



PRESIDENT:
VICE PRESIDENTS: Eric Montague and William Rudd
CHAIR: David Haunton

BULLETIN No. 186

JUNE 2013



Members of Merton & Morden AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service) relaxing between training and putting out fires (see page 5)

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PROGRAMME JUNE – SEPTEMBER

Wednesday 19 June

Visit to historic East Grinstead

For further details and to book call David Haunton on 020 8542 7079.

*Meet at East Grinstead station at 11am for a guided tour,
which includes a visit to Sackville House (1520). No charge.*

Friday 19 July at 2.30pm

Church of St Lawrence, Morden

Peter Hopkins will lead a guided tour of this interesting church and churchyard.

Bus routes 80, 93, 154. Parking possible nearby. No booking needed.

Thursday 15 August at 2.30pm

Ravensbury walk

David Haunton will lead a walk around this historic area.

*Meet at Ravensbury Park, Morden Road entrance (by pharmacy/brunch bar).
No booking needed. Bus route 201; Mitcham tram stop; parking in Morden Road*

Saturday 7 September at 2:00pm

Billiard Room, Honeywood Museum, Carshalton

Talk and tour by Jane Howard, curator, plus (optional) look at Carshalton Water Tower

No charge. Book with David Haunton.

*Nearest station, Carshalton; bus routes 127, 154, 157;
pay and display car park in Pound Street.*

MARIQUITA MOBERLY, ARTIST, OF MITCHAM

A recent *Antiques Roadshow* programme featured a painting of a woman in a garden, by a Mariquita Moberly, said to be ‘of Mitcham’. **Rosemary Turner** was intrigued, and when she turned to Heritage Officer **Sarah Gould**, she found that Sarah had had another enquiry and had produced a preliminary dossier:

Mariquita Jenny Moberly (née Phillips) was born in 1855, and studied in Germany under Bertha Froriep and in Paris under Carolus Duran. She painted portraits, figures, landscapes and flowers, and also miniatures. She was a member of the Association of Women Artists from 1902. She was living in Epsom in 1881, London in 1884, and Mitcham in 1899. Her work was exhibited from 1881 to 1935, and was shown at the following galleries: National Gallery, Royal Academy; Society of Women Artists; Walker Gallery, Liverpool; Royal Society of British Artists, Birmingham; Manchester City Art Gallery; Royal Society of Scottish Watercolour Artists; Royal Institute of Oil Painters; Royal Institute of Painters in Watercolours; Royal Hibernian Academy; Glasgow Institute of Fine Artists; Dudley Gallery.

She sometimes used the following aliases: H G (Mistress) Moberly, Marguerita J Phillips, Mariquita J Phillips, and Mariquita Jenny Phillips.

Morden Library holds this oil painting, *A Scene on the River Wandle*, dated 1882, perhaps painted while she was living in Mitcham. It can be found at <http://www.bbc.co.uk/arts/yourpaintings/paintings/a-scene-on-the-river-wandle-89237>



‘LOCAL CELEBRATIONS OF EVENTS AND HERITAGE’

On Saturday 16 February at Christ Church hall David Roe and Mick Taylor, with the help of Powerpoint, presented some of the photos they have taken in the last couple of years as part of the Society’s photographic record. The aims of this project are to benefit future historians, to remind people today of the Borough’s varied and changing heritage, and to record events and celebrations of all kinds. The emphasis is on Merton, Morden and Mitcham, to avoid any duplication of effort with the Wimbledon Society.

It is only possible here to mention a selection of the many images we were shown.

Local heritage takes many forms, and under this heading what we saw included:

The Wandle Industrial Museum building – a ‘temporary’ wartime annexe to the Vestry Hall

The industrial building in Windsor Avenue whose exterior served for many years as that of the police station in *The Bill* TV series

The London Fire Brigade’s new Control Centre in Jubilee Way

Once cherished pubs now standing empty – including the *Emma Hamilton*, the *Grove* (right – now a Tesco Express) and the *Morden Tavern*, and one inaccurately renamed – *The Beverley* being now *The Morden Brook* (the what?)



School sites closed and developed for housing – Rowan in Mitcham and St Catherine’s in Merton

And at the same time schools being expanded e.g. Aragon

An old milestone in London Road, Morden

The Nelson Hospital boarded up before being rebuilt as a modern LCC (local care centre)

The Merton Rush ‘island’, a historic feature which is to be preserved – more or less.

Morden Hall Park, with picturesque buildings such as Morden Cottage, snuff mills and the Bothy, as well as the Livinggreen project in the Stable Yard

Featured special celebrations included:

A street party in Charnwood Avenue, Merton Park, on the royal wedding day in 2011

The Queen’s Diamond Jubilee last year and a ‘Big Lunch’ in the glebe field at St Mary’s church, Merton, a pavement party in Morden, and the mayor lighting a beacon in Morden Park (right)

And a look back: fine copper beech in the churchyard at St Mary’s and three stained glass windows at the west end of the church, which all date from and mark Queen Victoria’s Diamond Jubilee in 1897



Cheering the Olympic torch, which was carried into the Borough by ex-tennis star Sue Barker, and travelled via Fair Green to Colliers Wood and onwards (this fine photo was taken by Christine Roe and featured in last September’s *Bulletin*.)

Plenty of annual events too:

KidsFest at Merton Abbey Mills, the Celebrating Age Festival, Black History Month and a ‘Celebrating Communities’ event, in which the Baitul Futuh mosque, Morden Baptist church and the local University of the Third Age participated

After Hallowe’en and then Diwali, the run-up to Christmas, with fundraising fairs, shops full of decorations – and, of course, those lights.

This enjoyably varied presentation reminded us that we have, in our Borough, an interesting and important heritage, and it confirmed that we Mertonians know how to enjoy ourselves! Our thanks to David and Mick for capturing so many valued images and special moments.

Judith Goodman

‘ARCHAEOLOGY AT LONDON BRIDGE STATION’

On 16 March, Peter Moore, a director of Pre-Construct Archaeology Ltd (PCA), spoke to us about the archaeological investigations carried out by the partnership of PCA and Oxford Archaeology in parallel with the development of London Bridge station itself, and of associated sites extending westwards some 500-600m to beyond Borough High Street.

