



PRESIDENT: The Viscountess Hanworth. F.S.A

VICE PRESIDENT: Mr. Arthur Turner

BULLETIN NO. 115

SEPTEMBER 1995

FORTHCOMING PROGRAMME 1995

Friday 15th September 8.00 pm Snuff Mill Environmental Centre
100 Years of the National Trust - Gerald Smith
Evelyn Jowett Memorial Lecture

Friday 20th October 8.00 pm Snuff Mill Environmental Centre
The Work of the Surrey Record Office
Julian Pooley will be referring to records relating to Merton Borough

Saturday 4th November 2.30 pm Snuff Mill Environmental Centre
AGM followed by Quiz

Saturday 16th December 2.30 pm Snuff Mill Environmental Centre
The Charterhouse of Shene - John Cloake of Richmond Historical Society

(Park in Morden Hall National Trust Garden Centre Car Park
and follow the path across the bridge and through the gateway)

Streatham Society

Meetings are on Monday evenings at 8.00 in Small Hall, St. Leonards Church Hall:-

16th October	The Mysterious Death of Charlie Bravo	Nicholas Reed
6th November	Local History Research Group - A Project on Lavender	Audrey Thomas
20th November	The Art of William Morris	Judy Goodman

The last two speakers will be known to members and it is hoped our Society will be well represented at these meetings. 118 bus route passes the church.

Kingston-upon-Thames Archaeological Society

At the Lower Hall, Friends Meeting House, Eden Street:-

Tuesday 3rd October - 8.00 pm - In the Steps of the Crusaders - From Venice to the Holy Land

ON A SAD NOTE

ARTHUR JOHN MARSON (JACK) BAILEY, B.Sc., F.R. Pharms., F.R.I.C.

It is with sadness that we learnt from Jess Bailey that Jack, who had been a member of the Society for 44 years, passed away on the 15th June after a brief illness.

Jack's great contribution to our knowledge of the history of our area, and Mitcham in particular, has been in the field of family history research. A member of the East Surrey Family History Society, he took an active part in the recording of inscriptions in Mitcham parish churchyard, the results of which have now been published and will be of immense use to future historians. His investigations into the background of Sir Ambrose Crowley, the 18th century ironmaster whose monument is to be seen in the baptistry of Mitcham church will, it is intended, be incorporated into a monograph to be offered to the Society for publication. Jack's detailed research into the history of the family of James Moore has also produced new and fascinating information about one of the outstanding characters of Mitcham. It is hoped that this, too, will eventually be brought together and made available as a token of gratitude and appreciation of Jack's work.

A service was held at the North East Surrey Crematorium on Friday June 23rd and Eric Trim attended on behalf of the Society, and conveyed condolences to Jess Bailey. Music for the service included the 23rd Psalm and God be in my head. The Revd. John Shepherd, M.A. officiated. Mrs Bailey asked for all to be thanked who had sent letters and cards.

RITA BROOKS

A letter dated 8th June from Ken Brooks informed the Society of the death earlier this year of his wife after a long fight against cancer. Both Ken and Rita have been members of the Society since the early 1970s.

From 1976 to 1986 they were joint Visits Secretaries and usually arranged 5 or 6 trips each Spring/Summer. As mentioned by Miss Mould in the previous Bulletin, these were very popular. The trips ceased in 1986 as it was no longer possible to muster enough people to fill a coach.

A letter has been sent by the Secretary expressing our sadness at Rita's passing.

J.L. RODRIQUES

Yet another notification of the death of a member. Mr Rodriques died earlier this year. He and his wife Marjorie have been members for 16 years. We offer our deepest sympathy to Marjorie. It was good to see her on the visit to Painshill Park, and to know that she is still taking an interest in the Society.

AND ON A HAPPIER NOTE

The Hon. Secretary received this letter from Miss Mould, dated 29th June, thanking us for remembering her 90th birthday.

Dear Fellow-members of MHS,

Thank you all for the magnificent flowers and the book-token! I was quite overwhelmed when I opened the door and found the man standing there 'behind the flowers'. They are still in very good fettle. I was able to decide on the book I intend to buy. It was reviewed in the Guardian on the 22nd and seemed put there specially. It is 'Emerson: The Mind on Fire' by Robert D Richardson, which I shall order from Waterstones, and look forward to reading, an opportunity to savour literary America of the nineteenth century.

