large lawn, scattering rose petals behind her. To find the story tap in westhampsteadlife/gutzon-borglum.

## MONITORING THE THAMES FORESHORE

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

## CORRECTION

In the November *Newsletter*, in an item featuring anniversaries (*It happened in 1817*) by Lester Hillman, we stated that the hanging of a Spa Fields rioter took place in Skinner Street in Somers Town. David Hayes and Lester have both pointed out that this particular Skinner Street was in the City. William Godwin lived there at the time.

## An Award to the Society

The LAMAS Journal Prize announced at the Local History Conference went to the Camden History Society for *Camden History Review 40* (edited by David Hayes). The judge said:

'The winning entry was of high quality and contained lengthy original research articles spanning a good range of themes and topics. This particular volume, for example, revealed Prince Charles Edward Stuart's 'secret' visit to London in 1750, provided interesting insights into Eley's 19th-century ammunition factory in the Gray's Inn Road, and focused attention on Blondin, the tightrope walker and sometime resident in and around the Finchley Road. The articles are diligently referenced and provide original and accurate information as well as insightful analyses, and all are delivered in engaging and accessible prose. This publication successfully maintains the reader's attention from start to finish and provides a very informative, stimulating and entertaining read.

Although the winner was a more of less unanimous decision, both runners-up provided stiff competition.' One of them was the Hornsey Historical Society for their Bulletin 57.

*A postcard of the Police Station in Holmes Road, Kentish Town c1904. It seems odd to find two motor buses in what is essentially a side road, although on the upper deck it seems like an outing. This 1896 building was designed by the noted architect Richard Norman Shaw, who also built a house for himself at 6 Ellerdale Road, Hampstead.*



## Jean Smith

We were sorry to hear of the death of Jean Smith who died on 11 November aged 94. Jean had spent most of her working life as the children's librarian at the Cotleigh Road library.

Jean lived in Sumatra Road and was a member of the CHS. She was passionate about the local area and built up an impressive collection of slides, which she used to give illustrated talks about the history of Kilburn and West Hampstead. Before she died she passed on her collection to fellow historian Dick Weindling.

Councillor Flick Rea, who knew her well, said "Jean Smith was, for many years, a loved and respected member of West Hampstead's community. She was very special – always volunteering to help. She gave talks, led walks and was a fund of information. She was a stalwart member of the previous West Hampstead Community Association and on its Board for years.

She was one of those truly rare people - a thoroughly nice person who cared about people. She had many friends and they and West Hampstead will miss her."

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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

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of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 286

Mar 2018

## International Women's Day, Now and Then

Thurs, 15 March, 7.30pm

Camden Local Studies, 2nd floor Holborn Library, 32-38  
Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA

One week on from International Women's Day, the theme of Irene Cockroft's talk will be broadened to cover the centenary of the Representation of the People Act 1918 that gave votes to suitably qualified women over thirty. Included will be Camden personalities of the past: those prominent in the suffrage

writer Israel Zangwill (founder of the Men's League for Women's Suffrage), anti-suffragist Mrs Humphrey Ward, and perhaps most surprisingly to many, Hampstead's real tennis world champion Eustace Miles (1868-1948). Many diverse luminaries were caught in the intrigue and finally - in Parliament's own good time and when it suited election strategy - prodded Britain over the palisade of prejudice into the modern world of equal citizenship.

Irene Cockroft is an independent exhibition curator, author and lecturer specialising in the history of women's involvement in the late 19th, and early 20th century Arts and Crafts and Suffragette movements. Our Speaker and Susan Croft are guest curating a 'Suffragettes in Camden' exhibition at Local Studies during the summer of 2018 (dates tba), as part of Parliament's Vote 100 and Camden's VOX programme.

## Tunnels Under Holborn

Thurs, 5 April, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3 1LS

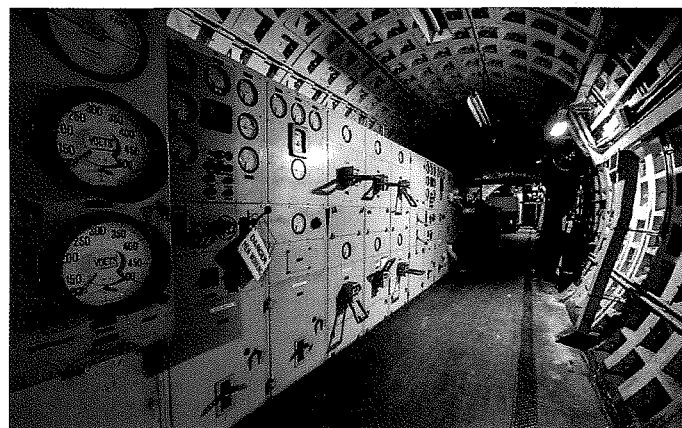
Antony Clayton's talk will explore the myriad tunnels carved beneath the former Borough of Holborn, from some of the earliest tube tunnels and the 'ghost'

*Kingsway Telephone Exchange*



*Our Speaker, Irene Cockroft*

campaign like the Pankhursts, Millicent Fawcett and Charlotte Despard and lesser known figures, such as community-spirited Emmeline and Frederick Pethick-Lawrence, English Folk Dance enthusiast Mary Neal,

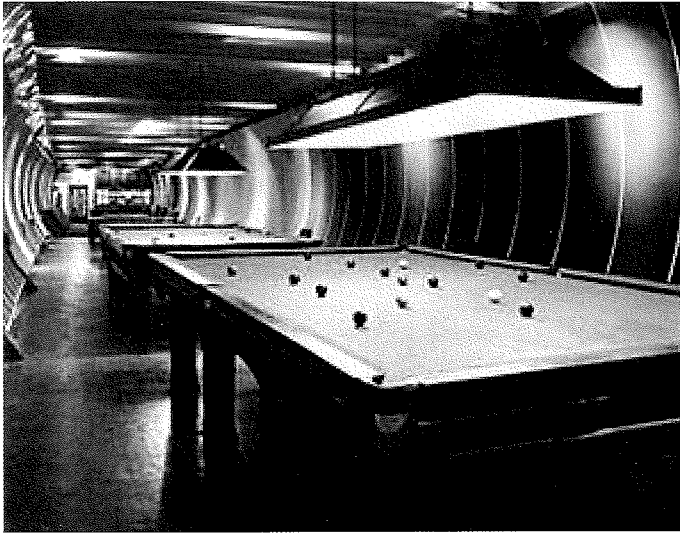


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*The Recreation Room in the Kingsway Telephone Exchange.*

station of British Museum, to Second World War tunnels and modern bunkers. Some of the folklore of so-called 'secret tunnels' in the area will also be explored. Antony is the author of *Subterranean City: Beneath the Streets of London*, *The Folklore of London*, and *Secret Tunnels of England*.

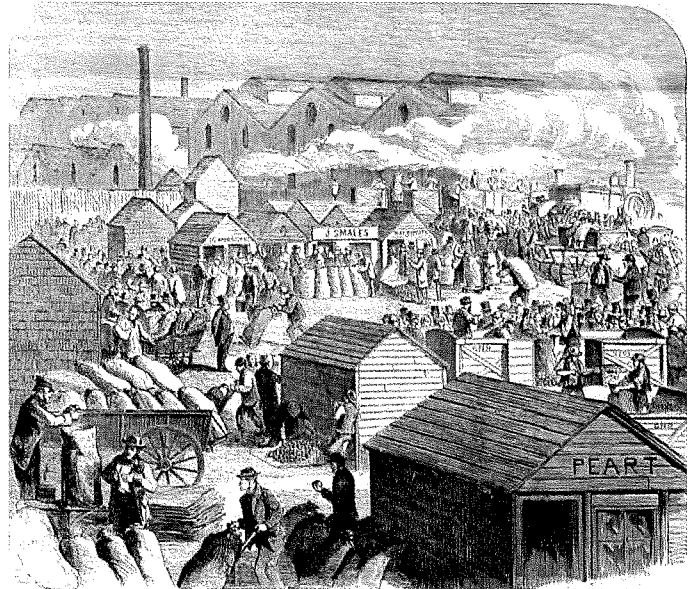
## The King's Cross Potato Market

In the last *Newsletter*, in the item 'Anniversaries 2018' we included the opening of the King's Cross Potato Market 150 years ago - 1868 - information obtained from *The St Pancras Book of Dates* by Walter Brown, the Chief Clerk and Registrar of St Pancras Cemetery department, a usually reliable source, published in 1904 by the borough council. He even supplied the opening date of 7th August that year. Peter Darley thinks this is inaccurate.

*Peter Darley writes:*

'Formerly the great potato market of London was in Tooley Street, Southwark, supplied by coastal shipping to wharves on the Thames. The Great Northern was the first railway company to establish a large potato depot for London, its location more convenient for supply to Covent Garden. As the market grew, other railway companies entered the trade, and by the 1860s the entire traffic in the carriage of potatoes had been diverted to the railways, the GN foremost among them.

The release of the King's Cross Temporary Passenger Station from passenger duties in 1852, when the present King's Cross station opened, provided the opportunity to convert it into a potato market. Over the next five years some £20,000 was spent on providing warehouse accommodation for leasing to traders, including a 150ft by 40ft warehouse on three floors and some 30 other warehouses to serve around 35 traders. The volumes traded grew quickly and, for the potato merchants, exposed a lack of facilities to receive their



*The Potato Market in 1864, from the Illustrated Times, shows the earlier market consisting of sheds*

consignments and inadequate storage, which compelled them to move the potatoes on promptly after removal from the company's wagons. Lack of sidings led to major blockages, with up to 1000 wagons waiting to be unloaded.

The complaints of the potato salesmen led to alterations and extensions in 1864 costing £40,000. The whole of the old passenger terminus was set aside as the area of the new market on which the company built 36 warehouses fitted with dry and ventilated storage cellars. Sidings were provided for removing potatoes from the railway trucks and for loading the drays for delivery to dealers in Covent Market, and elsewhere throughout the metropolis.

According to an article and engraving (*see above*) of 1864 purporting to show the existing market, the GN's potato trade had been conducted by 35 merchants, who carried on their business, before the 1864 improvements, in "little wooden huts". In fact the image shows the temporary site and shacks that briefly accommodated the potato trade while the warehouses were under construction. The stables that were a feature of this corner of the goods yard are not shown.

The GN was put on its mettle again by a further complaint from the potato tradesmen in 1888 drawing attention to the need for a vegetable market alongside the Potato Market. The traders were in a strong bargaining position, drawing comparison with facilities provided by the Midland Railway, which was actively encouraging changes of allegiance. The GN responded by covering the whole of the market with a glass roof supported by iron columns. Additional potato stores were added at the south end, bringing the total number of warehouses to 39



*The Flask, Highgate in 1911. Drawing by A.R. Quinton.*

## An old Highgate pub

It is not unusual for pubs to claim a very old foundation date – sometimes on flimsy or non-existent evidence. But there is no doubt that The Flask in Highgate Village was established a very long time ago. In fact we have missed its three-hundredth birthday. It first appears under that name in the Canteloves Court Rolls on the 28 June 1716, when it was surrendered by John and Phillippa Martyn to Edmund Rolfe of Thavies Inn; the premises were already in the tenure of Rolfe's future or existing son-in-law, Thomas Phillipps, vintner. It is described as The Flask, at the southern end of the village's Bowling Green. When Rolfe died in 1726 he left both The Flask and the Bowling Green to his daughter Elizabeth and her husband Phillipps.

The Bowling Green is noted in the Rolls in 1672 when the Lord of the Manor granted some notable residents of the village, including the Duke of Lauderdale and the Marquis of Dorchester, the stewardship of the Green which had been used 'as a bowling green beyond the memory of man.' Once all the trustees had died the Lord granted the Green to the owners of The Flask. Future owners were not permitted to dig it up, but if they did they were to re-establish it as a bowling green, with ditches and hedges around it and trees nearby. The Green was on the north side of The Flask and therefore behind it. It was an added attraction for customers of The Flask, but in 1730 it was indeed dug up and never replaced. In 1806 Chesterfield Lodge was built on its site; this in 1900 was replaced by the present-day Chesterfield and Burlington Mansions.

In 1917 The Flask was bought by John James Joass (1868-1952), the Scottish architect, who lived at 6 The Grove.

**John Richardson**

## THE WORLD WAR II GENERATION

*Shane Geere writes:* That generation who lived and fought through the Second World War is slipping away. It is of vital importance that we capture as many memories while we still have the chance.

The War Generation Project ([www.war-gen.com](http://www.war-gen.com)) was formed by broadcaster and historian Dan Snow, and author and broadcaster James Holland. It is creating a crowd-sourced online repository of oral history from people who lived through that war, and we are looking for individuals willing to join our volunteer team as interviewers and to record their stories. Please check out their website for the interviews that have already been carried out.

Shane Geere, co-ordinator of the project, would welcome new contacts. Please be in touch on [shane@wargen.org](mailto:shane@wargen.org).

## Things to Come

*Please put these talks in your diary:*

*17 May.* 'This vexed question'. 500 years of women in medicine, by Kristin Hussey.