On the Bedale Street site (east side of Borough Market), PCA found a major medieval ditch, 12th century at the earliest, almost certainly defensive. Peter suspects that it obliterated Roman and Saxon ditches on the same line. Recently there has been much argument about whether Southwark had a medieval defensive circuit or not, and, if so, where it ran. Thus it is very satisfactory that the dig found this ditch exactly where landscape historians had predicted it to lie; its presence throws new light on the status of medieval Southwark.

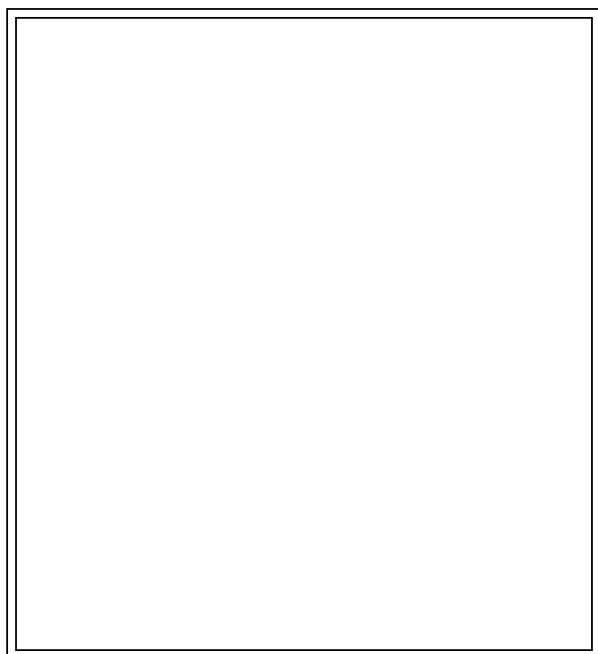
The Victorian London Bridge station itself was built on a series of brick and stone arches, which turned out to be ‘floating’, resting on ‘made’ (disturbed) ground, without real foundations. The modern construction is based on metal piles, for which individual holes had to be excavated. PCA dug many of these holes, both to investigate the archaeologically interesting ‘made ground’ and the depth of bedrock. This was found to lie between 4m (13 feet) and 6.8m (22 feet) below street level, requiring not only artificial light, but fresh-air supplies and safety ropes for the diggers. Archaeology under difficulties indeed!

The investigations showed a complex picture, of continually shifting areas of drier and wetter ground over time, allowing varied exploitation of the land. For example, PCA found the remains of two Roman structures between 5m and 6m below street level. One consisted of 17 timber piles used for the foundations of a substantial building, for which dendrochronology has given a date of between AD59 and AD83. The second structure consisted of a timber baulk packed with rocks and wood which may have been a landing platform for boats using one of the river tributaries.

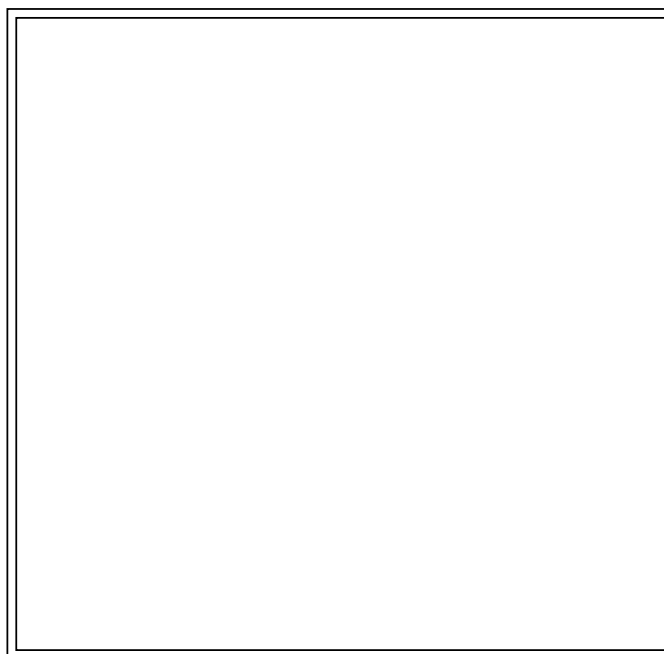
Towards the north of the site, nearer the river, medieval floors and walls were found, which may relate to some important townhouses along Tooley Street known to have belonged to religious houses based outside London. (The Southwark Embankment was a popular area for such houses.) Other major features included a 14th-century timber and wattle revetment for a water channel, the boundary ditch of St Thomas’s Hospital, and the timber uprights of a sizeable Tudor building.

Post-medieval reclamation of this marshy area enabled the population to grow, building a densely packed warren of streets by the beginning of the 18th century. Many of the houses and business premises were flattened by the building and subsequent multiple widenings of the railways. PCA found many traces of these houses as walls, floors, cellars and huge cesspits throughout the areas investigated, typically furnished with the ubiquitous clay pipes.

David Haunton



A “Penn Tile” produced in Tylers Green, Penn, Buckinghamshire, between 1330AD and 1390AD. This would have come from a high status building.



*The eyes from a German stoneware Bartmann jug, made in Cologne in the late 16th century.
Photographs courtesy of Oxford Archaeology – Pre-Construct Archaeology partnership*

‘LONDON FILM’

On Saturday 27 April at Christ Church Hall Ian Christie, Anniversary Professor of Film and Media Studies at Birkbeck College, University of London, began his talk by telling us about the London Screen Study Collection at Birkbeck. Every Borough has been requested to hunt for any films in their possession – amateur or professional, silent or sound, black-and-white or colour ... all is grist to the mill. Digital copies are then made, stored and studied. Often they come without any information attached to them, necessitating detective work. Many are frankly dull. But there are gems.

Ian began by showing us an extract from *Living London* (1904), which he had happened upon in the Australian film archive in Canberra. This was made by the American, Charles Urban (1867-1942), an important film-maker, Ian told us, with excellent editing, timing and composition skills. We saw the Thames, children at play, Covent Garden market, rows of women shelling peas (!), a flock of sparrows (what a nostalgic sight) and much more.

