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Bushey Museum

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The Journal is published by the Friends of Bushey Museum and is mailed to all friends and selected local organizations. Contributions on all aspects of Bushey's social and artistic history are welcome and should be sent direct to the editor at the Museum. The Friends support the activities of

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THE JOURNAL OF THE **FRIENDS OF BUSHEY MUSEUM**

elcome to the latest edition of the Friends of Bushey Museum's Journal. It contains its usual collection of articles on a wide range of topics and I hope that there is something of interest for everyone. This time not only do we have a husband and wife contributing, Pat and Tony Woollard, but also a mother and son, Mollie and Andrew Thomas - this must be quite unusual in local history journals.

At last we have a piece about drama, from Phil Kirby, but there must be many more memories and ephemera out there. I'm still waiting for something on

the history of music in Bushey. And what about your working lives, did you work for a Bushey firm?

lan Read has been helpful in finding photographs to illustrate the articles as well as providing an article himself, and Nick Overhead is responsible for the layout and design of the Journal. Thank you.

Thank you to all the contributors. Please keep the articles coming in: without your support there will be no lournal.

Janet Murphy

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football team.



Mary Annie Sloane (1867-1961)

arlier this year Pat and Tony Woollard visited an exhibition of the work of Mary Sloane at the New Walk Gallery in Leicester. The curator kindly gave permission for the extract of her diary relating to her time in Bushey to be printed in the *Journal*. Part I follows this brief biography and part 2 will be in the next issue.

Born in Leicester in 1867 into the wealthy family of surgeon John Sloane and his wife Sarah, Mary lived with her parents, brothers and sisters at 9 Welford Place (later 13 Welford Road). Family summers were spent at the Nook, the family cottage in the village of Enderby, Leicestershire.

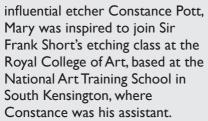
She attended the progressive Belmont House School, Leicester, where her early talent was recognised by art teacher Edith Gittins, a great admirer of William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement. After two years at Leicester School of Art, Mary left for London in 1887, to become a student at the National Art Training School, Kensington.

From 1890-92, she attended Herkomer's Art school in Bushey, Hertfordshire. At this time she began to really demonstrate her artistic self-belief with a series of stunning watercolour paintings recording the important framework knitting industry in the Midlands. Framework knitting machines were gradually becoming obsolete, but remained in villages, providing much needed income.

Mary's middle class background and her financial independence ensured her successful transition to London in 1887. After a number of moves, she settled at Bedford Gardens, Campden Hill, Kensingston. This remained her home until 1924. Mary made regular return visits to Enderby and Leicester however, producing beautifully observed etchings and watercolours of the town's

historic buildings and exhibiting with the Leicester Society of Artists.

After a chance meeting in 1898 with the



Mary's growing artistic reputation led to her joining the Women's Guild of Arts (WGA), founded in 1907 as a home for female artists and artisans otherwise excluded from the male-dominated Arts & Crafts movement. Mary's growing social circle soon included many female artists, intellectuals and political campaigners. Most notable was May Morris (younger daughter of William Morris) who was an influential textile designer and co-founder of the WGA. Mary and May met around 1909 and would enjoy a lifelong friendship, including many visits to Kelmscott Manor.

Mary travelled widely, both in Britain and on the continent, including visits to the Netherlands, Spain, Italy, France and Greece. She exhibited at the Royal Academy, Society of Women Artists, Women's Guild of Artists and numerous others.

In 1912 Queen Mary purchased a painting of Whitby Abbey; later commissioning Mary to produce a miniature drawing for the Queen's Doll's House. In the same year Mary was admitted as an Associate of the Royal Society of Painter-Etchers and Engravers, an important milestone in her career.

In later life Mary continued to exhibit even up into her 90s, exhibiting work with the Leicester Society of Artists. In the 1950s she left London to return to live in Enderby.



Memories at Bushey

Mary left these notes, which were probably notes for a talk, on numerous sheets and bits of paper – they were typed by her great niece A.D. They have not been edited.

ushey students have a good many privileges and one of the greatest is being allowed to go and see Professor Herkomer at work every week in all stages of progress. Every Sunday afternoon he puts up most of the pictures he has been working on in the week and the students stream in at the studio door and examine (and criticise) everything in the place. Professor H comes up and explains anything fresh and shows what new experiments he has been trying and tells what he means to do next to make his pictures come right.

Sometimes interesting celebrities are there, painters and authors and scientific men and sometimes it is generally rather hard to discover who they are and it is easy to mistake an alderman who is thinking of getting Herkomer to paint his portrait from an author or an R.A., and so we find it best to attend to the pictures and to take it for granted that important looking guests are always intending sitters. But we generally give our chief attention to the pictures as important looking people often come and turn out to be merely rich folks who are thinking of getting their portraits painted instead of being painters authors or R.A. or scientific men. So we generally give our chief attention to the pictures and there are always plenty to look at.

of My Time as a Student under Professor Herkomer.



The first time I went over to Bushey to explore and be introduced to the Professor it was to go with a student to one of these Sunday afternoon receptions. He was living in a little old fashioned house then and the new castle he has been planning for years was being built at the bottom of his garden.