*5 June.* Our Annual General Meeting followed by a talk: Humphrey Repton's London Squares, by Susan Jellis.

*5 July.* The Jewel in the Post-War Crown: a retrospective for the 70th anniversary of the NHS, by Kevin Brown.

*August:* Annual Outing, to be announced.

*20 September:* St Pancras Station (title to be announced), by Josie Murray.

*15 November:* Nancy Astor, Margaret Wintringham and Thelma Cazalet Keir: three early women MPs, by Robin Harragin Hussey.

*13 December:* Camden in 50 buildings by Louis Berk and Rachel Kolsky.

## Cook's Camden

Sydney Cook was Camden's first Borough Architect, although he had previously held the same position with Holborn Borough Council, and designed Holborn Library in Theobalds Road. He was regarded well in the architectural profession for his work in Camden, and this is celebrated in a new exhibition - *Cook's Camden* - to be held at Local Studies, Holborn Library, which runs from 5 February to 27 April.

The exhibition, designed by Stefi Orazi, is based on the book on Cook's work by Professor Mark Swenarton, of the School of Architecture, Liverpool. The photographs are by Tim Crocker. This will be supplemented by a talk by Tudor Allen on Tuesday, 6th March at 7.15 at Local Studies.

(Opening times: Monday and Tuesday 10-6, Thursday 10-7, Friday 10-5, alternate Saturdays from 17 February 11-5)

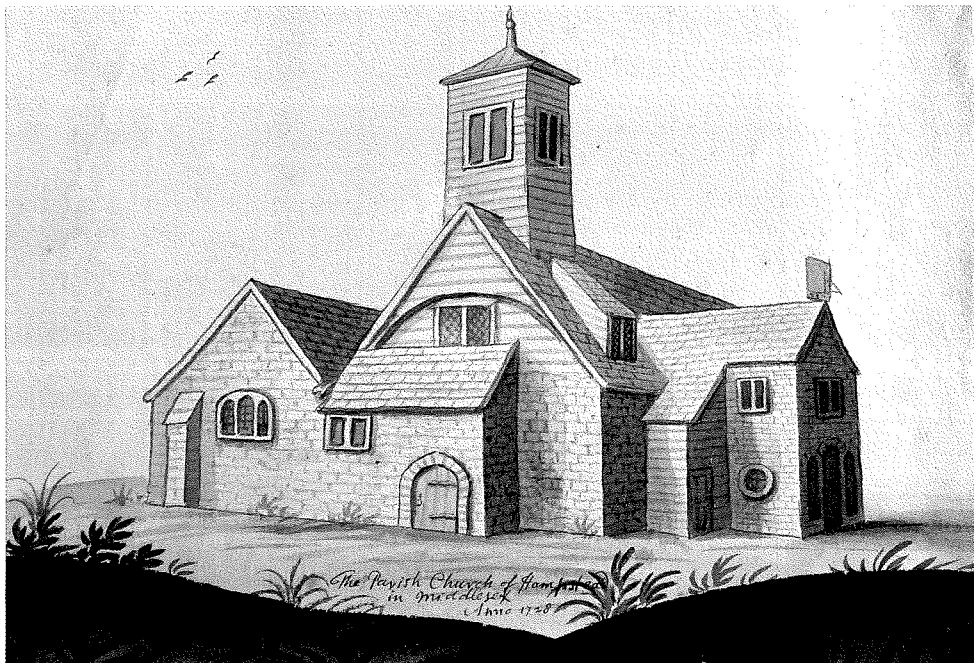
## Early Beatles in Decca Studios, West Hampstead

Dick Weindling reports on an important musical event on New Year's Day in 1962, 56 years ago.

On a very cold New Year's Day the Beatles arrived in West Hampstead for their audition at Decca Studios. Their manager, Brian Epstein, arrived by train, but the band drove down the day before, with equipment, squeezed into a van, fighting fog and snow in a journey that lasted ten hours. They stayed overnight at the Royal Hotel in Holborn and got drunk against the strict command of Epstein. Their audience the next day included the Decca A&R head, Dick Rowe, who, Epstein claimed, decided not to sign them.

George Martin, later their producer, was also not impressed by their demo disc, but was convinced enough by Epstein's enthusiasm to sign them. This led to famous recordings with EMI.

More details of the story are on the website fostered by Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms:  
<http://westhampsteadlife.com/2018/01/1>



*Peter Barber has found this image of Hampstead Parish Church in 1728 in the collection of the Society of Antiquaries. It is not an image seen before by Tudor Allen in Local Studies, nor by Peter Woodford. It does have similarities with a 1785 print in Images of Hampstead. Has anyone more information?*

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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No 287

May 2018

## 'This vexed question': 500 years of women in medicine

Thursday, 17 May, 7.30pm  
Camden Local Studies, 2nd floor, Holborn Library,  
32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA.

In 1870, a group of female medical students known as the 'Edinburgh Seven' campaigned for their right to graduate from the University of Edinburgh. Writing in *The Scotsman* one commentator bemoaned the 'vexed question' of women in medicine. Should women be allowed to train as doctors? Were they physically and mentally capable? Was there space for them in the profession? How would their male colleagues react?

The year 2018 marks 500 years since the foundation of the Royal College of Physicians and 100 years since (some) women were given the right to vote. To mark this momentous occasion, the Museum of the RCP will be hosting an exhibition which explores 500 years of the often fraught relationship of women

In this talk, Kristin Hussey will reflect on the long history of women in medicine, drawing out some of the different rationales behind the exclusion of female practitioners over the past five centuries. She will illuminate the contributions of some well-known and other lesser-known women, guided by the RCP's collections. Finally, she will consider how the question of being a woman and a doctor remains a vexing challenge for the practitioners of today.

Our speaker is Curator at the Royal College of Physicians.

## Repton's Bloomsbury and Russell Squares and the AGM

Tuesday, 5 June. (Please note: it is a Tuesday!)  
Camden Local Studies, 2nd Floor, Holborn Library,  
32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA

As is usual for the evening of the AGM, we shall be providing refreshments at 6.30pm; the AGM is at 7pm, and the talk is at 7.30pm. Non-members are welcome at 7.30pm (£1 at the door)

This year we are marking the 200th anniversary of the death of the famous landscape designer, Humphry Repton (1752-1818). In 1804, at the height of his fame, Repton was asked by the 5th Duke of Bedford to work on the grounds at Woburn Abbey. He soon extended his interest to the Duke's London estate in Bloomsbury, which was in the process of being transformed into a private housing development by James Burton. Plans for Russell Square and Bloomsbury Square were produced, but their execution encountered difficulties. Focused on Repton's landscaping activities, the talk covers the history of the development of the area from the open fields of the 18th century to the reworking of Russell Square on Reptonian lines in the early 21st century.

Susan Jellis, our speaker, is a contributor to the



A Lady Physician, depicted in *Punch*, 23 Dec. 1865

medical practitioners and the medical establishment. Indeed, the RCP was one of the last major medical organisations to admit female members, the first joining in 1909.

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*The fountain in Russell Square, one of the significant changes to the Repton landscape, was introduced in Camden Council's remodelling of the Square in 2000-01.  
(Photo: Susan Jellis)*

forthcoming multi-author book, *Repton in London: The gardens and landscapes of Humphry Repton (1752-1818) in the London Boroughs*, to be published by the London Parks and Gardens Trust in April 2018. Her talk is based on her chapter on Repton's London Squares.

#### **The AGM**

Nominations for officers of the Society and members of its Council, are invited. The present incumbents are:

PRESIDENT: Prof. Caroline Barron  
 VICE PRESIDENTS: Ann Saunders, Gillian Tindall, Malcolm Holmes  
 CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
 VICE CHAIRMAN: Vacant  
 SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT: Daniel Croughton  
 TREASURER: Henry Fitzhugh  
 MEETINGS CO-ORDINATOR: Ruth Hayes  
 PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: David Hayes  
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 PUBLICATIONS (postal sales) Roger Cline  
 PUBLICATIONS (bookstall sales) Sheila Ayres  
 LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Tudor Allen or his deputy  
 RESEARCH TEAM LEADER: Stephen Denford  
 COUNCIL MEMBERS: Sheila Ayres, Steven Denford, Lindsay Douglas, Emily Gee, Paul Klein, Richard Knight, Lester May, Susan Palmer and Peter Woodford.  
 INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Douglas Parkin

Nominations should be sent, to arrive by 1 June, to our Secretarial Assistant, Daniel Croughton – details in the panel on the back page. Nominations may also be made at the AGM.

#### **Copy dates**

In future the *Newsletter* will include the copy date for the following *Newsletter*. This will be on the back page, just above the panel of officer names and contact addresses.



*Aneurin Bevan, Minister for Health, the driving force in the establishment of the NHS.*

## **The Jewel in the Post-War Crown: a retrospective for the 70th anniversary of the NHS.**

*Thursday, 5 July, 7.30pm  
 Camden Local Studies, 2nd floor, Holborn Library,  
 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA*

**(Please note: our July talk is earlier in the month than usual, and is therefore featured in this, our May Newsletter)**

Since its inauguration on 5 July 1948, the National Health Service, a comprehensive health service for the entire community, has been a source of pride for the United Kingdom. A unified system was created from a patchwork of random and unco-ordinated local authority and charitable welfare provision. It was the culmination of various welfare schemes pioneered in the early twentieth century and the increasing role of the State in safeguarding the health of the people.

The Second World War Emergency Medical Service in London offered a model for how a national system could work and a vision for a better post-war world. Although idealistic young doctors supported state medicine, their elder colleagues resisted change and feared they would become no more than civil servants, but won concessions in the political battles of the time which brought them round to the new system.

However, ever-increasing demand and the rising cost of medicine as it became more technological have added new pressures.

Kevin Brown, our speaker, is Archivist to Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust and Curator of the Alexander Fleming Laboratory Museum. He is the author of books on the history of medicine and military and maritime history, most recently *The Seasick Admiral: Nelson and the Health of the Navy*. Kevin is especially pleased to be giving his talk on the 70th anniversary of the foundation of the NHS.

## Francis Sheppard

All London historians are in debt to Francis Sheppard, who died in January aged 96. He was, from 1954, the General Editor of the *Survey of London* volumes for 30 years, that indispensable series covering the architecture and development of many areas of London. Despite difficult financial restrictions and unsatisfactory working conditions he reinvigorated the magisterial series on London begun by C R Ashbee before the last war. During Sheppard's time the project was funded by the LCC and then from 1965 by the GLC until its abolition.

From his first volume on South Lambeth in 1956, Sheppard transformed the *Survey* from a slightly old-fashioned format. No other city in the world has such authoritative histories of its components to rival the scholarship of Sheppard's years. His own talents have been augmented by those of Ida Darlington, Andrew Saint, Jim Dyos, Michael Robbins, John Summerson, John Betjeman and James Stevens Curl. Sheppard was adept at merging the architectural information with the social and economic factors of the area being studied.

He had to be diplomatic too, because the research for the volume on Covent Garden in 1970 revealed enough information for the listing of many properties in the area which would have been demolished by the GLC, his paymasters, in their proposed crass plan to turn Covent Garden into a business centre. The listings proved such a barrier for the scheme to proceed that much of Covent Garden was saved, and a dreaded through road abandoned. The result was that most of the pleasantly assorted and low height buildings were retained. Sheppard may not have been impressed by the nature of Covent Garden today, but he would surely have been pleased to see much of its architecture still standing.

## Find the Ladies

The Foundling Museum has embarked on a mission to track down images of the 21 women who set in motion the creation of the country's first children's charity nearly 300 years ago. They signed the original petition to George II for permission to set up the Foundling Hospital after its instigator, Thomas Coram, failed to find enough men willing to risk the supposed stigma of the venture. The petition failed, but the women continued their campaign. The next petition in 1739, signed only by men, resulted in a Royal Warrant.

The museum's director, Caro Howell, says that the names of the women were written down by Coram in a notebook. This is their only legacy, but, of course, many of the men who eventually persuaded the king, some of them married to members of the 21 women, now have their portraits in the Museum.

Now, in the year celebrating Votes for Women, the Museum wants to mount an exhibition devoted to

the Foundling women. Caro Howell would welcome anyone who could help track down the portraits – they have some, but others are absent. If you think you can help the Foundling Museum at 40 Brunswick Square, its telephone number is 0207 841 3600.

## Subscriptions Due

A subscription renewal reminder was included with the last *Newsletter* – subscriptions were due by 1 March. Members who do not pay by standing order should send a cheque, made out to the Camden History Society, to the Treasurer, Dr Henry Fitzhugh at 56 Argyle Street WC1H 8ER (tel: 0207 837 9980). The July *Newsletter* will only be sent if subscriptions have been received by May 20th.

## Here and There

1. London Transport is applying to Islington Council for permission to erect an elongated memorial to the eminent typographer, Edward Johnston (1872-1944), on the wall of Farringdon Station. Johnston, who was born in Uruguay to Scottish settlers, was at first a calligrapher, but went on to design the typeface that is identified with London Underground. He also modified the bulls-eye that contains the station name. The typeface is also used extensively on printed matter issued by London Transport.