This was followed by the only sequence from Merton. Shot in the 1940s, it showed personnel of the Merton & Morden AFS (Auxiliary Fire Service) training, and also relaxing in front of stacked sandbags (see page 1). The AFS posts were sited at schools in the district, but our audience could not identify the location.

From a compilation, mostly from newsreels from the 1940s, called *Their Past, Your Future*, we saw a fascinating film from 1948 called *Peckham's Pioneer Health Centre*. Privately funded, in a striking Modernist (1935) building, the Centre offered a range of activities for all ages, such as physical exercise, swimming, games and workshops. The staff ‘studied health as a medical condition’. [There is a lot of information about the Centre on Wikipedia. The building survives, including the swimming pool, as housing.]

When it was announced in 1946 that bread be rationed there was much resentment, and from a Pathé newsreel of 1946 Ian had some splendid footage of a meeting of indignant ladies in hats, being urged to protest. The forceful speaker was a vicar's wife, we learned.



Next was a compilation of early 20th-century views, mainly of south London, taken from glass negatives. Local scenes included Vestry Hall, West Barnes level crossing, Cannon Hill Lane, *The Grove* public house, and the old Wimbledon station. We also saw flooded streets in Tooting, the result of a freak thunderstorm on 14 June 1914. From 1953 was a film showing Lambeth's elaborate celebrations for the Coronation – not only carnivals, processions and street parties, but also water polo and bicycle polo matches, singing and dancing competitions, and a model boat display.

Finally we saw two more downbeat films – Croydon marking Remembrance Day in 1958, and, from 1953, an elegiac farewell to London's trams, *The Elephant Will Never Forget*.

Ian Christie was thanked enthusiastically for an exceptionally enjoyable and varied presentation.

PS Ian would welcome any information about the Merton & Morden AFS film. Where was it taken? Who filmed it? And why? Please call Dave Haunton or the editor.

Judith Goodman

LOCAL HISTORY WORKSHOPS

Friday 15 March 2013 – eight present. David Haunton in the chair

- ♦ **Judy Goodman** had received a letter from member Dr Roger Logan about the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society, referred to (slightly incorrectly) on page 8 of the March *Bulletin*. Roger is an expert on Friendly Societies. See page 10.

She had been interested in references in the *Acts of the Privy Council* to Merton priory shortly after its dissolution. In February 1549 (O.S.) 'great elmes' had been sent to Bulloin (Boulogne) 'out of the landes late called Marten Abbey'. The next month Robert Packenham took a lease of the 'mylles of Marten, with thappurtenances'. In October 1552 one John Boyer hoped to be suffered to 'continnewe quietly his possession of certaine landes, parcel of the late Monasterie of Marten'.

- ♦ **Rosemary Turner**, who is a member of the Guild of St Faith, the team who make and repair vestments and other textiles at Westminster Abbey (and who was glimpsed recently on television), brought along a book on the abbey illustrated by David Gentleman. There were a number of historically accurate drawings of Abbey members in their monastic robes.
- ♦ **David Luff** had been tracing ancient watercourses, created both in the lifetime of the Priory, and subsequently by a variety of industries over the centuries. Some channels and small bridges survive, but before long they may be gone.
- ♦ **Peter Hopkins** had received a few copies of a book, *Centenary History of the Old Rutlishians' Association 1906-2006*. The 6.5 acre sports ground in Poplar Road was bought in 1923 for £4,700. Peter gave some details of a smithy in Morden.

He also produced a box of bones (from the collection of the late Dennis Turner). These had been excavated in 1960-1968 at Short Batsworth, the site of Haslemere School in Mitcham. He would be forwarding them to London Archaeological Archive & Research Centre.



- ♦ **Madeline Healey** reported that she had actually met Robert Side (*Bulletin* No.185 p.10) in 1992. She also reminded us that her grandmother had lived in the house at Ravensbury Mill, the 1910 valuation of which featured on page 12 of *Bulletin* No.184.

She enquired about a reputed tunnel under Ricards Lodge School and was told that a fine brick-built tunnel, seven feet in diameter, was constructed c.1735 to connect the staff quarters at Wimbledon's Marlborough manor house with the main house (so that the servants did not clutter up the grand lawns). In the 20th century it served as an air raid shelter.

- ♦ **Bill Rudd** talked about some of his adventures as a member of the Youth Hostel Association.
- ♦ **Cyril Maidment** gave details, and a discussion followed, about the ten-week display commemorating Merton Priory, which is planned for the new gallery at the Wimbledon Museum of Local History.
- ♦ **David Haunton**, reading the draft Mitcham Histories 14 had spotted a discrepancy between two sources quoted, and his wife Katharina had corrected an architectural term.

A relative of his had been employed as a trainee programmer at T J & J Smith (stationers' supplies) in Deer Park Road c.1969. This is early for private company to have a computer – does anyone know anything about the firm?

There was a mention in *The Times* obituary of the actor Richard Briers that he was born in Morden. Again, Is anything known?

Cyril Maidment

Friday 26 April – six present. Dave Haunton in the chair

- ♦ **Judith Goodman** had been helping Rosemary Turner find out about an artist mentioned on *Antiques Roadshow*. (see page 2)
- ♦ **Rosemary Turner** had a 1987 drawing-office plan from when her late husband's firm did electrical work at Merton Abbey. It showed how what was then known as the Savacentre building would lie over the priory remains.

The Society had been sent by Debbie Gow a copy of the 1910 *Wimbledon & Merton Annual*.

Rosemary noted that Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society were to have a tour of the chapter house on 18 May and a talk on artists John and Edward Hassell on 20 May.

She had been looking at a few Mitcham buildings in the 1910 Valuation Records. How the mighty have fallen! Mitcham Grove is described as 'gloomy and great difficulty would be found to get an adequate rental. The site would be suitable for a factory. The land is somewhat waterlogged'. The entry covering the area in Ravensbury marked 'Anglo-Saxon cemetery' on the OS maps is just described as 'vacant building land'. 'Morden Road is not a desirable Road to build residences except cottages.'