It was lovely to find all the signatures of fellow members of MHS on the card. Thank you to who arranged that. The flowers will fade but the card with all the signatures will remain to remind me of many happy associations with MHS.

45th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING
SNUFF MILL ENVIRONMENTAL CENTRE, MORDEN HALL PARK
SATURDAY 4th NOVEMBER 1995 at 2.30 pm.

AGENDA

- 1 Apologies for absence
- 2 Minutes of the last AGM held on 5th November 1994
- 3 Matters arising therefrom
- 4 Chairman's Report
- 5 Membership Secretary's Report
- 6 Treasurer's Report; reception and approval of the financial statement for the year, copies of which will be available at the meeting
- 7 Election of Officers for the coming year:
 - a Chairman
 - b Vice Chairman
 - c Hon. Secretary
 - d Hon. Treasurer
 - e Hon. Auditor(s)
- 8 Election of a Committee for the coming year
- 9 Motions of which due notice has been given
- 10 Any other business

NOMINATIONS for Officers and Committee members should be given to the Hon. Secretary 14 days before the AGM, though additional nominations may be received at the AGM with the consent of members. Three Committee members have to stand down this year under the 3 year rule, so please consider standing for election.

MOTIONS for the AGM must be sent to the Hon. Secretary in writing at least 14 days before the meeting.

THE COMMITTEE feel that it is time to appoint a second Vice-President, alongside Arthur Turner, to fill the position left vacant by the death of Miss E M Jowett five years ago. The Committee's unanimous choice is Lionel Green, a founder member of the Society. Despite moving to North Holmwood, and being very active with the Dorking Museum, Lionel is still a regular attender at MHS meetings, and continues his researches into Merton Priory. His lecture two years ago on the First Hundred Years of Merton Priory was very well received.

THE TREASURER wishes to remind members that the new subscription rates agreed at the last AGM apply from 1st October 1995:-

Single Member	£6
Additional Member of same household	£3
Student Member	£1

A renewal form is enclosed with this edition of the Bulletin. From this year, we also have the option of a Banker's Standing Order. Please return renewal forms to the Membership Secretary or he will accept subscriptions at the October and November meetings.

A WALK THROUGH THE WATERMEADS

Some 22 members and 8 visitors met at 7.30 pm on 26th May for a walk through the Watermeads led by Eric Montague, standing in for Paul Rutter, who was unable to make it. I understand from Irene Bain that weatherwise it was a very pleasant evening. The walk went past a cascade of water and followed ground that Irene said was new to her, although she had often spent time over there with her children when young. Eventually the party arrived on the industrial estate and then followed another route back to the gate and main road of the start. A very hearty vote of thanks ensued.

THE GREEN FAIR

Sunday 25th June was a bright sunny day, and Madeline Healey, Eric Trim and David Luff set up the stand, helped later by Margaret Carr and Marjorie Ledgerton. Publications were for sale as usual, but a total of £5 was the outcome. A display of herbs with illustrations, uses and cures realised another £4. The Treasure Hunt continued from the Carnival, and tickets to the value of £22.60 were sold that day. The £10 prize, deducted from this sum, was won by a small girl called Simone. She and four friends had each bought a ticket and agreed that if one of their tickets won they would share the prize. There were five very happy little girls who made their way home. The Lavender Lady, made by Madeline Healey, was won by Miss Helen Litchfield.

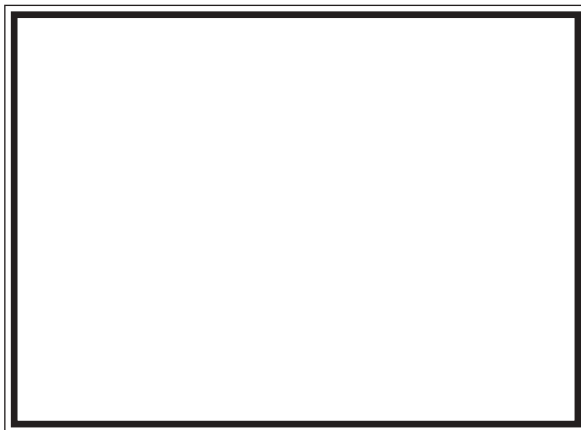
Thanks must be given to Wandle Industrial Museum for the loan of tables, etc. for the above fair and the Carnival.