The memorial will consist of large wooden blocks inserted into the wall, featuring his whole alphabet. The font will be in reverse, as the letters would be in a compositor's type drawer. Johnston's name is inserted amongst them.

2. The *Camden New Journal* is to celebrate 150 years of St Pancras Station in 2018. It is looking for old photographs, memories, historical documents or personal accounts of the iconic building. Please email Shaun Pollard at [shaun@camdennewjournal.co](mailto:shaun@camdennewjournal.co), or else call him on 0207 419 9000.

3. Congratulations are in order to Mary Cosh, long a stalwart of the Islington Archaeology and History Society, for recently celebrating her 99th birthday. She has written several histories and guides featuring Islington, and her book *A History of Islington* (2005) is the first full-length history of Islington since the middle of the 19th century.

## THE BRUNSWICK CENTRE

A new book on the Brunswick Centre in Bloomsbury has been published. Entitled *Pass-engers series 1: The Brunswick Centre*, it has several contributors, including one of the architects, David Levitt, who reflects on the construction. The book – ISBN 978-0-9572687-4-6, published by Petrel, is a softback of 112pp including many illustrations. It will be at a reduced rate of £10 to CHS members. Email your order to [info@passen-gers.co.uk](mailto:info@passen-gers.co.uk), and quote Camden History Society.

## The Annual Outing

This year's Outing on 7 August is to two National Trust properties. One is the Sandham Memorial Chapel near Newbury, which contains 19 canvases by the artist Stanley Spencer, expressing in paint his military experiences during the First World War. Spencer was a resident of the old Vale of Health Hotel from 1924 to 1927.

In the afternoon we shall go to The Vyne, near Basingstoke, a Tudor house, visited by Henry VIII and Anne Boleyn in 1535 as part of the Progress. Pevsner said that The Vyne is "one of the most rewarding houses in Hampshire, both visually and historically ...".

In the mid-17th century the house was sold to Chaloner Chute, who was Speaker of the House of Commons, and it remained in the Chute family until 1956.

A booking leaflet is enclosed with this *Newsletter*.

## The Theatre of many names at King's Cross

A book, published in 1925, recounts the shaky career of a theatre in Birkenhead Street, opposite today's King's Cross Station. *The Lost Theatres of the Nineteenth Century* by Erroll Sherson, deals with this theatre at some length. Its original name was the Grand Panharmonium Theatre, reflecting that it was the prime attraction in the proposed Panharmonium Gardens adjacent to the theatre, in which music and drama would dominate. This odd name was probably the choice of the main developer of the scheme, an Italian singing-master called Signor Gesualdo Lanza (1779-1859).

The enterprise, opened in March 1830, was inevitably nicknamed the Pandemonium. But it soon had another name - The Clarence - intended to honour the new king, William IV. At least it avoided the derision heaped on the odd statue, erected in 1836, of George IV (d. 1830), elder brother of William, which was placed on the site of a turnpike at the meeting of the roads at what is now King's Cross. The area became popularly known by that name because of the statue and road junctions: its name acquired permanence when the new LNER station, opened in 1852, used that title.

Although the pleasure-garden scheme capsized and the land was used for housing, the theatre struggled on, changing its name regularly. In its early days Edmund Kean starred in *Richard III*. In 1838, according to Mr Sherson, it became the New Lyceum. Later names include The Regent, The Argyll, The Cabinet and The King's Cross.

The theatre had an unusual policy, for it put aspiring actors on stage - for a fee. 'Any young man could try



*The Panharmonium Theatre.*

his luck there in *Hamlet* on payment of a fixed tariff according to the importance of the role. Rosencratz cost 2s 6d, but Horatio was 5s. The title role cost one sovereign.'

Charles Dickens went there. He noted that in this type of theatre, 'the orchestra usually consisted of two fiddles and a flute, who had to get through any number of overtures till the performers were ready. The theatre was usually lit by half a dozen little oil lamps set round the only tier of boxes. Charges for amateur performers for the part of Richard III were as much as £2, Catesby 12s, the Lord Mayor London 2s 6d. Lady performers had nothing to pay.'

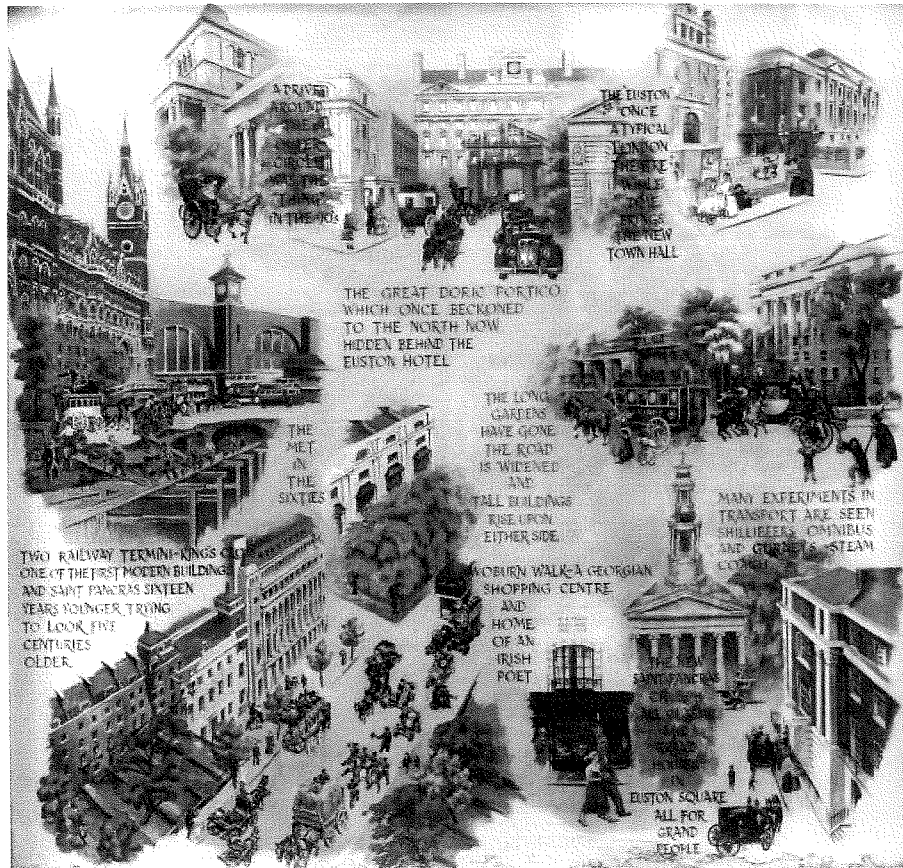
A later visitor, when it was the King's Cross Theatre, said that 'standing under the portico for shelter from the rain, he was accosted by the money taker who said to him "Come in, sir: just a goin' to begin.". He paid a shilling and entered to find an audience of not more than thirty persons, mostly in their shirt-sleeves. The overture was *Home, Sweet Home*, played by an orchestra of one solitary fiddler, who was booed away for playing out of tune.

The theatre was probably closed in the late 1860s.

**John Richardson**

## Postcards in the Park

In the First World War a giant sorting office called the Home Depot was built in Regent's Park. Millions of letters and parcels for soldiers on the Front Line were handled there. A commemorative Pop-Up Depot, based on the original on the site, will be open to visitors who can immerse themselves in its activities, exploring its role during the War. You can visit on 12th or 19th May, 11-3, to take part. The Depot will be found east of Broad Walk and just north of Chester Road, which itself is a turning off the Outer Circle.



## Rediscovered Murals

Much interest has been aroused at the reappearance of some murals that were once on display in Camden (previously St Pancras) Town Hall, by East End artist Cecil Osborne. Their possible existence was established by David Buckman who was researching the pre-war East London Group of painters. The murals were commissioned by the old St Pancras Council and depicted buildings and life in the borough. Cecil's son, Dorian Osborne, has described the background to their creation.

"The offer was for my father to supply three pictures painted in oils depicting the history of the Borough on canvases to be hung in the small Assembly Room at St Pancras Town Hall. The Council supplied the materials and father designed and painted the series which are each six feet by six feet square.

"We were living at 46 Belsize Square at the time and that is where the first was painted, the work commencing in, I seem to recall, 1956 or thereabouts. My brother and I were used as artist's models for some of the children depicted. Also there are two rather ragged children shown in some sections which were based on the *Bisto* advertisement – for example, in one panel, pushing a hand-cart. The motor car depicted in the illustration of the Doric arch at Euston Station is a *Triumph Gloria*.

"In 1958, we moved to 7 Redston Road, N8 and

that is where the second panel was completed and the third executed. It is the third which shows the Post Office Tower, as it was then in progress. At a later date, the Council moved all three to the public lending library in Brecknock Road near Kentish Town from where they were moved into storage."

But what happened next? Malcolm Holmes takes up the story. "I think these certainly look like the ones I last saw in the former staff canteen in the basement of the Town Hall, but I can't remember where they were before." Malcolm remembers them last in the 1990s, but doesn't remember them as canvases.

David Buckman was contacted, after the publication of his book on the East London Group, by Dr Kaori O'Connor, to say she had the three panels.

"I did not acquire the paintings so much as rescue them. They turned up in a weekly sale at the old Phillips auction rooms in Bayswater in the nineteen-nineties. Not a picture sale, but a general one, thrown in with furniture and oddments.

"I saw one of the canvas panels poking out from behind a fridge. The Phillips staff knew nothing about their background and did not know what to make of them. I realised that some of the places featured in the paintings were near to where we lived in Bloomsbury and knew I had to save them. If they had failed to sell, they would have been scrapped. As I recall there were no other bidders.

"Once I got them home, I realised they were a unique social history of a part of London that is rapidly changing out of recognition, while also acquiring a new cultural and artistic life. Only recently, when I met David Buckman, I learned about the artist Cecil Osborne, his life and how the panels came to be painted for the old St Pancras Borough Council.

"I have had the panels for some twenty years, and they remain as fresh and fascinating as the day I first saw them. They have a unique presence with a very strong sense of time and place. They were painted for a public space, intended to be seen by many people, so I would like them to find a new home where they can be widely appreciated."

Gillian Tindall had heard rumours of these murals before. Her guess would be that they got side-lined some time around the point (1963-4) when St Pancras was being subsumed into Camden. "They are not great art, but the passage of time lends further weight and interest to them, and of course they should never have been abandoned like that, particularly given that St Pancras Council seems to have encouraged their production. Surely, somewhere in their spacious new premises at 1 Pancras Square Camden can find room for them?"

The panels are now owned by Dr O'Connor's daughter and Camden has indicated its interest in purchasing them. Watch this space.

## A Second Primrose League

Many members will know the Primrose League as an organisation founded to support Conservative principles. It derived its name from Disraeli's favourite flower. The League was founded in 1883 and disbanded in 2004.

However, **Peter Darley** has found another Primrose League, centred on Primrose Hill, and which was German. *He writes:*

"The pilotless aircraft (V1) that fell between Oppidans and King Henry's Road in Primrose Hill in 1944 caused heavy damage to the houses in both roads. Only four houses of the northern Oppidans Road terrace now survive, numbers 18 to 21.

This was perhaps the final chapter in a story about German air power that centred on No. 19. In the three years before the war the house had been the base for the Primrose League, as the group of German émigrés that was trying to alert the British to the dangers to peace of German rearmament liked to be known.

There were four main players in this Primrose League. **Otto Lehmann-Russbuedt** was a lifelong pacifist and campaigner against the arms trade. Arrested after the Reichstag fire in 1933, he narrowly escaped to Britain where he was promptly made stateless by the Nazi regime. Through his high level British

contacts he tried to alert Britain to the threats to peace posed by German militarism and aerial and gas warfare. He also carried out research for his book, published as *Germany's Air Force*, an exposé of secret aerial rearmament in contravention of the Treaty of Versailles. Neither activity endeared him to the British government which, concerned with political relations with Germany, alerted MI5 and leaned on the publishers to suppress the book.

**Bernard Reichenbach** was a journalist about whom less is known, as his security files have not been released.

**Hans Wolffsohn** was an aviation expert and former war pilot, and co-author with Lehmann-Russbuedt. He had maintained contacts with former colleagues and aviation experts in Germany.

**Karl Otten** was considered by MI5 the leader of the group. From a left-wing intellectual tradition, he was a fervent anti-Nazi and keen to alert Britain to the threats of Luftwaffe build-up. A pacifist and writer, he had achieved transitory fame as an expressionist poet: his 1918 volume of anti-war poetry had been impounded by the Prussian Secret Police. In the dying days of the Weimar Republic, he once more became famous as the author and scriptwriter of G.W. Pabst's film *Kameradschaft*, one of the first great cinema successes. His need for a translator for his plays, books and reports led to a close association with a somewhat enigmatic British writer, Claud Sykes.