- ♦ **Peter Hopkins** had some more finds held by Dennis Turner from the Short Batsworth dig – animal bones. He also had some iron from the 1960 Merton Priory excavation. This would be offered to Dave Saxby.

He had received from John Pile a collection of transcripts from parish and other records of Morden which John had completed in 1950. There were also three glass lantern slides – views of Merton High Street (right), Merton double-gates and the *Organ Inn* at Ewell.

There was discussion about the 900th anniversary of Merton Priory planned exhibition at the Wimbledon Museum. Peter had extracts from Lionel's book, a timeline, and some 'modern myths' about the priory. It was suggested that something from Janette Henderson's work on the priory granges be included. Judith asked if what happened afterwards to the canons could be included.



- ♦ **David Luff** brought along a scale model (for a model railway) of Morden Underground station, including bus zones and shop fronts.

He had also acquired an old (c.1933) guide to Merton and Morden, with interesting advertisements (right) and map.

He went on to speak about concerns regarding the Merton Priory walls, which are in need of repair (see page 13). Cyril Maidment had met with a Borough conservation officer and an English Heritage representative. On some maps the walls are marked as National Trust property. Peter suggested that this might be a suitable project for Merton Council to apply for lottery funding.

- ♦ **David Haunton** spoke about Hartshorn's long-established butcher's shop in Raynes Park, which was due to close. See page 11.

He had been busy proof-reading future publications and the notes from the Short Batsworth dig.

- ♦ **Madeline Healey** brought her (as usual) fascinating reminiscences about places mentioned during the meeting.

MODERN HOMES on the Kingsley Estate, South Merton & Monkleigh Road Estate, Morden.



Monkleigh Road Estate.

High-class Houses are now being built on the Monkleigh Road Estate, Merton. They are conveniently situated in close proximity to Morden Underground Station, and within easy reach of bracing Epsom Downs and some of the finest scenery in Surrey.

Houses are priced as follows :—

Centre Houses	£695
End Houses	£750
Semi-Detached Houses	£775
Garages Extra from	£25

Full particulars may be obtained from :—

Messrs. H. COPP & SON, 146, Mostyn Rd., Merton Park, S.W.19.

Rosemary Turner

Dates of next Workshops: Fridays 7 June, 26 July and 13 September at 2.30pm

At Wandle Industrial Museum. All are welcome.

KEITH PENNY recalls an episode of 90 years ago, which had national implications:

‘THE MOST INTERESTING POLITICAL FIGHT OF RECENT YEARS’

Part 1

The Mitcham by-election of 1923 is accorded a mention, even if only a footnote, in standard histories of the inter-war period. The sitting Member, Dr T Cato Worsfold, aged 62, had succumbed to ill-health brought on by long hours at Westminster in addition to his own work: he resigned on 13 February 1923. At the same time the Conservatives were looking for a ‘safe’ seat for Sir Arthur Griffith-Boscawen, the Minister of Health,¹ who had lost his seat at Taunton in the General Election of November 1922.

The Mitcham constituency (which then included Beddington, Hackbridge, Carshalton and Wallington) had Conservative traditions, and the local man who would have been the next candidate, Mr Robert Meller, stood aside in favour of Sir Arthur. One MP wondered if Dr Worsfold’s resignation was due to ill-health or to the Minister for Health. Some suspected that Dr Worsfold’s illness was a specially arranged one, though *The Commoner* columnist made it clear that ‘the breakdown in health was of a serious character’.²

Some of the national background may sound familiar: in 1922 the Prime Minister misjudged the public appetite for military action in the Middle East, and the Coalition government collapsed when the Conservatives decided to go it alone; cuts in public expenditure had been advocated and were largely being implemented – something called the ‘Geddes axe’ after the initiating Committee chairman; controls on wages and prices were being removed; there were mass demonstrations and hunger marches by and for the unemployed, among whom were many ex-servicemen.

Sir Arthur Sackville Trevor Griffith-Boscawen [*right*], 58 years old, had been an MP for most of the years since 1892. Knighted in 1911, he became a member of the Privy Council in 1920. He held the army rank of lieutenant-colonel, had been educated at Rugby and Oxford and belonged to some of the most prestigious gentlemen’s clubs in London. He saw himself as a Progressive Conservative and, as a member of the London County Council 1906-10, had instituted slum clearance and other housing reforms.



Standing for the Liberal party was Lieutenant Ernest Bertram Brown MC. Awarded his medal in May 1917 for ‘conspicuous gallantry and devotion to duty’,³ he claimed not to be seeking the ex-servicemen’s vote, though the use of his rank and award in publicity material might suggest otherwise. He had twice unsuccessfully contested a seat in Salisbury.

The fast-growing Labour party made a surprise entry, specifically to fight Sir Arthur, because of his rent de-control plans and because he had been ‘dumped upon them in the dead of night’.⁴ The candidate was James Chuter Ede. Fifteen years younger than Sir Arthur, he had been a teachers’ union official, and sat on Surrey County Council then and for years to come. During the Great War he had served as a Regimental Sergeant-Major,⁵ though he seems not to have played on his military service.

Ten minutes before nominations were due to close, Mr John Thomas Catterall entered the contest as an Independent Unionist. A fluent speaker, he viewed the use of the constituency as a safe seat as an ‘ugly piece of political trickery’⁶ and denounced Sir Arthur’s handling of the rents issue. A RNVR veteran of Gallipoli, he was financed by residents and disgruntled Conservatives.

MITCHAM ELECTION.
LIBERAL CHAMPION CHOSEN.
LIEUT. BROWN, M.C. : HIS TWELVE POINTS.
MR. BENNETTS MAKES FUN: WILL JONAH FIND LAND ?
MR. J. CHUTER EDE FOR LABOUR.
MINISTER OF HEALTH ON HOUSES AND RENTS.