INDEXING OF BULLETINS

I must make amends for an omission in the paragraph about this in an earlier Bulletin. Eric Trim continued the initial work set up by Audrey Thomas when this was started. She is responsible for the original index but as time went by, of course, more subjects were added.

Abject apologies, Audrey!!

The Editor



PAINSHILL PARK

Top left: The Abbey in Autumn

Top right: Grotto Bridge

Bottom right: The Chinese Bridge



PAINSHILL PARK

On 17th June, 29 members made their way by various means to Painshill Park, Cobham, Surrey. This visit was a follow-up to the talk given to the Society on January 28th by Mrs Maina Teltscher of the Painshill Park Trust.

The weather was anything but kind, and so nine members elected to use the minibus, while the rest of the group set off on foot. After a brief history of the Park, from its inception in 1738 by the then owner Charles Hamilton, through many vicissitudes until 1981 when the Trust was set up by local enthusiasts, the two groups followed planned routes, with stops at the many interesting features for a potted history. From the lakeside we went past the amphitheatre with its many varied shrubs and deciduous plants. From here we had a view of a "most elegant Gothic temple" (Sir John Parnell's journal). The temple looked as if it were made of stone, but in reality was made of wood, plastered over to resemble stone.

Further on, a vineyard has been planted on the site of a former vineyard. It is hoped that wine will be produced in 2 or 3 years time. Tiles were produced further on round the lake, and to hide a brick kiln, Hamilton built a "ruined" Abbey. After viewing the Chinese bridge, we crossed to Grotto Island, where we made for the Grotto itself - a most amazing construction of holey stone and in course of renovation. The cave is entered by a dark winding passage until at last you enter a large chamber, with basins and niches which will have water trickling through, and with artificial stalactites hanging from the roof, ingeniously constructed from wood and canvas.

Back to the bus and a visit to the Mausoleum, the floor of which, according to Horace Walpole, was like "painted oilcloth", and getting a glimpse across the lush countryside of the huge waterwheel, built in 1730 to provide water for the cascade.

Unfortunately we were not able to see the Hermitage, the Temple of Bacchus and the Gothic Tower, but our final surprise was the view of the Turkish Tent on the hill - newly restored, and opened only the day before by HRH the Prince of Wales, the Patron of the Trust.

Our tour concluded with a welcome cup of tea in the Visitor's Centre.

Our thanks are due to our excellent guides and for the very warm welcome we received from the staff. And thanks also to the members who kindly transported those without cars to Painshill. It was, in spite of the rain, a very enjoyable and interesting afternoon.

DMA Warburton

Footnote:

A vote of thanks must be extended to our indefatigable Secretary, Sheila Harris, who made all the arrangements, including all the transport arrangements, and had to contend with cancellations and all manner of emergencies.

It was interesting to find out that the Society had visited Painshill before, in April 1984 (arranged by the Brooks) and Joan Page not only went on the 1984 trip but on this one too. She remembers it was a perfectly awful rain swept afternoon too!! She is amazed at the difference in the place and feels that an enormous amount of work has been done in the ten years between visits. On the original visit the whole area still looked neglected although not overgrown, and its present appearance owes a lot to the trust and its supporters.

Painshill Park is open to the public on Sundays only from April to October.

Admission: Adults £3.50

OAPs and Students £3.00

Marjorie Ledgerton

VISIT TO CHEAM

On Saturday 15 July members and friends visited the old village of Cheam. Between the clay to the north and the chalk to the south runs a narrow outcrop of Thanet sands, beneath which is (or was) a good water supply. Here is the site of a 10th-century Saxon settlement, and here stands all that remains of Cheam's medieval parish churches - the chancel, known as the Lumley chapel. The dedication to St Dunstan of successive churches - the present one dates from the 1860s - derives from a visit by Dunstan (who died in 988), when Archbishop of Canterbury. The chapel's custodian, John Davison, told us that the chapel is used for two services each year - on 2nd November for All Souls', and on Low Sunday. Otherwise it is open by arrangement (tel: 0181 643 4404).