**Claud Sykes** was a man of many parts that fitted together rather like a *matryoshka* or a Russian doll. He initially pursued an acting career, one that served his later roles. His credibility was bolstered by his friendship and literary collaboration with James Joyce in Zurich, typing the first chapters of *Ulysses* and together forming The English Players, a troupe with Sykes as producer/director and Joyce as business manager. Sykes' next persona was as an author and translator from German, with a fascination and enthusiasm for both aviation and spying. Flying was, at the time, romanticized as the last form of individual combat in which the traditions of martial chivalry had survived amongst the mechanized carnage of modern warfare. Sykes tapped into this market with translations of books about WW1 air aces under the pseudonym 'Vigilant', including *Richthofen: the Red Knight of the Air* in 1932. He also wrote three volumes of 'Lynx' novels, about a fictional British air ace, and *Secrets of Modern Spying* (1930).

This set of skills and experience served Sykes well as he and Karl Otten got to know each other in 1937, and he became Otten's translator and friend, being introduced to the Primrose League through the trust he had built with Otten.

Lehmann-Russbuedt and Reichenbach shared accommodation at No. 19 where they were later



joined for a while by Otten and his wife. Sykes, codenamed M/S, was a regular visitor, having been engaged by MI5 to keep an eye on the group to discover its sources and finance.

The Primrose League had good contacts with experts in Germany and political contacts in UK. Through the latter they communicated with Winston and Randolph Churchill, a contact that became increasingly direct. External funding came from a variety of sources including Czechoslovakia, through whose embassy they reported.

The group split up shortly before the start of WW2. Karl Otten was later himself engaged by MI5. Sykes was never rumbled.'

*Note:* The content of this article is taken directly from *A Matter of Intelligence: MI5 and the surveillance of anti-Nazi refugees 1933-50*, by Charmian Brinson and Richard Dove. (Manchester University Press, 2014)

## Cook of Camden's Triumph

Gerald Isaaman, former editor of the *Hampstead & Highgate Express*, reviews the exhibition and book by Mark Swenarton of Sydney Cook's architectural effect on the London Borough of Camden.

'They were the glory days, when local government was truly accepted as the basis of democracy, individual communities that were not stamped on and deprived of funding.

Being there at the birth of Camden in 1964/5, I reported the fears that glueing together Tory-controlled Hampstead and Holborn with Red Flag waving St Pancras, albeit as the richest of the new London boroughs with a rateable value of £33.2 million, could be a political disaster.

Yet, unlike the ongoing systemic Brexit crisis today, there was a deep desire to make it work for the basic benefit of the people. St Pancras's outspoken lefties Charlie Ratchford and Paddy O'Connor appreciated that here was a new powerhouse authority with enormous potential to make its own impact on the welfare state.

Although it is labelled as architectural history, *Cook's Camden*, by Professor Mark Swenarton, is a record of virtually unrepeated political and social change brought about by young talent allowed to answer the borough's demands, particularly in creating new housing. As the Hampstead councillor Enid Wistrich, now 88, said at the time: "The main aim was more housing, beginning and end".

And what is even more remarkable is that Sydney Cook (1910-1979), originally Holborn's Borough Architect, who brought about the crucial change, was a virtually unknown local government officer. Certainly elusive, modest too as far as the local media

was concerned, hardly the radical role model he became behind the scenes carrying out the Council's manifesto for "an effective housing policy ... at rents you can afford."

Now, at last, his success in changing the face of Camden over just eight years is recognised in immaculate detail and delight. That is apart from the fact that there is just a single photograph of Cook in what Professor Swenarton sub-titles *Cook's Camden as The Making of Modern Housing*. This is a *Ham and High* picture of Cook taken in April, 1969 - he is with the architect Neave Brown. They are seen looking at a model of Brown's Alexandra Road estate at Swiss Cottage, completed in 1978 now regarded as a low rise, high density masterpiece in modern urban design.

Indeed, it is totally appropriate that the vital role of Cook and his impressive architects' department in bringing it about should be told in the wake of the belated award to Brown, now 88, of the RIBA's 2018 Gold Medal as a pioneer of public housing, an honour personally approved by the Queen.

As Neave Brown, an American, has himself said: "Where England and the architects were radical was in their identification of socialism and the idea of making a new society. And my god, I personally felt that England really did need a new society at the time."

Cook, alas, is not with us to add his applause. Professor Swenarton, in his absence, celebrates the 518 homes for some 2,200 people Cook's department produced, to be "the most architecturally celebrated housing scheme built in Britain in the past half century." He concludes: "If, half a century later, our architects could do the same, we would have good reason to be satisfied."

Professor Swenarton's own commitment to the Cook saga goes back almost a decade, to when I first met him in 2008 and provided him with the names of some key people. So up popped the names and influence of such doyen councillors as Frank Dobson Martin Morton, Millie Miller, Sammy Fisher, Ivor Walker, as well as the New Hampstead Society architects Michael Floyd and Chris Gotch.

Their talents too were all part of Cook's enterprise in creating the municipal housing that Margaret Thatcher later destroyed around the country. And which Theresa May is now belatedly trying to revive with a promise of £2 billion to bring some solace to those seeking affordable homes in a crazy market of monster prices and escalating rents.

Now people living in fear in an age when the Grenfell disaster has so dramatically pinpointed the failure of safe high-rise council housing across the country and the government failing in its promise to provide funding for replacement cladding.

Mrs May should take a stroll round Camden to see for herself how Cook's passion created a radical range of no fewer than 47 ambitious housing projects by committed architects including Highgate Newtown, the Brunswick Centre, Maiden Lane, Fleet Road and Tolmer Square.

There is also Branch Hill, Hampstead, derided by opponents as the most expensive council housing ever in a highly controversial, almost never ending debate over land once adjoining Lord Glendyne's elegant home. The scheme eventually became an enviable mixed public and private project when the Tories took control of Camden.

It is strange that skyscrapers are still seen as suitable for council housing – one is planned for the centre of Mrs May's Maidenhead constituency – Cook's vision in Camden has been lost. Every local authority ought to buy a copy of Swenarton's book and, if anyone is feeling flush, give it as a Christmas present for the Prime Minister, whoever she – or he – might be in December.

(*COOK'S CAMDEN The Making of Modern Housing* by Mark Swenarton (Lund Humphries, £45).

## Things to Come

Please put the following in your diary:

August 7: *Annual Outing*. See p4 and flyer inserted with this *Newsletter*.

20 September: *St Pancras Station – 150 years old*, by Josie Murray

18 October: *Cook's Camden: The Making of Modern Housing*, by Mark Swenarton.

15 November: A talk by Robin Harragin Hussey featuring Nancy Astor, Margaret Wintringham and Thelma Cazalet Keir – three early women MPs. (Title to be announced).

13 December: *Camden Town in Fifty Buildings*, by Louis Berk and Rachel Kolsky.

## Talks at St Pancras Old Church

Two talks at St Pancras Old Church, Pancras Road, will probably interest members of the Society:

*Thursday, 7 June.*

Alan Powers, architectural historian and joint editor of *The Twentieth Century Journal*, will talk about Enid Marx, one of the greatest designers of the 20th century.

*Wednesday 20 June*

Anna Keay, Director of the Landmark Trust, on James, Duke of Monmouth, Restoration playboy and adored illegitimate son of Charles II.

Talks begin at 7pm – the bar is open from 6.30pm. Tickets £10 at the door. All proceeds go towards the St Pancras Old Church restoration funds.

*Regent's Park Road c.1904*



**Copy date for July Newsletter: June 17**

This Newsletter is published by the Camden History Society.

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

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# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 288  
Jul 2018

## The Jewel in the Post-War Crown: a retrospective for the 70th anniversary of the NHS.

Thursday, 5 July, 7.30pm  
Camden Local Studies, 2nd floor, Holborn Library,  
32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA

It was possible that this July *Newsletter* would not arrive with members in time to give sufficient notice, so the details of the July talk were given in the May edition. Our Speaker, Kevin Brown, marks the 70th anniversary of the inauguration of the National Health Service on 5 July 1948.

Please refer to the previous *Newsletter* for more information or else to the CHS website (details below).

## The Annual Outing

There are some seats still available on the coach to visit Sandham Memorial Chapel on Tuesday 7 August, featuring 19 Stanley Spencer works, and to the Vyne, a Tudor mansion, shown below. Pick ups are at Camden High Street (outside Marks & Spencer) at 8.30am, Hampstead High Street (outside Waterstones), and 8.45 at Swiss Cottage outside the Library. The fee is £25 for National Trust members, and £35 otherwise. A booking leaflet was included with the last *Newsletter*, but if you have lost that telephone the organiser, Jean Archer, on 0207 435 5490 (91 Fitzjohn's Avenue, NW3 6NX).



## The Annual Meeting

At the 48th Annual Meeting on June 5th, the Chairman, John Richardson, reported that the Society had received no further communication from Camden Council as to its plan to redevelop Holborn Library, including the Local Studies Centre, since we attended a meeting in July last year. He criticised the lack of progress, the absence of reaction to our proposals, and queried if the developer was having a change of heart, or even if Camden still intended to go ahead with the scheme which includes developing the site of Cockpit Yard nearby.

The Chairman congratulated Lindsay Douglas on the redesign of our website, and also Ruth Hayes for the quality of the talks in the previous year.

The Treasurer reported that we had enrolled about 50 new members in the past year - almost entirely the result of our new website.

The following officers and Council members were appointed:

PRESIDENT: Professor Caroline Barron  
VICE PRESIDENTS: Dr Ann Saunders, Gillian Tindall, Malcolm Holmes  
CHAIRMAN: John Richardson  
TREASURER: Dr Henry Fitzhugh  
MEETINGS CO-ORDINATOR: Ruth Hayes  
PUBLICATIONS EDITOR: David Hayes  
PUBLICITY OFFICER: Lindsay Douglas  
PUBLICATIONS (Bookstall Sales) Sheila Ayres  
PUBLICATIONS (postal sales) Roger Cline  
MEMBERSHIP SECRETARY: Dr Henry Fitzhugh  
LOCAL STUDIES LIAISON: Tudor Allen or his deputy  
RESEARCH TEAM LEADER: Steven Denford  
COUNCIL MEMBERS: Catherine Dille, Emily Gee, Paul Klein, Richard Knight and Susan Palmer

SECRETARIAL ASSISTANT: Daniel Croughton  
INDEPENDENT EXAMINER: Douglas Parkin

The meeting concluded with an interesting talk by Susan Jellis on Humphry Repton and his designs for the gardens of Bloomsbury and Russell Squares.

### The Society's Website

[www.camdenhistorysociety.org](http://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!!**

## Where there's a Will: the search for Anthony Heap's son.

In March of 1986 the personal diaries of Anthony Heap, long-term resident of St Pancras, were donated by his son to the British Records Association in accordance with his father's will: today they are located at the London Metropolitan Archives. The diaries, which span the years 1928-1985, have since proved a useful source for researchers, detailing aspects of his work and home life, current affairs and his great love, the theatre. Edited by Robin Woolven, *The London Diary of Anthony Heap, 1931-1945* was published last year by the London Record Society with financial assistance from the Camden History Society. It encompasses that most intense and vivid period of London history.

But what of Heap's only child, his son? Out of respect Robin and the LMA had attempted to locate him but, unable to do so, final editing and publication proceeded. Never one for leaving a stone unturned, Professor Caroline Barron, President of the CHS, asked if I might have better luck locating Heap's son – albeit then post-publication. If he *could* be found he would of course receive a copy of the published diary *gratis* and, who knows, have in his possession additional photos and letters that might further enhance subsequent talks given by Robin Woolven and others.

Heap's son, Anthony Charles Heap, was born in 1949 but intriguingly had later taken the surname Connell (we know this because it was under that name he acted as executor and donated his father's diaries). An initial search under his birth name proved fruitless. Searching, however, for 'Anthony Charles Connell' yielded several possibilities. These included recent electoral entries and also a possible 1991 death index entry and a corresponding probate index entry giving an address, Esmond Gardens, in Chiswick.

Modern death entries often feature the precise date of birth. Robin Woolven was able to hunt through the unpublished 1949 volume of the diaries for the day of his son's birth, the 24th February 1949:

*'M was delivered of a big bonny boy weighing 10lbs at 3 am this morning. Heard the joyous tidings over the phone as soon as I got to the office and straight away hied me up to Haverstock Hill to spend half an hour with M and the baby'* This date was an exact match to the details on the 1991 death entry. Indisputably then, Anthony Charles Connell had died, somehow, just shy of his 42nd birthday. Robin Woolven ordered copies of the relevant death certificate and will.

A civil service higher executive officer, Anthony Charles Connell died at the Royal Marsden Hospital on 12 January 1991 of advanced carcinomatosis, his body ravaged by cancer. Witness to his death and

sole executor of his will was Brian T. Green, a bus driver of Stoke Newington. The principal beneficiaries of the will were four charities – the Samaritans, the National Association for Mental Health (now MIND), the Cancer Help Centre of Bristol and the Sick Children's Trust. Interestingly, the latter was located at 139 Gray's Inn Road. This was the address in which Anthony Heap had lived as a boy and young man from 1915 until 1932, in which year he and his mother moved to Camden Town. Heap's father, a dentist, would take his own life at No. 139 the following year. Undoubtedly Connell must have been aware of the significance of 139 when drawing up his will.