Sir Arthur started campaigning on 16 February but straight away ran into trouble when some of his statements about rent de-control were in part contradicted by his own Ministry. As the *Annual Register* for 1923 put it, ‘the Government’s wobbling on the housing question so exasperated large sections of the electors that the result ... could not be considered a foregone conclusion’.

Sir Arthur's meetings in Mitcham were noisy and frequently interrupted. At a particularly rowdy meeting at the Gorrington Park schools he was howled down, and his wife⁷ was hustled and struck when leaving the building. Some of the disruption came from 'a crowd of Socialist irregulars' thought to have come from Tooting.⁸ Such organised disturbances ceased when they were publicly repudiated by the Labour candidate.

Lieutenant Brown pitched his party as a middle one, able to stave off reaction on the one hand and revolution on the other. Sir Arthur, he thought, was not fit for his job and had misled his audience: his record as a minister⁹ had made him known in the West Country as the man who had betrayed agriculture.¹⁰

Mr Ede attacked the rent de-control plans, the level of unemployment and poverty in Surrey, especially among ex-servicemen, and Sir Arthur's record in government. His speeches read well even now, with personal anecdotes and observations, sarcasms, jokes, statistics and rhetorical flourishes. The four wards in the Mitcham area were expected to yield him most votes, with their considerable population of industrial and 'black-coated' workers.

Meanwhile Mr Catterall held open-air meetings until he could book halls. He was expected to do well in Carshalton and Wallington, where the middle classes would be the first to undergo de-control of the higher rent bands. Renting was still the norm – owner-occupying on a large scale had yet to arrive, and did so after this election, as a consequence of the Housing Act of 1923, mentioned in the second part of this article.

On polling day, a fine Saturday 3 March 1923, each of the candidates twice motored around the constituency. After the polling stations closed at 9pm the boxes were taken to the Vestry Hall for safe-keeping until counting began on the Monday morning.

Sources: *Sutton Advertiser* (in Merton Local Studies Centre); *The Times*; *London Gazette*; *Annual Register* 1923 and 1946; *Kelly's Handbook*; A J P Taylor *English History 1914-1945*; C L Mowat *Britain Between the Wars*. The title of the article is from *The Times* 27/02/1923. The picture and the headlines appeared in the *Sutton Advertiser* 23/02/1923 and 09/03/1923.

1. This new ministry dealt with housing as well as health.
2. *Advertiser* 09/03/1923
3. *London Gazette* 11/05/1917
4. Speech by Ede
5. Biographical note in Surrey History Centre catalogue
6. *The Times* 20/02/1923
7. His first wife had died in 1919; two years later he married his sometime secretary.
8. *The Times* 26/02/1923
9. He had been Minister of Agriculture and Fisheries when controls on the level of agricultural workers' wages were abolished.
10. *Advertiser* 23/02/1923

Part 2 will appear in the next issue.

A 'SMALL TOKEN' FROM EMMA

We were interested to receive a recent enquiry about a silver goblet, belonging to our correspondent. It bears the following inscription: 'A small token of friendship and gratitude from Lady Hamilton to her friend Mr Parrott for his very good attention to her much beloved husband Sir William Hamilton'. The goblet's hallmarks reveal that it was made in London in 1802 by Solomon Hougham. Sir William died the following year.

Parrot(t) was a surgeon, listed as a member of the Royal College of Surgeons. He lived in Mitcham, and in some style. Mitcham Court and Elm Lodge, both at Cricket Green, were his home at different times. His son also became a surgeon, but the goblet passed down the family from his daughter Dorothea, who married a Robert Kelham, and it is still with the Kelham family.

The National Maritime Museum has a letter¹ from Nelson's niece Charlotte, a frequent guest at Merton Place, to her mother, in which she says, 'I have had the tooth ache very bad since Sunday. I am expecting to see Mr Parrot every moment for he is coming to draw my tooth. I am now a little easier but I suppose it is the idea of Mr Parrot's coming that drives away the pain...'. At the end she adds a postscript, 'I have just had my tooth drawn I feel quite well.'

Parrot seems to have been part of the social circle at Merton Place and not solely a professional visitor. George Matcham, a young nephew of Nelson, wrote in his diary on 28 October 1807, 'A large party assembled [at Merton Place] at dinner, among the rest a Miss R...ch...d, a very unaffected handsome girl, and niece of Dr. Parrot ...'²

It is interesting to know that Parrot attended Hamilton. However, when Hamilton's life was drawing to a close, he moved to his own house in Piccadilly (not wishing to die under another man's roof – and that man his wife's lover), and it is possible that in his last days a London doctor was in charge. The biographies don't say.



1. NMM (ref. BRB/1 A) 2. Quoted in M Eyre Matcham *The Nelsons of Burnham Thorpe* (1911)

Dr ROGER LOGAN, a long-standing member of the Society and an expert on Friendly Societies, comments on an item in our last issue:

HEARTS OF OAK BENEFIT SOCIETY

Whilst not denying the possibility of a Hearts of Oak Benevolent Society (MHS *Bulletin* 185 p.6), the society seemingly mentioned in the 1910 Merton Valuation records, reputedly named by its members ‘after the navy whose ships protected Britain from invasion’, was that given in the title above.¹

Founded in a June 1842 in a public house in the City of London, the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society became by the turn of the century the largest friendly society of its type, which was an ordinary large or centralised society. P H J H Gosden’s 1961 standard text *Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875* devoted some paragraphs to explaining the differences in rationale, characteristics and structure between it and the better known, more extensive and popular friendly society Orders, or Affiliated Societies, such as the Oddfellows, Foresters or Rechabites.

He quoted the definition of the acting Registrar of Friendly Societies, A K Stephenson, giving evidence to the Royal Commission on Building and Friendly Societies in 1871 as being of ‘quite a distinct class, and may be described, perhaps, as doing business over the counter. They are really offices for life insurance and sickness, but in which there is no connection or personal acquaintance between the members as there is in the ordinary friendly society’.² In other words there was no social (some might say ‘benevolent’) dimension to them at this period.