We heard that there was probably a wooden church here first, followed by a flint and sandstone structure of, probably, the 12th century. Blocked arches can still be seen in the surviving fabric. John, later Baron, Lumley, who inherited Nonsuch Palace from his father-in-law the Earl of Arundel, and died early in the 17th century, appropriated the chancel as his private chapel and built three handsome monuments. His first wife, Jane Fitzalan, lies beneath a marble-topped tomb, decorated with carved alabaster panels of mourning figures against fanciful architectural views, suggesting Nonsuch. His second wife, Elizabeth d'Arcy, is commemorated in a monument made before her death. Her recumbent form, in alabaster, is surrounded by slate tiles carved with the Lumley heraldic popinjay.

Lumley's own monument, also completed in his lifetime, is a massive affair, with black columns framing an imposing inscription, and plenty of heraldic ornament. Much in evidence is the Lumley motto: MURUS AENEUS SANA CONSCIENTIA ('a sound conscience is a wall of bronze'). Lumley was responsible too for the fine barrel-vaulted ceiling of 1594; decorative plaster friezes and swags of fruit add to the chapel's sumptuous effect.

All the other monuments were originally in the body of the earlier churches. A particularly interesting brass palimpsest * of 1542, commemorating the Fromonde family, has kneeling figures on one side of a panel, and a saint and decorations on the other. A range of monuments from the 17th to the 19th century illustrates the changing tastes of the period, with columns of many styles, draped and undraped urns, and a fine selection of lettering. Many of the monuments are connected with the manors of Cheam, and some of the names were familiar to our Mitcham and Morden experts as having owned land in our own area.

Across the road from the churchyard stands the house called Whitehall, now owned by the London Borough of Sutton and open to the public for 17 years. As the second part of our visit we were given an excellent guided tour, in two groups, by curator Pat Jackson. (Tea and cakes were consumed at two sittings meanwhile.) Excavations in the garden have revealed the presence of an earlier building, as well as a great deal of Cheam pottery, but the oldest part of the present house dates from 1500 and consisted then of three rooms at ground level, with a fixed ladder to the upper floor, and a smoke bay. Chimneys were built around 1550, a porch and small room above added at the front, and a newel staircase tower at the back. The early residents have not been identified, but it is assumed that they were prosperous, as the rooms are of good size, with relatively high ceilings. The original earth flooring was later replaced with brick.

In the middle of the 17th century John Aldrich, founder of Cheam School, is believed to have lived here, though there is no evidence that he ever taught in this building. This was when the back extension was added, nearly doubling the depth of the house.

From the mid-18th century until its purchase by the Borough Whitehall was occupied by the Killick family. By the date of their arrival the windows were glazed and the fine sashcord shutters installed. The Killicks were responsible for weatherboarding the house, and in the 19th century added the kitchen extension, with bathroom above (the present 'parlour' had been the early kitchen). The Killick Society takes a continuing interest in the house.

At several places in the house visitors can see details of the building methods used, including the early wattle-and-daub beneath the weatherboarding, the bracing timbers, and the chalk blocks used, with flints, for some of the walls. It is conjectured that one such block, carved with a fleur-de-lys may have come from Merton Priory. Roof tiles are each secured with two wooden pegs. The foundations are chalk blocks.

Some of the furniture has been lent by the V & A, and there is a 'Nonsuch' chest on loan from Bourne Hall museum. One room is being equipped as a Victorian kitchen, and other rooms are used for permanent and temporary exhibitions. Whitehall has 10,000 visitors each year, including many school parties. One room has been furnished as a late 19th-century schoolmaster's study-bedroom, for the association with Cheam School was renewed when some of the masters lodged here. The school, now Cheam/Hawtreys, still maintains friendly links with the house, though it had moved to Berkshire long before the Prince of Wales became a pupil at his father's old school. A pupil's bed and desk from the 1930s is on display. William Gilpin, headmaster of Cheam from 1752 to 1777 and an ardent proponent of the Picturesque, was satirised in a series of drawings by Rowlandson and verses by William Combe, of which Whitehall has an amusing collection, many of them reproduced on ceramics.

The garden, once much larger, contains a 600-year-old well dug 65 feet down through the sands to the chalk below.

This was a most interesting visit, and we were fortunate to have such well-informed and enthusiastic guides as John Davison and Pat Jackson.