In addition to the gifts to the charities, Connell also bequeathed several thousand pounds, his car and the entire contents of the flat in Esmond Gardens to his friend and executor, Brian Green. This left us with a vestige of hope. If found, Brian Green might be in the possession of a whole trunk of Heap ephemera. Or ... perhaps not.

Brian Trevor Green, born 1943, died on 16 December 1991, about twelve months after Connell. Drawn into a sort of *danse macabre*, we ordered another death certificate and yet another will. After all, it was quite possible that Mr Green's beneficiary may have been acquainted with Connell too.

Green died at St Mary's Hospital, Paddington of bronchopneumonia. Apart from his collection of model buses, his entire estate was bequeathed to a friend, Graham J. Tipping of Walthamstow. I was able to contact him and he is alive and well. Tipping had known Connell and had even attended his funeral in 1991 but, no, none of his personal effects had been passed on to him, and he knew nothing of their whereabouts. Thus, as you see, sometimes where there is a will there is not always a way.

**Paul Klein**

*Paul Klein is a member of the Council of the CHS. He is currently researching his house in Tufnell Park when it was a private boarding school for girls and also its lineage which dates back to 18th-century Kentish Town.*

*Sources: Ancestry and Findmypast. Wills and death certificates purchased by Robin Woolven.*

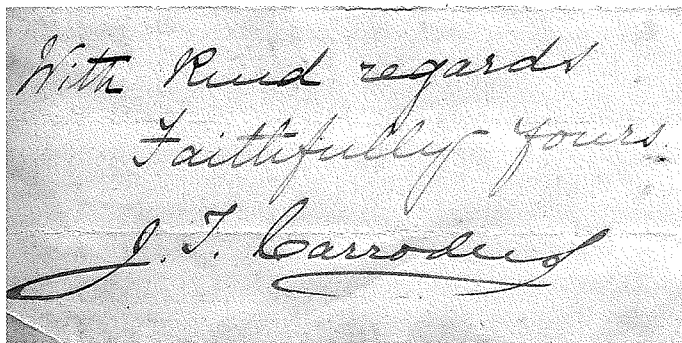


*Anthony Heap*

## Autograph Solved

Mark Haynes has written with a query accompanied by a picture of an autograph (below):

He writes: I have a puzzle which I am hoping the CHS may be able to crack. I recently came into possession of a large autograph book, dating back to the Victorian period. It contains a large number of autographs of the great and good when such a pastime was in its infancy. Actors, artists, aristocrats and musicians feature, but a signature of someone who is local to me has proved hardest to decipher. Whoever he was, the letterhead shows he lived at 199 Camden Road NW. Tracking him down would seem to be easy, but I've been stumped.'



This query was passed on to David Hayes. He writes: The celebrity was John Tiplady Carrodus, a notable violinist, who died in 1895 in his final home at 199 Camden Road. (Wikipedia has him dying in Hampstead, but that's wrong as his death registration says 'Pancras'.) According to *The Times* (17 July 1895) JTC was buried in Highgate (East) Cemetery. He is variously described as a violinist or a Professor of Music.



## Here and There

1. An organisation called London Greeters is looking for additional volunteers who would show visitors around Camden areas. Volunteers can do as little or as much as they want, but about twice a month is maximum. Camden is one of the most requested destinations. Ability to speak French would be helpful. To see more, Google London Greeters.

2. There is an exhibition entitled *The Return of the past: Postmodernism in British Architecture* at the Sir John Soane Museum from 16 May until 27 August. Entry is free. It is the first exhibition to explore Postmodernism in British architecture.

3. Our member, Pamela Taylor, has recently published for Victoria County History a book on Knightsbridge and Hyde, in its short history series. The history of Knightsbridge has been complicated because it was structurally related to Westminster, Paddington and Westbourne. Knightsbridge, to the west of the River Westbourne, was also related to Eye (Ebury) and from the mid-14th century was also intermeshed with an adjacent part of north-west Eye known as Hyde – a name now remembered in Hyde Park.

The paperback, 96pp, £12.99, can be obtained online on: [www.sas.ac.uk/publications/victoria-history-Middlesex-knightsbridge-and-hyde](http://www.sas.ac.uk/publications/victoria-history-Middlesex-knightsbridge-and-hyde).

4. A campaign has begun to erect a plaque to commemorate Henry Croft, founder of Pearly Kings and Queens. He was born in May 1861 in St Pancras Workhouse (now used by St Pancras Hospital, where his plaque will be placed) and also died there, of lung cancer, on New Year's Day 1930. He was raised in an orphanage after his father, a musician, died when he was about ten. At fifteen he became a road sweeper for St Pancras Vestry and was still employed in this form of work into the 1920s.

To raise money for charity, he adorned his clothes with mother-of-pearl buttons, so that eventually the whole of his outdoor clothing was decorated. He is also pictured with a top hat. He was not a costermonger, but in this his outfit was similar to some costermongers. In 1902 he was referred to in the *Strand Magazine* as the 'Pearlie King of Somers Town'. In 1907 he was presented to the King and Queen, and by 1911 all the metropolitan boroughs had 'Pearly' families.

At his funeral in St Pancras Cemetery in East Finchley, his cortège stretched for nearly half a mile, with a horse-drawn hearse, musicians and nearly 400 pearly kings and queens.



## The Coleridge Tomb

Much interest has been aroused by the discovery of the tomb of Samuel Taylor Coleridge (1772-1834) in Highgate. It was found amid rubble in the crypt beneath St Michael's church in South Grove.

Coleridge, poet and philosopher, friend of Wordsworth, came to live with and be in the care of Dr James Gillman and his family at 14 South Grove, Highgate, before they all moved in December 1823 to 3 The Grove opposite. Coleridge by then was an addict of laudanum, a tincture of opium. He asked Gillman not to let him out of the house for the first week, so badly tempted he was to the drug. He claimed that he had henceforth abstained, but de Quincey, an expert in such matters, declared that in his opinion Coleridge had not. Coleridge also drank frequently at the Red Lion & Sun in North Road, Highgate.

On his death, he was buried in the graveyard attached to Highgate School and its chapel. In 1868 his tomb and the coffins of other members of his family were incorporated in a vault beneath a new school chapel. In 1960, the author Ernest Raymond complained that Coleridge's tomb had become derelict and in 1961 it was disinterred and installed in St Michael's church which had been consecrated in 1832, a ceremony which Coleridge had himself attended, and in which his funeral service was held. The re-interment was marked by a service on 6 June 1961.

His coffin seems to have been placed in the St Michael's crypt in what was formerly the wine cellar of Ashurst House, previously known in the court rolls as The Banqueting House. This house was bought and demolished to make way for the church. Sir William Ashurst had been Lord Mayor in 1693-94. The last occupant of this splendid property was Daniel Downing and his 'Highgate Mansion House School for Young Gentlemen'. It was sold by its owner, Sarah Cave, to the Commission for Building New Churches in 1830.



A service was held at the church recently this year to rededicate Coleridge's tomb, and to launch a campaign to raise £5000 to refurbish the entire crypt.

## Where was Kilburn Wells?

Today, no. 42 Kilburn High Road at the corner of Belsize Road is a branch of the Franco Manca pizza chain. The London & South Western Bank opened here on 31 December 1874, and next door were two small shops, numbered 44 and 46, now united as a single property, Rush Hair Salon. When the bank was expanded and rebuilt in 1898 to form the present building, a stone plaque was placed at first-floor level saying this was the site of Kilburn Wells,

Though the exact location of the Wells has long been disputed, after much research we now believe it was situated behind today's pizza restaurant and Rush Hair Salon. When a local builder, Henry Oldrey, demolished some old houses to build a new photographic studio for George Nesbitt in 1891, he found the remains of a brick arch and a tiled passageway behind what was then no. 46 Kilburn High Road.

In the 18th century, Kilburn gained a reputation as a pleasure resort known as Kilburn Wells. It was based on a medicinal spring of fresh water in Abbey Fields near the site of the old Kilburn Priory and in the grounds of The Bell, or Kilburn Wells public house as it was then called.

On a 1762 drawing by James Ellis, The Bell and the Wells are owned by Holton Vere. Successive generations of the Vere family held the land and rented out the pub. Soon after Joseph Errington became landlord here, he placed an advert in *The Public Advertiser* in July 1773 listing its many attractions:

'Kilburn Wells, near Paddington. The waters now are in the utmost perfection: the gardens enlarged and greatly improved; the house and offices repainted and beautiful in the most elegant manner. The whole is now open for the reception of the public, the great room being particularly adapted to the use and amusement of the politest companies.

'Fit either for music, dancing or entertainments, this happy spot is equally celebrated for its rural situation, extensive prospects, and the acknowledged efficacy of its waters; it is most delightfully situated near the site of the once famous Abbey of Kilburn, on the Edgware Road, at an easy distance being but a morning's walk from the metropolis, two miles from Oxford Street; the foot-way from Mary-bone across the fields is still nearer. A plentiful larder is always provided, together with the best of wines and other liquors. Breakfasting and hot loaves.'

Despite Errington's efforts to publicise the place, he went bankrupt in May 1795, and the Kilburn Wells with its tea gardens and medicinal springs were put up for sale. After further renovations, The Bell Tavern was put up for sale again in 1807.

At its height it rivalled the more famous Hampstead Wells. In 1801 Dr John Bliss analysed the water from



*A view of Kilburn Wells c.1850 viewed from behind the High Road across the footpath from Abbey Road. The white building on the right could be the Long Room. (London Metropolitan Archives, City of London - Collage reference 7822)*

both Kilburn and Hampstead Wells. Writing about Kilburn he said: 'The spring rises about twelve feet below the surface and is enclosed in a large brick reservoir, which bears the date of 1714 on the key stone of the arch over the door. The water collected in the well is usually of the depth of five or six feet, but in a dry summer is from three to four, at which time effect as a purgative is increased. When taken from the well a few inches under the surface it is tolerably clear, but not of a crystal transparency: at first it is insipid but leaves an evident saline taste on the tongue. At rest, and even on slight agitation, no smell is produced but on stirring the water forcibly from the bottom of the reservoir, it becomes turbid from impurities which have been collected in it, and a considerable odour is emitted like that from the scouring of a foul gun barrel.'

The description of the well given by Dr Bliss matches the remains which Oldrey found in 1891. The use of the water for curative purposes appears to have generally ceased in the early part of the 19th century.

The wells suffered a further blow after the London & North-Western Railway from Birmingham to Euston cut through the pleasure gardens in 1838. The area of the well was now beyond the rail tracks and accessible only from the High Road. It became a kitchen garden.

Although the tea gardens were not confined to the grounds behind the public house, it continued as one of several tea gardens on the fringes of London which offered a day's outing and entertainment in

the surrounding countryside. Dickens in his *Sketches by Boz* includes an essay called 'London recreations', which describes a visit to a tea garden. He mentions Kilburn, but the essay is probably an amalgam of various gardens.

Possibly because of its seclusion, the area attracted numerous duels of honour in the 18th century and were well publicised (duelling was made illegal only in 1819). At 7am on 2 July 1792, James Maitland, the 8th Earl of Lauderdale and General Benedict Arnold met here after Lauderdale made an insulting remark about Arnold in the House of Lords. Arnold fired and missed, but Lauderdale declined to return a shot, saying that he had no desire to kill Arnold.

Pugilism was also popular there. In this period there were no timed rounds - the contestants fought until they were unable to get up, and the fights could last for hours. In 1783 Daniel Mendoza beat John Matthews at Kilburn Wells after 2 hours. Mendoza was the first Jewish prize-fighter to become champion.

The Old Bell was pulled down in 1863 and the present pub erected. The OS map a few years later shows the development that had changed the area, and it is now impossible to find any remains of Kilburn Wells, but 1a West End Lane is called Wells Spa House.

**Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms**

## Data Protection

*To all members of Camden History Society:*

The General Data Protection Regulation came into force in May 2018 and the Camden History Society is committed to operating within it and protecting your personal information. The Regulation requires that the club identify its legal base for processing of personal data. We believe that the holding and processing of data about members is necessary for the legitimate interests of the Society.

The data we hold are names of members and partners if given to us, addresses, telephone numbers and email addresses. These data are only used for postal and email correspondence; they are retained for as long as an individual is a Member of the Society and are deleted when a Member leaves. Book orders are retained until the end of the financial year and then deleted. Web contacts are not retained at all. Personal data are not available to any person other than the Membership Secretary and the Publications Manager, not to any outside person or organisation. If any data breach or unauthorised disclosure takes place, Members have a right to complain to the Information Commissioner, but we hope a Member would take up any issues with a member of the CHS Council first.

Dr Henry Fitzhugh, Membership Secretary, 56 Argyle Street, London WC1H 8ER, UK. Email: henryfitzhugh@talktalk.net. Tel 020 7837 9980.

## Things to Come

*20 September:* To mark 150 years of St Pancras Station a talk entitled 'Celebrate St Pancras – the people, the place, the journey'. Our speaker will be Josie Murray.