Gosden observed that ‘they [the large ordinary societies] were simply insurance businesses and as a matter of deliberate policy avoided all those social manifestations of the “friendly” spirit which working-men members thought to be so important’.³

As a registered Friendly Society the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society was subject to the Friendly Society Acts. These set out what a registered Friendly Society could legitimately do. The 1896 Act, the most recent consolidating Act prior to 1910, gives the following at Sections 44 and 47:-

44 – (1) The trustees of a registered society or branch may, with the consent of the committee or a majority of the members present and entitled to vote in general meeting, invest the funds of the society or branch, or any part thereof, to any amount in any of the following ways

(d) in the purchase of land, or in the erection or alteration of offices or other buildings thereon;

47 – (1) A registered society or branch may (if the rules thereof so provide) hold, purchase, or take on lease in the names of the trustees of the society or branch any land, and may sell, exchange, mortgage, lease, or build upon that land ...⁴

Land and property ownership was thus part and parcel of an organisation seeking to maximise the financial return on its investment of members’ money. By 1905 the Hearts of Oak had 284,063 members and funds of £3,250,961.⁵

The Hearts of Oak Benefit Society survived into the Thatcher years, and the era of regulation of financial investment business. Registering under the 1992 Friendly Societies Act, the words ‘Benefit Society’ were dropped and replaced by ‘Friendly Society’. In 2007 the society was taken over by the Reliance Mutual Insurance Group.

London-based MHS members seeking a fuller history might want to take the opportunity to visit the City of Westminster Archives Centre, where, according to The National Archives web page accessed 1 March 2013, records of the Hearts of Oak Benefit Society (Friendly Society) from 1842 to 2002 are deposited. Alternatively, a centenary history was published in 1942, which is obtainable, at a not inconsiderable price, from internet booksellers’ sites.

1. TNA Access to Archives web page www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a/. It would be interesting to know if the origin of the assignation of the name appeared before the society’s centenary publication in 1942, when the UK was at war and an appropriate patriotic connection would not have been out of place.

2. P H J H Gosden *The Friendly Societies in England 1815-1875* (1961) Manchester University Press p.50 fn.1

3. *Ibid.* p.51

4. Friendly Societies Act, 1896, 59 & 60 Vict. Cap.25

5. *Reports of the Chief Registrar of Friendly Societies and Branches for the year ending 31st December 1906; Part A – Appendix (N), List of Societies Registered under the Friendly Societies Act at 31st December 1905* (1907) London, Eyre and Spottiswoode

Postscript: Members wanting to learn more about the culture, characteristics and heritage of friendly society Orders (affiliated societies) will find www.aoforestersheritage.com useful.

DAVID HAUNTON says farewell to an old friend:

THE END OF A CHAIN – RAYNES PARK 2013

I am sorry to record the closure on Saturday 27 April of Hartshorn Ltd, the butchers, of Coombe Lane, Raynes Park. This was an old-fashioned but professional family butcher, where the chaps behind the counter, Trevor, Mark and Raymond, knew exactly where their meat came from. The following memories were mostly recounted by Trevor, an archetypal ‘behind the counter’ man.



Left:

*The End,
Coombe Lane,
Raynes Park.*

Photo DJH 2013

Below:

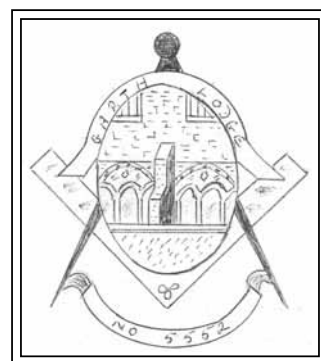
*detail from
Frith photo of
North Street,
Leatherhead
1906*

The Hartshorn chain started c.1904, when young Mr Hartshorn took over an existing business (‘late Brown & Mercer’), which was flourishing (‘Purveyors to HRH The Duke of Connaught’) in North Street, Leatherhead. An enterprising man, he opened a further five branches in neighbouring towns over the next 30 years, installing a manager in each. The Raynes Park branch was the last, opening in 1932. [I am not sure where the other four were – Hindhead and Ewell have been suggested as possibilities – so I would be delighted if anyone could help me locate them – DH.] In the early 1950s Mr Hartshorn (‘the old man’) sold off the six branches to their managers, who then continued trading under the name, but as individual businesses. One by one they were slowly closed, until only the Raynes Park shop survived. The business was offered as a going concern nearly a year ago, but unfortunately without any real interest resulting.

Trevor’s father had previously worked in other branches, and became the manager of the Raynes Park one when it opened (‘his last shop, first as manager’). When I asked Trevor recently why his sausages were labelled ‘home-made’, he protested that they were made on the premises, and then joked that the shop was his second home. It turned out that it was also his first home, when his father was still manager. He started helping out on Saturdays, aged 11, doing deliveries with the traditional bike and basket, and behind the counter on occasion. He thoroughly enjoyed it then – ‘great days’ – but later ‘escaped a couple of times’, though he was ‘always recaptured’. Trevor and Raymond can now relax into well-deserved (late) retirement, while Mark moves on to pastures new.

GEOFF COOPER, one of our members, outlines the history of GARTH LODGE

Word has come down through the generations of Garth masons that the origins of the Lodge are to be found in conversations held by members of the newly formed Morden Park Golf Club in the autumn months of 1934. In a *Brief History of Garth Lodge*, produced on the occasion of its 50th anniversary, the author, patently familiar with the course, conjectured that these discussions were 'most probably instigated between the long 10th and short 11th, and finally determined in the 19th'. Whether that was so or not will never be known. What is known is that on 21 February 1935 a meeting was held at which the club captain, Charles Angliss, proposed taking steps to found a Masonic lodge within the club. The 23 golf-playing freemasons present all undertook to become founder members of the prospective lodge. The golf club committee consented to a lodge, open to club members only, meeting on the premises, but only between October and March, and never at the weekend. A second meeting of prospective founders just one week later agreed that the name of the lodge should be Garth. Events moved swiftly. On 11 March Morden Lodge No. 4958 sponsored a petition to the Grand Master of Freemasons of England for a new lodge, bearing the name of Garth, to meet at Morden Park. The petition was duly countersigned by the Provincial Grand Master of Surrey, HRH The Prince of Wales (later the Duke of Windsor). The identity of the proposer of the name remains a mystery, but a further meeting on 11 April accepted Frank Drew's design for the lodge arms, a cloister-garth. The aforementioned petition was accepted on 5 June, and Garth Lodge No.5552 was consecrated in Freemasons' Hall, Great Queen Street, London, on 1 October 1935 in the presence of 23 founder members and 78 guests. The club captain, Worshipful Brother Angliss, became first Master, and Worshipful Brother Drew was the first treasurer. Their names, together with those of the other founders, are displayed on the Master's dais whenever the lodge is open. Once in existence, the first act was to propose that HRH The Prince of Wales should be elected an Honorary Member of Garth Lodge.