* In this context a monumental brass that has been turned and re-engraved on the reverse. Lionel Green pointed out that there was also a brass palimpsest at Cobham. Richard le Strange in *British Monumental Brasses* (1972) mentions other local ones at Ewell, Sanderstead, Thorpe and Walton-on-Thames.

Judy Goodman

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

The meeting on Friday 23rd June 1995 was the very best so far, and should not have been missed by anyone. Bill Rudd was elected as chairman for the session, and proved an excellent chairman.

Peter Hopkins showed a copy, from Kenneth Ross's "A History of Malden", of a map of Malden, dated 1627, belonging to Merton College, Oxford. It showed fields which had once been the lands of Merton Priory, attached to their 'Hobbaldes' property in Lower Morden, straddling the parish boundaries and the Hundred boundaries of Brixton, Kingston and Wallington.

Judy Goodman produced a Portrait and Memoir, from the European Magazine she had borrowed from the London Library, showing Abraham Goldsmid, who had entertained the Prince of Wales, later George IV, at Morden Lodge.

Peter and Sheila Harris had had a visit to the General Manager of Whitelys at their present factory in Daventry, and received documents and photographs of the workplace at Ravensbury Mill, over the last century. Some small products were displayed, including a skipping rope with ball-bearing races in the handles. Whitelys had used their trade name FLEXEN extensively.

Sheila read a request from a Mrs P Stanley for information about the Wandle Park swimming bath. Madeline Healey recalled that she had a photograph of her mother, as a schoolgirl, at the swimming bath. Mum hated the cold and the mosquitos. People agreed to send any available information or recollections to Sheila.

Bill Sole ruminated about the architect of the 1770 Hanford Row, West Side Common, Wimbledon, with its mansard roof and double slope of pantiles.

Bill Rudd had had prints made from blocks stored in our archives, of the Lyric Players, dating back obviously to around 1930.

C E Sole

The meeting on Friday 4th August was under the chairmanship of Peter Harris.

Bill Sole expressed his concern over the fate of yet another listed building; this time the White Hart, Mitcham. A fire had damaged the rear extension of the main building. He was opposed to a change of name. He then went on to explain, with illustrations, the various characteristics of waterwheels v turbines.

Marjorie Ledgerton had visited the Greater London Record Office, Northampton Road, EC1, and was very impressed by the amount of research material available to local and family historians.

Bill Rudd presented his update of the Rutter Family genealogy (rediscovered at long last!), explaining the several branches, and with particular reference to those who were involved with the family snuff and tobacco firm.

Peter Hopkins presented the second stage of his study of medieval land ownership and occupation with the Merton Priory's West Barnes estate, having looked at Lower Morden at the last meeting.

Judy Goodman had visited Carlisle and had made a particular study of the former priory of Augustinian Canons, now the Cathedral Church. It remains a very fine building and has a most impressive history.

Sheila Harris had received another letter of enquiry, this time on Women and their role in the Great War. Following Peter and Sheila's visit to Whitely's mentioned above, additional records had been received which will be exhibited when the Wandle Industrial Museum is established at the Ravensbury Mill.

Peter Harris had visited Sherborne where he had been given samples from the silk farm, formerly at Lullingstone, Kent. Sherborne Castle had connections with Sir Walter Raleigh (pronounced there as Rawleigh).

Bill Rudd

The next Workshops will be on Fridays 29th September and 17th November, from 7.30 pm at the Wandle Industrial Museum by the Vestry Hall, Mitcham. Do come and join us.

THE WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

The Wandle Industrial Museum was founded in 1982 by two Merton schoolteachers and a community worker with the London Borough of Merton. The idea was to promote the heritage of the River Wandle and in particular the work of Arthur Liberty and William Morris, two of our most revered residents of Merton.

The project was originally sponsored by the Manpower Services Commission Scheme, who provided staff from the long-term unemployed. They developed many of the excellent displays now on show and in our collections.

The Museum offers a wide range of services both to the local public and especially to our schools. Workshops are run for classes at all ages numbering up to thirty in a class, on the textile industry, and they actually participate in Block Printing using the Liberty Blocks of which the Museum now has quite a collection. The Museum offers conducted walks along the river for school parties and local Societies and other groups who request it. Help is also provided for students on research projects and dissertations, and information is found for anybody who asks for it.