*18 October:* Cook's Camden: the making of Modern Housing, by Mark Swenarton

*15 November:* Robin Harragin Hussey: Hardship and Faith: the Experience of the First Women Members of Parliament.

*13 December:* Käthe Strenitz and the Camden Railway Lands. Speaker: Peter Darley

## The St Pancras Map of 1804

The 1804 map of St Pancras parish was by far the most detailed depiction of the parish's buildings and open fields that existed. It was surveyed at the very period when the character of this rural parish was rapidly changing. Many fields survive still, but there were substantial developments in the south – what is now Fitzrovia and Somers Town – and there are house by house developments in Kentish Town and Highgate, and in the nascent Camden Town. In summary, John Tompson, the surveyor, noted that there were 386 pieces of 'inclosed land' containing about 2300 acres, and 4139 houses etc, roads, streets, outbuildings covering 288 acres.

The map was enlarged and updated in colour in 4-

sheets much later, in even more detail, apparently commissioned by St Pancras parish.

While the first map itself is interesting enough, Camden archives also hold a splendid Terrier, methodically listing the properties and fields together with their acreage.

Mr Tompson worked from 29 Grafton Street, Fitzroy Square and the map was printed by Neil at the Somers Town Printing Office in Chalton Street.

Tompson's cover letter, which accompanied his invoice, is splendidly loquacious:

*'The proprietor (Mr Tompson) having under the patronage of several of the most distinguished nobility and gentry who have considerable property in the Parish at the expence of upwards of three years labour taken a survey of the whole parish of St Pancras and considering the great utility of making such a work public was induced to have the same engraved, which Map is now completed and will he trusts be found to be executed in all its parts in a style of workmanship and correctness of drawing that will give it a decided superiority over everything of the kind hitherto submitted to public patronage.'*

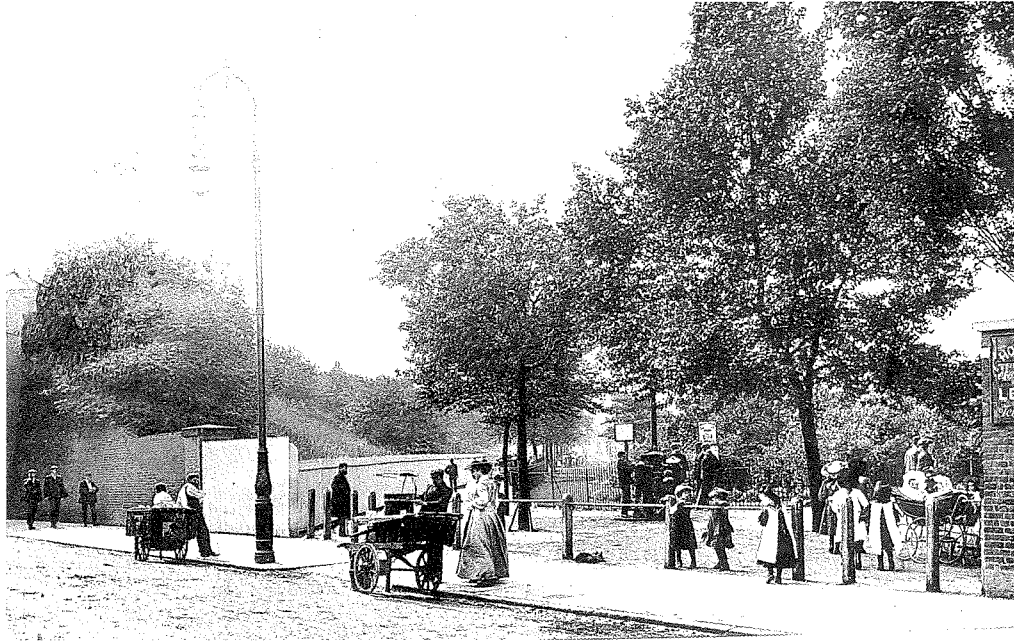
*Ladies, Noblemen and Gentlemen, who may be desirous of the map ornamented with variegated Colours, which will give a great addition to its picturesque appearance, may have them executed on the most reasonable terms.'*

His invoice notes that he had worked on the project between 17 February 1796 to 19 June 1804 "in all kind of Weathers". He stresses "My time in Labour, Assiduity and Expence... was 963 Days (or Two years and 233 days) at only 16s per Day, including my Expences, being £270 15s, amounts to £770.0.0 and paid assistances for drawing Chain, dimensions etc of £28.0.0d." There were additional expenses for printing, 'terrier books'.

One famous name in the Terrier that accompanied the map, is that of James Burton, the architect. He is shown as holding a house, offices, garden, brickyard, shops, sheds and a paddock, and Foundling Field. He also held the Duke of Bedford's Coppice and the Duke's Field.

Also featured is the property of the 'Smallpock Hospital', the Veterinary College, the Workhouse, and the Foundling Hospital. Henry Leroux, (Jacob Leroux is generally credited as the developer of Somers Town), has a brickfield, and John Davies, owner of the pleasure gardens and spa, Bagnigge Wells, has outbuildings and tea gardens. The Earl Mansfield, owner of Kenwood, has about 230 acres, including the Thousand Pond Field, and the New River Company has a reservoir on the site of Tolmers Square.

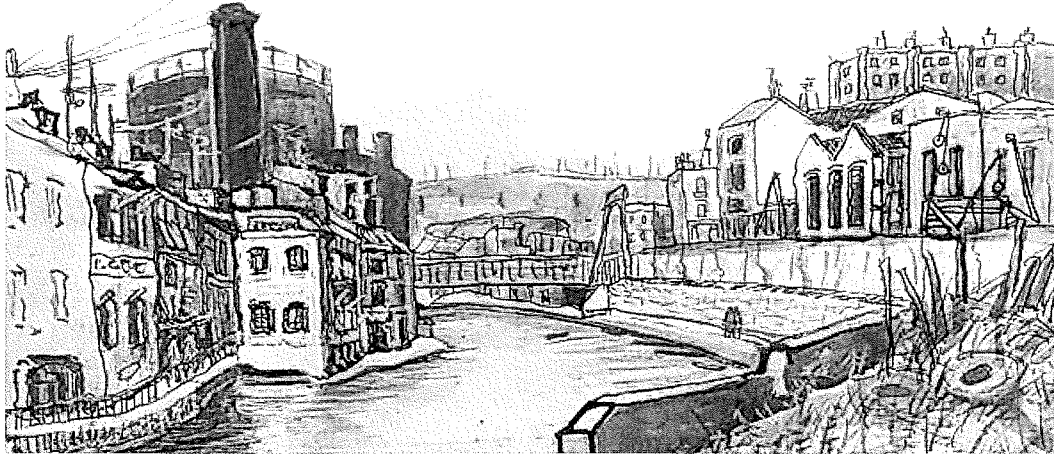
**John Richardson**



*A summery day in Mansfield Road, Gospel Oak, showing the entrance to Parliament Hill Fields.*

*Antrim Grove Library, Belsize Park c.1906. This was the first library here, opened in 1897. It had a brief history. Its ceremonial opening was delayed a year by a strike and then in 1936 it was demolished because there were so many design defects. The present building was opened in 1937, but since 2012 has been run by a community group called The Winch. It is open Monday to Wednesday, 10-6.*





*Regent's Canal 2002 by Käthe Strenitz. (copyright: the family of the artist)*

## The Käthe Strenitz Collection

We featured the work of Käthe Strenitz in *Newsletters* 274 and 275. The London Metropolitan Archives have recently received from her family a gift of 39 drawings and 18 prints. **Jeremy Smith**, of the graphics collection at LMA, describes her work and the donation:

'Although covering a wide span of dates, from the 1950s to the start of the present century, her works form a visually cohesive group, united by the artist's fascination with the detritus of London's industrial past. All the subject material that she could hope for was contained within the post-industrial heartlands of King's Cross, a terrain where at that time railway lines, canals, gasholders, goods sheds and disused machinery dominated every vista.

Käthe Strenitz roamed this fascinating territory for almost forty years, starting in the 1950s following the purchase by her husband of a former tripe factory on a site to the south of the old Caledonian Market. The revived factory became a subject for her drawings, but she was more frequently lured by the brick and iron geometry of the King's Cross railway lands, producing pictures that are snaked by railway tracks, tunnels and bridges or by the sweep of the canal.

These are the features recorded by her strikingly confident line-work, whether as pen and ink drawings (many touched with delicate grey washes) or in a watercolour, or in large bold colour woodcuts. When she ventures away from King's Cross it is only to follow the Regent's Canal up to Camden Lock, or

to explore and sketch in the low-key back streets of Islington, or else to find another rich source of industrial architecture amidst the riverside cranes and gantries of Rotherhithe and Bermondsey.

Käthe Strenitz arrived in London as a Kindertransport refugee, separated from her family in the Sudeten lands of Czechoslovakia. She was only 16 and difficult years followed, living in hostels and working on farms. Only later was she able to study drawing and printmaking at Regent Street Polytechnic.

Our newly-acquired works capture the isolation and beauty of a part of London that is now entirely changed. Drawings that she made less than twenty years ago are now extremely difficult to identify topographically. The new artworks join our existing collection of her works, consisting of drawings and prints presented to us by the artist herself.

Our neighbours, the Islington Museum and Local History Centre, have several of her works and the Guildhall Art Gallery holds one of her very few City of London subjects. She has been exhibited at Bankside Gallery, the Boundary Gallery and the Ben-Uri gallery and most recently at the Islington Museum. Some of the drawings will be featured within the forthcoming book by Peter Darley, *The King's Cross Story: 200 years of history in the railway lands*.

Sadly Käthe Strenitz died in August 2017 and it is with extreme gratitude that LMA acknowledges the help and generosity of her family.'

*Much of this article was published in the 33rd issue of the London Metropolitan Archives quarterly newsletter (2018, no. 2). You can see the full newsletter at <https://mailchi.mp/cityoflondon/fw4uu4pbje-813041>*

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# newsletter

No 289

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

Sep 2018

## Celebrate St Pancras Station - the people, the place, the journey

20 September, 7.30pm.

Camden Local Studies and Archives Centre, 2nd floor,  
Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA

In September we are invited to mark 150 years since St Pancras Station was opened. The changing fortunes of this remarkable building since the 1960s have been extraordinary. At one time the station was in a very bad way, neglected, with much reduced train traffic and seemingly without importance in the railway system. Serious proposals were made to divert traffic from St Pancras to King's Cross, Euston and Moorgate. The empty station could then be used, perhaps, as a sports centre or an exhibition hall. The splendid Midland Hotel at the front of the station, facing Camden Town Hall, was derelict and even abused by British Rail as conversion of parts of it into offices ignored interior embellishments. It seemed, like the station, doomed.

*A merged image of St Pancras Station train shed. On the left in black and white is a photograph taken some years back (Courtesy of National Railway Museum/Science & Society Picture Library) and to the right, in a photograph by Sam King, is the restored roof, the lower canopy of the extension and a Eurostar train.*



But along came Eurostar, when it was proposed that the route of this new high-speed line to Paris, then terminating in cramped circumstances at Waterloo, should come instead to St Pancras.

Transformation, the product of ingenious engineering, took several years. The train shed was extended northwards – this time beneath a flat roof – to accommodate the longer Eurostar trains. The abandoned undercroft of the old station, previously used to store merchandise, particularly beer barrels, was converted into a shopping and restaurant concourse. What had been a station seemingly about to disappear is now, according to many, the finest in the country.

St Pancras is now owned by HS1 and they are celebrating its 150th year with a series of talks on different themes. Josie Murray, Senior Heritage Advisor to HS1, will be exploring some of these themes with us in September. These include the changes over the years and the people who have worked in or used the station.

### The Society's Website

[www.camdenhistorysociety.org](http://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!!**



*Flats in Alexandra Road. (photo Tim Crocker)*

## Cook's Camden: the Making of Modern Housing

*Thursday, 18 October, 7.30pm  
Burgh House, New End Square, NW3 1LS*

The housing projects built in Camden in the 1960s and 1970s when Sydney Cook was Borough Architect are widely regarded as the most important urban housing built in the UK in the past 100 years. Cook recruited some of the brightest talent available in London, including Neave Brown, Peter Tábori, and Gordon Benson and Alan Forsyth. The schemes they designed – which included Alexandra Road (above) Fleet Road, Highgate New Town and Maiden Lane – command admiration from architects to this day.

The Camden projects represented a new type of urban housing, based on a return to streets with front doors, in place of tower blocks. The Camden architects showed how the required densities could be achieved without building high, creating a new kind of urbanism that integrated with, rather than broke from, its cultural and physical context.

Mark Swenarton's talk will give a brief presentation of what was involved in this remarkable episode, along with a nutshell account of the principal projects.