On 28 November 1935 the first meeting was held at Morden Park. A converted stable in the courtyard, furnished with redundant seats from the refurbished Northern Line carriages, served as the lodge room. Meetings continued there throughout the following ten years. The unofficial rule restricting membership to golf club members was rescinded in 1938. As each lodge meeting consists of two distinct parts – the business proceedings followed by the festive board – members and guests attending adjourned to the clubhouse bar in the interval, while local caterers with a mobile kitchen converted the lodge room into a dining-room.

In late 1945 all Surrey lodges were invited to compile a record of their wartime activities. In his account dated January 1946 the secretary of Garth recalled that meetings had been held as and when circumstances permitted, and were often attended by few brethren. Especially memorable had been the meeting of 27 July 1944, for during the proceedings the blast of a flying bomb had burst open the lodge room door. Among those members serving in the armed forces there had been two colonels, one major and one squadron leader.

Perhaps of particular interest to members of Merton Historical Society resident in Merton and Morden all those years ago is the following extract:

'Brother Baker, Worshipful Brothers Macdonald, Franklin, Billingham, Auger and Cockbain and Brother Shadbolt, all councillors of Merton and Morden UDC, led active lives in administering the affairs of the district, and the first four all became Chairman of the Council during the war years and each creditably discharged the duties of that important office. Worshipful Brother May and Brother Hayward, Clerk of the local UDC and Horticultural Officer respectively, were actively engaged in Civil Defence work.'

Meanwhile Merton and Morden Council had purchased Morden Park in late 1945 and gave notice to the golf club to cease functioning by 25 March 1946. Hence Garth Lodge was in need of a new home.

A document in the lodge archives penned at the time of the 25th anniversary in 1960 states, 'It was on a note of sadness that we said farewell to our unique and much loved surroundings when the venue was changed to the Stoneleigh Hotel'. Garth Lodge met at Stoneleigh for the first time on 24 January 1946, and continues to do so to the present day. In the post-war years interest in Freemasonry increased dramatically and Garth membership became such that in 1957 it was possible to sponsor a daughter lodge, Cherrywood No.7530. However, recent years have seen a comparable decline in interest, and Garth, in common with most lodges in Surrey, has felt the effect. In the 1980s the average attendance at meetings was 40. Today the average is less than 20. However, though few in number, the current members of Garth Lodge are determined to see that the lodge that they have inherited continues to prosper, striving hard to maintain the high standards set by their forebears, founded on the grand principles of Brotherly Love, Relief and Truth.

DAVID LUFF, with a call to action:

LET'S SAVE THE PRIORY WALL

‘The Priory wall is falling down, falling down, falling down.

The Priory wall is falling down, but does anyone care?’

The simple answer to this question, apart from local historians like ourselves, is ‘no one’. Especially not those deemed to be responsible for its protection.

Why should our Priory wall be covered in ivy, bushes and trees under the pretext that this will protect it from being vandalised – which appears to be the reason given by the Borough? Would it not be more appealing to have it standing proud on an area of grass, with maybe a tree here and there, and a decorative Pickle running alongside?

There are three sections of the wall that have survived the dissolution of Merton Priory in 1538.

One is in Station Road. A few years back it was repaired because of the danger of it collapsing. This repair does set a precedent, for if one section can be repaired so can both the others.

The second section of wall is in the rear gardens of the maisonettes in Windsor Avenue. When these were built the property developer used the wall to separate the rear gardens of the upper and ground floor flats. For this to have happened there must have been something official preventing the wall's demolition. Without some control they would have simply bulldozed the wall flat. Most of the wall here is in very poor condition and would require extensive restoration, though it is not beyond repair. Though it is on private property with no public access, it can be seen from the eastern bank of the Pickle in Brangwyn Crescent. The location of this bit of the wall could be used as an excuse for not restoring it, and we will have to keep a careful watch.

The third section is in the grounds of the Merton Abbey Sainsbury's/M&S building. It stands at the eastern edge of the site and follows the bends of the Pickle. There is no direct access, but parts of the wall can be seen from the Priory Park Estate. The best time to see it is winter or early spring. It is 220m in length and is in two sections – one of 180m, then a gap with an iron railing fence and gate before the final 34m stretch. This latter section is very overgrown and difficult to see.



Most of the wall here is in good condition, considering its age and years of neglect. A few parts lean to the east, and a 4m section has collapsed. The rubble is in situ, so it must be a fairly recent fall, and is repairable. There has been some backfilling of the ground on the west side of the wall, and quite a number of trees are now growing close, with their roots directly under the wall's foundations. The infill and trees would have to be removed.

Unfortunately the London Borough of Merton does not have a good track record when it comes to caring for our historical heritage. For instance, the lost stonework for the gateway arch in Station Road, and the alterations to the listed Colour House and to the Long Shop, both at Abbey Mills.



Next year will be the 900th year since the founding of Merton Priory. So why not come along and look at the only aboveground remains of the Priory? Oh, I'm sorry – you can't see it due to its being covered in ivy, trees and bushes.