After the M.S.C. Scheme came to an end the Museum led a precarious existence and moved to several premises throughout the Borough on short term basis, eventually finishing up at the present site in the Annexe building to The Vestry Hall at Mitcham, which was opened to the public in 1990. The Museum then applied to the London Borough of Merton for grant support. This small grant enabled them to employ a part-time administrator.

In 1994, the Museum joined with Merton Council and Fairclough Homes to plan for the Museum to move to a more appropriate base at the historic Ravensbury Mill. The refurbishment of the Mill and its environs has gathered apace, and the opening of the new Museum is now tentatively planned for December 1995, or possibly later - the Spring of 1996 is a more feasible date.

The Trustees and Management Committee are looking forward to a new era with relish but it is also a daunting prospect financially. It is estimated that we need £15,000 to open it to the public. To this end we have now formulated a fund raising committee. Work has already started in approaching local businesses for sponsorship for various projects for which a PR package has been produced. We have a new volunteer fund raiser who will be making application to various Grant Giving Trusts, including the National Heritage Lottery. Now that the Museum has gained Provisional Registration from the Museums and Galleries Commission, it is now eligible to apply for grants from other sources.

The Museum is also in process of preparing a Business Plan for the next three years, with help of a Business Advisor from "Business in the Arts". The Museum is also fortunate in having Mr Simon Lace (Curator of Richmond Museum) who has been assigned to the Museum as our Curatorial Advisor.

Museum staff have recently visited the renovated Ravensbury Mill to see exactly what the developers have provided. The work carried out by Fairclough Homes was of an extremely high standard under the watchful eye of English Heritage. Subsequently now the Grade II listed building has been removed from the lists of buildings at risk.

The Museum team now has the task of painting all the internal walls and floors and varnishing all interior woodwork. For this, the Museum needs a band of volunteer workers and it is hoped they can involve the Merton Community Service Unit with this task.

The refurbishment of the water-wheels will be a long term project for which much funding will have to be sought after.

When the new Museum is finally opened to the public it will need a considerable band of volunteer workers to man the exhibition rooms. It is hoped that the Museum can be opened two or three days a week for which people could join a rota scheme for stewarding. If anybody is interested please contact us at the Museum on 0181 - 648 0127.

Peter Harris - Trustee/Director, Wandle Industrial Museum

LORD MONSON'S SCHOOLDAYS

The great pleasure of local history research lies not only in the discovery of something which casts a new light on a period of local history, but also the opportunity it sometimes affords of being able to help the family historian in piecing together the story of his or her forebears.

Lord Monson's reminiscences of his schooldays at the Revd. Richard Roberts' Academy at Mitcham between 1804 and 1809 are an example of such "gems" which occasionally await re-discovery, and it was almost with incredulity that I first came across the manuscript whilst working through the local history collection at Mitcham Library in the late 1960's.

William John Monson (1797-1862), born at Negapatam in the East Indies, was the only son of William Monson (1760-1807) and Anne Debonnaire. William Monson senior served in India between 1780 and 1806, attaining the rank of Lt. Col. in the 76th regiment of infantry. He entered Parliament as member for Lincoln in 1806, but died at Bath the following year. William John Monson attended Eton and Christ Church, matriculating in 1814 at the age of 17, was a student at Lincolns Inn in 1817, obtained his B.A. in 1817 and his M.A. in 1820. He became sixth Baron Monson in 1841.

As an account of life in a preparatory boarding school during the Napoleonic Wars the "Reminiscences" are fascinating reading in themselves. They also contain many small details of contemporary life in Mitcham which are not recorded elsewhere. Possibly of greater interest to a wider readership, however, they contain numerous delightful vignettes of Monson's schoolfellows, amongst whom were boys like Phillip and Edward Pusey, the latter to become the great theologian Dr. Pusey, Edward Stanley who, as Lord Derby, was Prime Minister in 1851 and again in 1858, Lord Thomas Cecil and his brother the Marquis of Exeter, and Robert Eden, who succeeded to the peerage to become the third Baron Auckland, and was Bishop of Bath and Wells from 1854 to 1869.

Monson's "Reminiscences of Mitcham" are handwritten on laid paper, watermarked "W.M.Hodgkinson & Co. 1853", cover over fifty pages of foolscap, and are bound in one volume. From the author's remarks at the end of the book it is clear that his reminiscences were drafted in 1858, after visiting Mitcham with Lady Monson on the 4th May that year. The manuscript was completed four years later, shortly before his death.