## The Annual Outing

A few miles south of Newbury, Sandham Memorial Chapel at Burghclere was built in memory of Lieut. Harry Sandham, who had died in 1919 from an illness contracted in the War. According to our informative guide, it was as well that the chapel had already been dedicated in 1927, before Stanley Spencer had begun his paintings there (on canvasses woven in Flanders). The striking murals recall Spencer's work as a medical orderly at Beaufort War

Hospital in north Bristol, and kit cleaning at training camp near Farnham in 1916, before active service in Salonika, Macedonia ('the forgotten front'). The local Berkshire Downs feature as background to his *Resurrection* painting behind the chapel's altar, something our guide felt should not be ignored. The linen and silk altarpiece embroidery incorporates the words, "We are such stuff as dream are made on and our little" .... (Shakespeare's *The Tempest*), and "I am the resurrection and the life and he that" .... (New Testament, John 11 v.25). The embroidery was designed and worked by Mrs Madeline Clifton (née Knox), a pupil of Walter Sickert who refused his proposal of marriage.

Our afternoon at The Vyne, a Tudor house with later additions (near Sherborne St John, a few miles north of Basingtoke), offered some chances of shade for picnics in its grounds, if not in the walled garden on the last day of the heatwave. Disappointment that only four rooms in the house were open (after the roof restoration project) was compensated for by room guides who were a mine of information, and filled us in on the two main families: the Sandys in the 16th century; and, from the mid-17th century, the Chutes. In the Ante Chapel was a set of more than 60 truncheons used by special constables for duty in nearby East Sherborne St John during Anti-Corn Law troubles. Quite a talking point, while we awaited entry to the Chapel with its 16th-century stained glass and Flemish encaustic tiles, a 17th-century *trompe l'oeil* painting recalling fan vaulting in Gloucester Cathedral's cloisters, and a screen moved from Windsor Castle in the 19th century.

Thanks must go to the M&M coach driver, the Carpenters Arms at Burghclere, and the friendly volunteers at Sandham Memorial Chapel, but especially to Jean Archer for organising the day

**Ruth Hayes**

## The remarkable Raymond Way

Opposite Belsize Road, the ground floors of Nos. 67-75 Kilburn High Road were occupied from 1956 by Raymond Way Motors. Over time Way had other outlets in the area and a motorcycle department at No. 36 Willesden Lane.

This famous car and motorcycle company was founded by Douglas Raymond Way (1905-1981), who came to Kilburn in 1933. He was originally based in the old Humber car repair works in Canterbury Road (previously the Saxby and Farmer Railway signal factory, which has now been demolished). Way's company became the largest used-car dealership in Europe, selling 2,000 cars and motorbikes a year. 'Don't delay, buy your car the Raymond Way', was one of his best-known slogans. The firm supplied cars for the television series *Z Cars*, and even had an aviation department, displaying a Piper aeroplane in the Kilburn showroom.

Way had an adventurous life and a variety of careers: as a fairground 'barker' for a Wall of Death, a Brooklands racing driver, RAF pilot, boxing and wrestling promoter, farmer, Radio Luxembourg motoring correspondent and a Lloyds underwriter. He was a tough and hardworking businessman who became a millionaire.

Likeable and vastly entertaining, but loud and brash rather like the comedian Max Miller, Way lambasted his way to riches, owning a penthouse near the BBC in Portland Place and a farm in Berkhamsted. He was driven everywhere by his chauffeur in a Rolls Royce fitted with personalised number plates, and a TV set. His voice was husky and he smoked using a long cigarette holder. He wrote on the back of a photo of his motor yacht *White Ghost*: 'Every kid wants to wear loud ties and get his hair waved. And every millionaire wants to own a yacht. I've done the lot. here's my yacht, with me at the helm, after I had loaned her to the Admiralty when War began.' Despite his wealth, Raymond stayed on first-name terms with all the street traders in Kilburn, many of whom he had known for thirty years.

In the early 1960s Way sold his company to King's Motors (Oxford) for £650,000, but the venture was not a success and he bought the firm back in 1967 for £400,000. He finally sold out to Morris Motors in 1973 for £750,000.

### Background

Way was born in 1905, the fourth in a family of five children; his father was a bank clerk. He went to the local primary school where he said he did as little work as possible. In contrast, his youngest brother studied hard, earned a scholarship to Cambridge and became a stockbroker.

Aged 16, Raymond found his first job as a 'grease boy' at a local garage for 15s a week. For a time he

drove a 'stop me and buy one' pie van. He saved some money and with a friend opened a small garage in Croydon but it failed to make money and they sold it after a year. Then he worked as a fairground 'barker' for a Wall of Death motorcycle show. He strongly believed his experience as a showman led to his future business success, for he learned the value of exaggeration, shouting his encouragement to see the show.

In 1931 Way set up a secondhand car business in Hamilton Mews in St John's Wood (today it is called Hamilton Close). At the time of the 'Great Slump' he adopted the slogan 'Nothing over Ten Pounds'. As the business expanded he moved several times.

He loved to buy cars previously owned by the rich and famous. He had the black Buick in which the Duke of Windsor and Mrs Simpson travelled during their honeymoon. He also owned the eight-ton armoured car used by Field-Marshal Goering. Other cars of his belonged to George Bernard Shaw, Earl Mountbatten, Eva Braun, Marilyn Monroe and Churchill. All the cars used regularly by Way had built-in tape recorders so that he could dictate letters and memoranda.

Way died on 15 October 1981, leaving £889,135 (today worth about £3.25 million) to his third wife.

**Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms**

## Things to Come

Please put these talks in your diary:

### November 15

*Hardship and Faith: the Experience of the First Women Members of Parliament*, by Robin Harragin Hussey

### December 13

*Käthe Strenitz's Camden and the Railway Lands*, by Peter Darley

**January and February** - to be announced

### March 21

*Settlements and Song: Camden's Women*, by Rachel Kolsky

## Here and There

1. Friends of Brunswick Square are celebrating the Humphry Repton bicentenary year with a talk by Susan Jellis on the work of the famous landscape gardener, and in particular his design for Russell Square. The talk will be at 7.30 (after the AGM of the Friends) at the UCL School of Pharmacy at 29-39 Brunswick Square. Tickets may be obtained on <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/reptons-london-squares-tickets-47861779872>.

2. Belsize Baroque are beginning a new season of concerts, with diverse works in new forms. The programme will consist of works by Handel, Albinoni, Telemann, Geminiarni and Fasch, directed by Catherine Martin. The first concert, at 6.30pm on Sunday 30 September, will be in St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, NW3 4HY.

## A new CHS publication

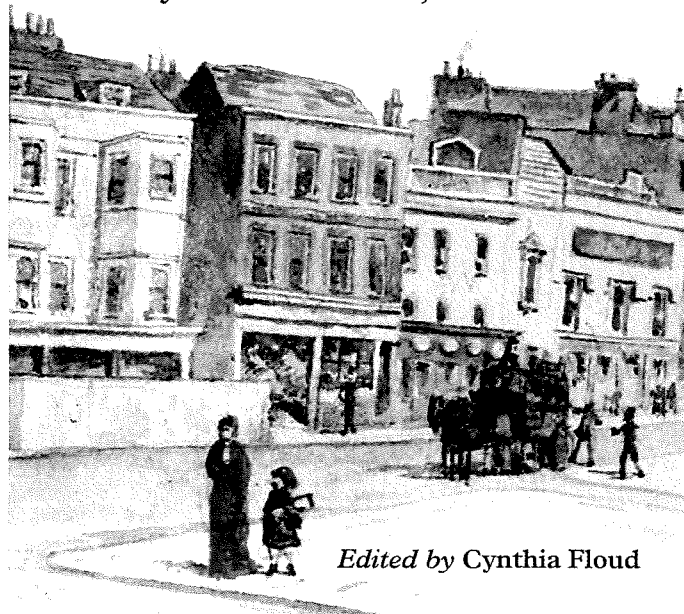
*A Dysfunctional Hampstead Childhood 1886-1911* features the memoir of Phyllis Allen Floud née Ford, written in the 1940s and recently edited by Cynthia Floud in an engagingly colloquial style. Phyllis describes her girlhood and adolescence in middle-class Victorian and Edwardian Hampstead. The story of her ill-matched parents, penny-pinching and preoccupied with social status, her brothers banished to distant Empire, and her pro-suffrage sister, is worthy of a novel. Phyllis does not shy away from indecent exposure, sexual coercion and the constraints of courtship; she turns her sardonic gaze onto decor, dance cards and doctoring; she moves from the social rules of women's cycling to riding on horse buses. Her catastrophic education does not dim her enthusiasms for art, tennis and swimming, while her social success leads her to meet many local luminaries, such as the Nevinsons and the Garnetts.

With 180 pages and 56 illustrations, and at the bargain price of £10.50, the book will shortly be available for purchase at Camden Local Studies & Archives Centre, or for ordering online at [camdenhistorysociety.org/publications](http://camdenhistorysociety.org/publications).

David Hayes

## A dysfunctional Hampstead childhood, 1886-1911

*The memoir of Phyllis Allen Floud, née Ford*



Edited by Cynthia Floud

*A rare Kentish Town view of c.1905. It is looking from Prince of Wales Road to Malden Crescent. The two prominent houses on the left survive.*



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# newsletter

of the CAMDEN HISTORY SOCIETY

No 290

Nov 2018

## Hardship and Faith: the Experience of the First Women Members of Parliament

Thurs, 15 November, 7.30pm

Eleventh Church of Christ, Scientist, 11 St Chad's Street, WC1H 8BG

2018 marks a significant centenary for women with the passing of the Representation of the People Act 1918, which for the first time gave (some) women in Britain the right to vote, and of the Parliament (Qualification of Women) Act 1918. This second (very short) Act of Parliament received the Royal Assent on 21st November 1918, and stated that "A woman shall not be disqualified by sex or marriage for being elected to or sitting or voting as a Member of the Commons House of Parliament".

In keeping with our Eleventh Church of Christ, Scientist venue, Robin Harragin Hussey will be talking about some of the earliest female MPs, three of whom were Christian Scientists. They included Lady

Nancy Astor, the first woman to sit in the House of Commons. For these early women MPs, the House of Commons was a very difficult place to work, having been a male bastion for over six hundred years. They were not welcomed. Robin will explore how and if their religious faith helped them to deal with these hardships, influenced the causes they supported, and led to their main achievements. She will also consider how they advanced the causes so close to the hearts of all those women who fought so hard for the vote in the preceding years.

Robin is District Manager of the Christian Science Committee on Publication in UK and Ireland, and has a background in church history; she worked for many years as a teacher of Religious Studies.

This talk is being held jointly with the Eleventh Church. **Please note: St Chad's Street is at the King's Cross end of Gray's Inn Road, and is the first turning on the right, walking south from the junction with Pentonville Road. It is a modern building.**

*Women MPs, including Nancy Astor and Thelma Cazalet, 1931.*



### The Society's Website

[www.camdenhistorysociety.org](http://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!!**



# Käthe Strenitz's Camden and Railway Lands

Thurs, 13 December, 7.30pm

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3 1LT

Käthe Strenitz used her husband's factory on Market Road as a base from which to roam over much of London, from the 1960s to 1980s, drawing street scenes and industrial landscapes, working mostly in pen and ink, but also in watercolours, oils, and woodcuts. Camden and the railway lands of King's Cross and St Pancras provided many subjects close to her base. She attributed her fascination with industrial landscapes to her arrival at Liverpool Street Station from Prague with Kindertransport at age 16 and waiting in a large, gloomy, blackened station. An extraordinary resource of over 200 drawings is held by London Metropolitan Archives, to ensure her drawings remain together as a body of work.

Our speaker, Peter Darley's forthcoming book, *'The King's Cross Story'* (see p.4) has been greatly enriched by Käthe Strenitz's drawings and is dedicated to her. Her drawings are a unique record of Camden's past and deserve far greater recognition.

Peter Darley is Secretary of the Camden Railway Heritage Trust, which he founded in 2007.

As this is our Christmas meeting, the talk will be preceded by mince pies and wine/fruit juice from 7pm.



*A photograph of the Regent's Canal with Canal View on the left and the Constitution pub in St Pancras Way, in the background, by John Farlie in 1952. It was kindly sent to us by Lester May. The view is much the same as that in Käthe Strenitz's painting which appeared in Newsletter 274.*

*Wharf Road looking south from Plimsoll Viaduct, by Strenitz, 1977.  
Courtesy of London Metropolitan Archives.*



## A census enumerator's woes

Old census returns are an invaluable tool of the local history researcher. An insight into the effort that might have gone into compiling them has cropped up on dragongenealogy.com, an Australian website. In the 1861 UK census, Thomas Mullinger was an enumerator in the slums of Somers Town. When, on 13 May - a whole month late - he submitted his 573 'Schedules', he appended an excuse for his tardiness:

"A great portion of my District being Unchurched, Ignorant and Prejudiced, I have great trouble and delay in Gathering in the Schedules at all, and when gathered in they so abounded in Inaccuracies of the most surprising and puzzling description, I have been obliged to return them for Revision, and generally to supply eventually Fresh Schedules to Replace them. The Schedule as amended by myself will at once establish these Facts and I most respectfully submit these annoyances and Hindrances most Materially account for the Late Date in my Declaration."