David Haunton and Peter Brunton would like to know more about
THE END OF A WAR – MITCHAM 1945



Peter Brunton has sent us these photographs of celebrations in Love Lane, Mitcham, at the end of the Second World War. Peter lived with his parents at no.5 Love Lane and can remember Mrs Cook at no.7, the Norths at no.1, no.3 and no.11, and the Penns at no.9. Across the road in the 'new' houses built in c.1927 lived families called Brace at no.2 and Rextrue at no.4

Photo no.1 (above) is of the start of a parade. It is in Love Lane at the point where the path (there was no road then) narrowed towards Church Road; the churchyard is just visible top right. Peter is the little boy about three years old, second from left at the front, who is dressed as John Bull, with a Union Jack around his hat. The curly-headed child second from right portrays Uncle Sam, with a rudimentary Stars and Stripes painted round his (her?) topper. Peter's mother is the 'bride' just left of centre.



Photos no.2 and no.3 are two views of a children's street party in Love Lane, perhaps at the Frimley Gardens / Church Lane end.

In Photo no.2 (bottom left) Peter can identify his mother front right with Peter on her knee, their next-door neighbour Mrs Cook, holding the same curly-head who appears in no.1, and the boy in the dark coat is probably Brian Follett. The ladies standing next to him are Peter's paternal grandmother and his grandfather's sister Edie, holding the flag. On the right of the picture, only one-half of Peter's other grandmother is visible.

Photo no.3 (right) is obviously much the same, with the adults backed away, and the boy in the sailor suit (a Sea Cadet?) shifted to be in charge of Peter.

Questions A lot of queries arise, starting with the fact that we are not sure exactly when these events took place – is this VE-Day or VJ-Day? Are they both the same occasion?

And then the people – can anyone identify any of the other people in the pictures? In particular who (and why) are the boy in the American Army officer's cap (sitting about eight places down on the left side of the table) and the boy in boater and 'blackface' (a little nearer the camera, on the opposite side of the table)?



If you have any information at all on the events and people shown here, please give David a ring.

A request from

LAMAS (LONDON AND MIDDLESEX ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY)

The LAMAS Local History Committee is on the lookout for new members to represent the views of local history societies in the Greater London area. If you are interested or know of someone who may be willing to join the committee please get in touch with John Hinshelwood 020 8348 3375 johnhinshelwood@btinternet.com or Eileen Bowlt 01895 638060 c.bowl@tiscali.co.uk.

A Correction

Keith Penny points out that the date for the postcard view of Upper Green West on page 14 of the *March Bulletin* cannot be 1953. A 612 trolleybus can be clearly seen in the right-hand foreground, and that route closed on 30 September 1950. The date may have been taken from a postmarked card in the library's collection, but postmarks can be misleading!

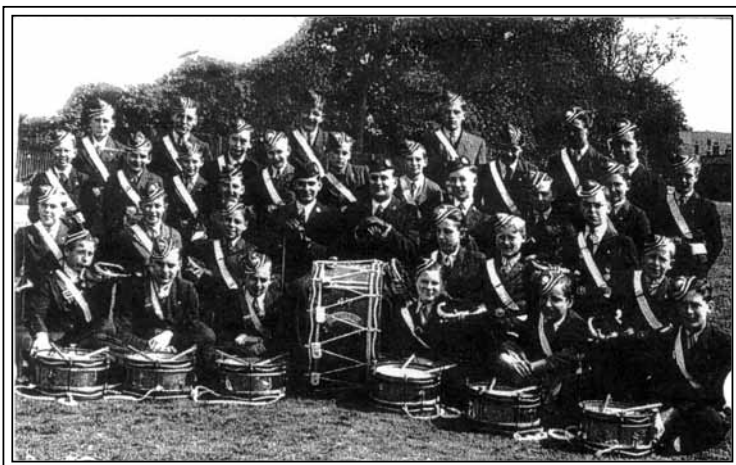
After reading Eric Montague's volume on *The Cricket Green*, MR LESLIE A LENEY has sent us his
MEMORIES OF 4TH EAST SURREY BOYS' BRIGADE 1933-1938

We were members of the Guild at the Methodist Church, Mitcham, over by the Cricket Green – 20-30 boys 10-13 years of age, with our teacher Mr Tull and his son Harold. We had Physical Training and outings to the seaside. Then Mr Tull made it possible for the Company of Boys' Brigade to be formed. The boys thought it a good idea and so Mr Tull became Captain Tull, and his son Harold became Lieutenant, and Ossy Packer also became Lieutenant. The company was the 4th East Surrey Boys' Brigade, and we each had a uniform, blue and white forage cap, a BB belt and a small haversack.



By Queens Head, Mitcham, with Capt Tull directing

Some marching music was needed so a bugle band was formed with side drums, a base drum, and a mace bearer, thanks to the 28th South London Company which was based in Tooting. We marched in columns of four. Between 1933 and 1936 we attended ceremonies at Mitcham Stadium and Battalion parades on Three Kings Piece. Five bands and 500 boys marched to Thornton Heath church. I was a side drummer sergeant, John was leader, Wally base drummer and John bugle leader.



*Outside Mitcham Methodist church: L Leney 2nd left front row,
J Sharman right front row, Lt Tull left of base drum,
Capt Tull centre of base drum, O Packer right of base drum*

We gathered in the Methodist Hall for training, or went to Tooting for more knowledge. A vaulting horse was acquired and PT was the form. Then there were the camps. My first experience was to Swanage with the 28th company. We marched from Swanage station along the front to Ballard Point – 70 in the company and 30 in the band with two base drums – a memorable time! I was part of the advance party preparing bell tents for the boys' lines and officers' lines and the cook house. Other camps were at Little Common and Cooden near Bexhill.

I often sit at home and think of those days. What memories!

ROSE COTTAGE, WIMBLEDON

Rose Cottage, 101 Hamilton Road SW19, which is 200 years old this year, is under threat. Permission has been given to demolish it and replace it with flats.

There was an article about Rose Cottage in *Bulletin* 131 (September 1999). The house was built for a prosperous merchant, Hamnett Pinhey, who later emigrated to Canada. His estate in Ottawa is now a historic site, whose honorary historian Professor Bruce Elliott is strongly supporting efforts to save Rose Cottage. Unfortunately the house has no statutory protection, and we have to hope that the developers can be persuaded to retain it as part of their building plans.

JG

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.

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