Mrs. Elizabeth Crisp of our Society commenced transcribing the manuscript in the early 1970's, and a typescript copy was completed in 1894. A copy of this was deposited with the local studies librarian at Mitcham, and in September 1987 a further copy, interleaved with photocopies of various plans and sketches of the school made in the 1840's and 50's, was supplied to Emma Lady Monson, who until then had been unaware of the manuscript's existence. A set of notes, with short biographical details of the persons mentioned in the "Reminiscences", has just been completed.

E N Montague

UPDATE TO THE LENDING LIST

The following items have now been added to the lending list, available from Tony Scott:-

The Bourne Society Bulletin No. 160

LAMAS Newsletter May 1995

Surrey Archaeological Society Bulletin 291 and 292

Surrey Local History Council Newsletter April 1995

KUTAS Newsletter May 1995

Painshill News Spring 1995

The Editor

COLOUR HOUSE THEATRE

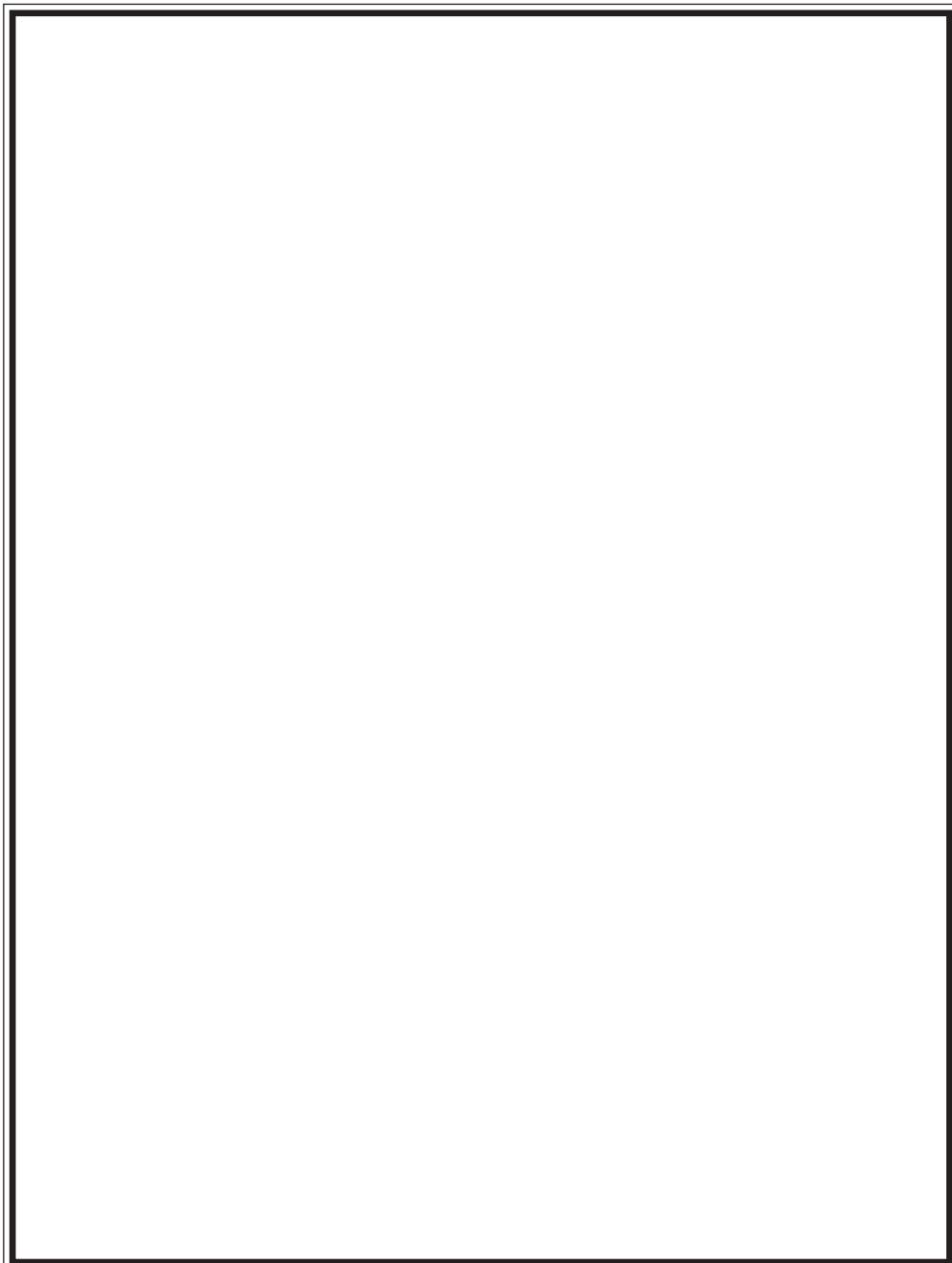
I have watched with more than a little interest the transformation of the former Colour House of the Liberty silk printing works to what is now the Colour House Theatre. Now that the transformation is complete, members may like to know what it has to offer.