Thomas Mullinger was a 66-year-old teacher of Classics, living at the time in (erstwhile) Weston Place, King's Cross. He was, incidentally, related to another schoolmaster, George Lyne, who may once have taught the young Charles Dickens. There is more about this in *Camden History Review* 42, to be distributed with this November Newsletter.

David Hayes

## Aircraft in Kilburn

In November 1916 Richard Cattle, a carpentry firm, combined with another company called Allens to open the Central Aircraft Company at 179 High Road, Kilburn. They built wooden Centaur aircraft which they initially flew from 'Kilburn Aerodrome' (as it was jokingly called, but which was really a nearby field on Willesden Lane), before offering flying courses and joy-rides from Northolt Aerodrome. Successful for a while, the company sold flights over London, Kent and the Welsh beauty spots, even going as far as the Belgian battlefields, with prices ranging from £2 3s 6d up to £160. By June 1920 there were 100 flights a week over London.

You could buy a Centaur aircraft from CAC for £250 (the equivalent of over £7,000 today). But the project

*A Centaur aircraft made by CAC Kilburn.*



wasn't a success. There was a serious setback in September 1920, when a twin-engine Centaur hit the ground soon after taking off from Northolt - seven people died.

The aircraft company closed in May 1926 and went back to furniture making.

Dick Weindling and Marianne Colloms

## Keats at Wentworth Place

Two hundred years ago, in November 1818, John Keats (1795-1821) moved a short distance from No.1 Well Walk in Hampstead to Wentworth Place, a house newly built on the edge of Hampstead Heath by his friend Charles Armitage Brown. Then began an *annus mirabilis* for Keats, in which he published the first of his mature works, including five of his six great odes. According to Brown, in a much quoted but possibly invented anecdote, *Ode to a Nightingale* was composed under a plum tree in the garden there. It was followed in the following 18 months by *Ode to a Grecian Urn*, *Endymion*, *Bright Star*, *The Eve of St Agnes*, *La Belle Dame Sans Merci* (the last two probably inspired by Fanny Brawne), all now standard works in the repertoire of Romantic poetry, but most of them harshly criticised in his lifetime.

In this same fateful month, Fanny Brawne and her widowed mother moved into the other half of Wentworth Place. Fanny (born in West Hampstead) and Keats had met the month before, and were now thrown together daily. Keats lent her books, and they indulged in such light reading as Dante's *Inferno* together. This became an ardent friendship, but remained, it seems, platonic. For one thing, Keats was struggling financially and was in poor health, so had little to offer as a potential husband. Tuberculosis finally drove him in 1820 under medical advice to a warmer climate. Barely over two years after he moved to Wentworth Place he died in Rome.

Dr Peter Woodford

## Things to Come

Please put these talks in your new diaries:

*Thurs, 17 January*

The changing face of Fitzrovia: 300 years of an urban village, by Nick Bailie

*Thurs, 7th February*

The Campaigns to save Kenwood, by Helen Lawrence.

*Thurs, 21 March*

Suffrage, Settlements and Songs: Camden Women, by Rachel Kolsky

*Thurs 18 July.*

The AGM, plus talk to be announced

*Thurs 17 Oct*

What can Phyllis Ford's childhood tell social historians? A talk by Cynthia Floud

## Book Review

*The King's Cross Story, 200 years of history in the railway lands* by Peter Darley, (The History Press 2018) ISBN 978 0750985796 paperback 215 pages.

This is a book for people interested in railway history and also for those interested in the general development of the King's Cross City area. The railway development side is very comprehensively covered with plenty of historic and modern coloured illustrations, accompanied by historic maps some of which have been annotated to pick out areas of special interest.

We start with a Sunday Stroll up Maiden Lane before the coming of the railways, which Peter presented at a meeting of the Society in December last year, open country with a few industries like brick and tile making. Town gas had been generated alongside the Regent's Canal from 1824, so there was already smoke and smells sullyng the country air. The first railway in North London kept to the north-west at Euston and it was not until 1852 that the Great Northern Railway opened its station at King's Cross, taking the lines under the Regent's Canal and through a pair of tunnels to get to Finsbury Park. Goods traffic was important and the various structures and track layouts, constantly changing as traffic increased, are given a very full coverage. The Midland Railway had been allowed to use some space behind King's Cross for their traffic, but eventually they were squeezed out and they built their own line into London from Bedford and their own terminal at St Pancras with lines going over the canal, requiring the platforms to be well above the level of Euston Road. The housing that had been built between the Euston Road and the canal was mostly swept away as the demands of railway traffic increased, with blocks of flats such as Stanley and Culross Buildings providing re-settlement, only themselves to be mostly swept away in the twenty-first century redevelopment.

Horses feature strongly in the book, since they were used not only to haul carts transporting goods to and from the yards but also for shunting rail wagons to

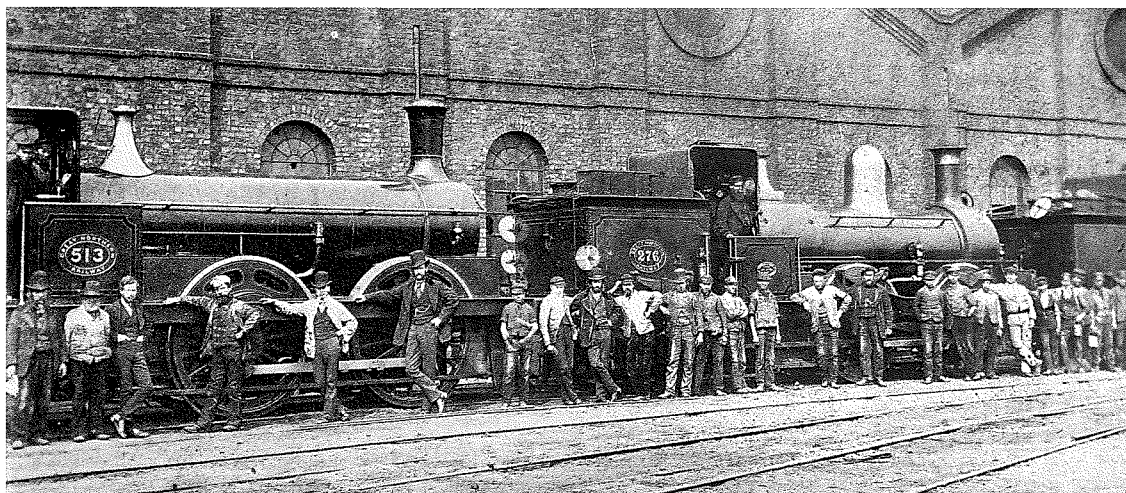
form a train load where the use of a steam locomotive was not economic (and hydraulically-powered capstans were not yet available). Their stables, the economics of feeding and veterinary treatment are all analysed and illustrated. The stables were usually multi-storey, with the fodder stored at ground level and the horses made to climb ramps to their accommodation.

The heyday of streamlined steam locomotives for express travel to the North and the industrial relations of the men who drove and serviced them is described and their replacement by diesel and electric hauling. The goods yard lines and structures fell into disuse as coal lost its popularity and road haulage provided a more economic door-to-door service for goods; there are plenty of drawings by Käthe Strenitz which have featured in recent CHS *Newsletters* to evoke the spirit of the decaying site. Some of the structures have been adapted for new uses, such as the Grade I Granary Building being used for the University of the Arts, and Coal Drops being adapted with a spectacular new roof as a party venue, but most of the historic infrastructure has been swept away for new buildings, some very high, for residential and office development, providing employment but not necessarily for the small tradesmen who had set up businesses in disused railway buildings.

The local campaigns to get an acceptable development to suit all interests is described, as are the various schemes to provide a terminal in the area for the Eurostar rail link whose line to the east caused more disruption to our neighbours in Islington; in Camden it was the buried bodies of St Pancras churchyard covered over in Victorian times by the embankment out of St Pancras who were exhumed and found new resting places so that the long Eurostar platforms of St Pancras could be built over them.

There is a tremendous amount of research and coverage of a wide range of subjects (like a short chapter on Coal taxes and the posts which define the metropolitan area in which the taxes are levied (and collected by the Railway Companies). A lot of repetition, but that can be justified as the book will

*Running Shed staff with Sturrock and Stirling tank engines, c.1870. (Ian Allen Library).*



probably be dipped into to study a particular subject rather than being read straight through. No index, which throws the reader back to the list of chapters at the beginning to find a subject of interest, but in my opinion good value for money and a far better account of its subject than many of the railway-oriented books which have recently been produced in the Stroud area. If you enjoy exploring the lands to the north of King's Cross station and want to know what is there and what was there before, this is the book for you. Put it on your Christmas list!

**Roger Cline**

*Peter Darley founded the Camden Railway Heritage Trust. At first concentrating on the Camden Goods Station, it now includes the King's Cross Railway Lands in its efforts to protect important railway heritage features and open them to the public.*

W H Smith is selling the book at £14 but members are encouraged to order copies from the Trust for £15 inc. p/p so that it can recover costs more quickly. To buy in this way you can email Peter on Darley@aol.com and you will be given details of how to pay, or else you can write to him at 21 Oppidans Road, NW3 3AG enclosing a cheque for £15 made out to Camden Railway Heritage Trust.

## TRACING LILLIE LANGTRY

It is often asserted that the famous actress and courtesan, Lillie Langtry (1853-1929), lived at Leighton House, 103 Alexandra Road, Hampstead. We are trying to establish if this is true.

There is no sign of her in the rate books, the electoral rolls, or in directories; Malcolm Holmes says that he does not have proof that she lived there.

It may be that the claim began in 1967 when the Council compulsorily purchased the house and planned its demolition. The residents of the house left in October 1971, and development began. However, on 8 October 1971 *The Times* called for the house to be saved. Andrew Varas, whose family lived there spoke to the press, and Adrienne Corri the actress, who lived nearby, said that it should be made into a theatre museum.

Does anyone have information regarding this?

**Dick Weindling**

## Clive Donner

Dick Weindling has also been following the career of another West Hampstead notable, the film director Clive Donner.

Donner was born in the Priory Nursing Home at 43 Priory Road in January 1926. His father was a concert violinist and his mother ran a dress shop. Donner attended Gladstone Park junior school and Kilburn Grammar. He became interested in film when he accompanied his father to a studio recording session.

He managed to get a job in the film industry as a junior assistant editor for the Sydney Box film *On Approval* (1944). He was then called up for three years, and afterwards worked as first assistant editor on two of David Lean's films. By 1951 Donner had become an editor on films such as *Scrooge* (1951), *Genevieve* (1953) and *I am a Camera* (1955). His biggest hit was *What's New Pussycat?* (1965), a farce starring Peter O'Toole, Peter Sellers, Woody Allen and Ursula Andress. His debut as a director was *The Secret Place* (1957), and his first popular film was *Some People* (1962) about working-class teenagers who formed a rock band in Bristol.

He and his wife, Jocelyn Richards, had bought a cottage in Buckinghamshire and a house at 3 Melina Place, Grove End Road, St John's Wood. These they later sold when they moved to Hammersmith.

With the reduction in cinema attendance he turned to theatre and directed two Pinter plays, and to television where he directed Geoffrey Household's book called *Rogue Male*.

Donner died of dementia in 2010.

## A CROWDED HOUSEHOLD

In the 1930s two scholars, Percy Lovell and William McB. Marcham, transcribed the Court Rolls of Cantelowes manor, one of the larger manors within St Pancras parish and which included much of Kentish Town and the southern part of Highgate Village. The Rolls, extant from the 15th century to the 18th century, are in Latin and on parchment. The transcriptions were used to compile their magisterial *Survey of London* volumes 17 and 19 published in the later 1930s. The former book covered the part of the village of Highgate that was within St Pancras parish, and the other the rest of the manor down to the King's Cross area. We hope to have a newly typed and indexed version of these transcriptions on the CHS website in the near future.

Lovell and Marcham's Highgate research included the ownership and occupancy of Lauderdale House. It noted that John Povey became the owner of what became Lauderdale House in May 1598. He is referred to as a citizen and embroiderer of London, and a governor of the recently founded Highgate School. By his first wife, Alice, who died in October 1553, he had six daughters, and by his second wife Elizabeth he had fourteen sons and four daughters. She died in 1594. Povey himself died in 1599 and left £20 to Highgate School towards furnishing a library.

The extent of early mortality at that time is revealed in a Court Baron in 21 April 1600, when Povey's death is recorded. His *only* daughter and heir inherited his property, which implies that no other children had survived. The heir, Katherine Bond, was married to Sir William Bond.

**John Richardson**





## A great garden of death

An exhibition of archive images of Highgate Cemetery has opened at Camden Local Studies and Archives. It is on until 8 December. Local Studies is on the 2nd floor of Holborn Library, 32-38 Theobalds Road, WC1X 8PA. It is open Monday and Tuesday 10-6, Thursday 10-7, Friday 10-5, Saturdays 10 & 24 November, and 8 December 11-5.

*The Britannia pub at the junction of Parkway and Camden High Street, c.1905.*



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