I made one of my periodical visits to the Merton Abbey Mills on Saturday 29th July, and, having met some of the players in costume, decided to 'give it a go'.

The Colour House is very nicely laid out; the form of lighting, the free-standing seats, and the controls set up in a gallery above the entrance. The stage and surrounding walls are painted matt black. For the performance the props are minimal leaving the players to hold the audience completely.

"Short Shakes" is a series of short extracts from Shakespeare, scenes from A Midsummer Night's Dream, Comedy of Errors, Taming of the Shrew, As You Like It, and Romeo and Juliet. The show is non-stop, each scene broken by a blackout. I thought it extremely well done and the players are very enthusiastic. The Colour House Theatre has brought an otherwise neglected industrial building back to life. I can thoroughly recommend it.

Bill Rudd



FROM OUR POSTBAG

Eric Montague responded to a letter from Mrs P.B.Robins regarding the Arthur Family in Mitcham, and we now welcome Mrs Robins as a member.

Monty has also answered an enquiry from the Society of Friends in Sutton re the Pitt Family.

We have also received a letter from Dame Angela Rumbold enquiring about Jim Bryant of Mitcham and "Cleaver work". No information seems to be available. If anyone can help please contact Hon. Secretary.

We have also received an enquiry about the history and previous owners of White Cottage, Morden Hall. Please contact Hon. Editor if you can help.

An appeal from Bygone Films has also come our way:

Fresh from the launch of her first video Bygone Richmond upon Thames Borough, former fashion buyer, Anita Bowerman is appealing to residents living in South West London of all postal address codes SW1 to SW20 which includes Merton Borough for old cine film that could be tucked away in attics and cupboards.

Rare footage such as the daily sights pre 1980s, Royal visits, the war years, celebrations, sports, fashions, transport, industry, local events, the town centres are needed to make a 55 minute video called Bygone South West London, the first in a series of programmes featuring the Capital.

Anita, 32, who worked for Libertys and House of Fraser switched from a fashion to film career last year. She is looking forward to piecing together this area of London's past on film. "History was captured on cine film", she says, "I want to bring to life those glorious moments from South West London's past for the enjoyment of everyone today. I need old cine films of formats 8mm, super 8mm, 16mm, the rarer 9.5mm and even 35mm to make this 55 minute historic video".

Contributors whose film footage is selected to make this historic video will receive free of charge a VHS copy of their relevant cine films and a copy of the final video. Readers are assured that the film will be looked after carefully and returned in its original form.

"I am hoping the general public and perhaps business organisations will help me locate film that hasn't seen the light of day for years. During my hunt for film of Bygone Richmond, I uncovered some 40 hours of cine material which I then edited down, researched and wrote a script. Some of this footage is extremely rare and is brought to life on the video watch evocative images of:- the transport, buildings and fashions on a drive through Twickenham's streets in 1926; Winston Churchill waving his homburg hat arriving on Richmond Green in 1945 before the General Election and a raging fire which swept through the Grandstand at Richmond Horse Show in 1957 and much more besides."

For the South West London project, Anita has already found footage of Putney Boat Race 1961, rare colour film of Queen Mary in Wandsworth 1937 and Wimbledon Tennis in the 1920s.

So, if anyone has any old cine film that may be suitable, please contact Anita urgently

Letters and contributions for the bulletin should be sent to the Hon. Editor.
The views expressed in this Bulletin are those of the contributors concerned and not necessarily those of the Society or its Officers.