There was no one about when we went in. There was a little brass plate on the front door telling students to go straight through to the studio and we accordingly went in and did not stop to examine the hundreds of interesting things we

passed in the house. We left our cloaks in a sitting-room half-filled already with sticks and umbrellas for we were not very early and there we saw a painting of Prof. H's dead wife and watercolour portraits of his babies at all ages and some beautiful carved furniture carved by the Professor's father and uncle from peculiar designs of his own. There was a series of drawings of country people in Bavaria which is his native country and when we had glanced at these we came to the studio door and squeezed our way through a crowd of students to the front. If any of the students want to discuss any point with their

teacher that is the time. He is ready to discuss anything from bicycling to needlework or modern painting to modern dress. I once assisted in a heated discussion on the wearing of sandals. My friend had been wearing sandals in the school to the amazement of the other students and they gathered round in a ring to hear the Prof. denouncing the practice. I do not remember why except that they needed a classical dress to go with them according to him and none of our arguments had any effect. I have since seen an etching by him of Mrs. Herkomer wearing sandals so perhaps he has changed his views. The students

however must have been impressed for they took steps to enforce his ideas by hiding the unfortunate sandals, they did not turn up till the end of the term, but it was not until five years afterwards I learned where they had been hidden. I happened to hear only the other day.

They are rather fond of pranks of that sort. The last exploit I heard of in that line was that someone had rolled a huge snowball into the school door this winter blocking the way and there was trouble after as one master took it as a personal insult.

The life of a Bushey student is fairly independent. There used to be a comic picture in the students' magazine of a young student with long hair standing between an easel and an open door with duty calling him to come and work and pleasure beckoning him out to dance I think it was.

The Bushey students are divided into two sets, the Preliminary class who paint heads under a stern junior master and the advanced class who paint under Prof. H. The preliminary class is where the hardest work is done because the students are always desperately anxious to get out of it and they can only do so by sticking closely to their work and passing Professor Herkomer's examination for the life class. These competitions are held periodically and cause no end of excitement and rivalry over them and bitter disappointment among those who fail. The number depends on the amount of room there is in the life room (vacancies) about as much as on the merit of the work.

About 40 compete and sometimes only one or two get through. The next time perhaps nearly half. It is not from superior merit, but because there are vacancies. When students get into the advanced class and have no new



honours to strive for, they spend half their time wishing themselves back in the prelim which they appreciate more than ever when its doors are shut to them for ever.

They work for a year or two in the life class getting a criticism once a week from Prof. H and after the advanced class the correct thing is to take a studio in the village - there are more than 60 now in the neighbourhood so there is not much difficulty in renting one and when you have chosen your studio the usual plan is to buy a large canvas and a bundle of new brushes and shut yourself up with it every day for some months and let no one in until you can produce a finished picture for criticism and admiration. A wagon load of paintings goes to the London exhibitions every spring. There are 90 students in the school and among them all they use up a vast amount of canvas and materials. 180 studies are done in the week which comes to 7200 in the school and what becomes of these studies no one ever knows. Perhaps maybe the heating apparatus benefits.

I have sometimes been asked if the students at Bushey do not have to work too hard. That depends entirely on themselves some do and some don't. There was one young man there when I first went who was said to work eleven hours in the day (he didn't) and there were some who spent the chief part of their time arranging dances and picnics and only came into the school to look at the illustrated papers in the reading-room and do five minutes work for the sake of appearances.

Some of the idlest have got on remarkably well though since and as for that young man who was said to work 11 hours a day, Mr. Watts himself writes of him with admiration, his portraits and biography are given in the papers and he is to be one of the leading painters in a year or two if not sooner.

The regular school hours are about 7 hours a day. We are supposed to be there very early for the classes begin at 8 and go on until 4 with time off for midday lunch. In the winter it is from half past 9 to 3 with an evening class at 7. In the summer this evening class is held early in the afternoon to leave time for out of doors sketching after it and this outdoor work is what we enjoy the most.

Some of the people near allow the students to come into their grounds to sketch. There is a very old garden at the Manor House which would make splendid pictures and it used to be simply crammed with easels and sketching classes, twenty people trying to paint apple trees and half a dozen more making a picture of a couple of ragged village children gathering daisies or perched on the swing. You had to be there early if you wanted to get a good place.

Some of the other neighbours were not so obliging. One farmer in particular was extremely violent and swore hard if he caught anybody trespassing off the footpaths especially if they were students.

Another farmer had a capacious orchard which appeared in half the picture exhibitions in the kingdom and it was given up to sketching parties from morning till night. Every student who owned a dog took it sketching too and tied it to the palings and occasionally they broke loose and varied the monotony of life by a dreadful fight.

There used to be another favourite sketching ground but it came to a sad end. There was an old house standing empty in a deserted garden in the middle of the village. The house was covered with Virginian creepers to the chimney tops and the sketchers revelled in the place and painted pictures there entitled The Deserted Village, The Old Home, The Return of the Wanderer and so on but the owner apparently objected to having the place over run with students and there were rumours that swarms of tramps slept there every night so on the principle of the dog in the manger the house was pulled down, the trees grubbed up, the ground laid waste and no one could wish to see a more hideous place than it is now.



Philip Kirby

Following your request for information about drama groups in Bushey, I thought you might be interested in this programme for, and the photographs of, the play *This Happy Breed* by Noel Coward, which was performed by the newly formed British Legion Players. There is no date on the programme but I think it must have been 1946 or 1947. I came out of the Royal Air Force in 1946 and joined the players for this production (playing the part of Frank Gibbons). In the picture I am

seated on the left hand side of the table, turning and looking aghast at

the two coming through the door! Performances of this took place in both St James's Hall in Falconer Road and St Peter's Hall on Bushey Heath. I do not know what happened to the British Legion Players after this production as I became very much involved in music and drama up at St Peter's, becoming Musical Director for St Peter's Players and subsequently Organist and Choirmaster at St Peter's Church for a number of years (I am now 94 years of age).

Evacuees-the story

This article is based on the recording of an interview of Eileen and Beatrice Law by Jennifer Parker in March 2006.

e lived in the east end of London at 12 Agate Street, East Ham, near the Royal Albert and Royal Victoria docks. There were four of us children: Alf was about 14, Eileen was about 10, Beat was about 8 and Jimmy about 6.

We had a terrace house: you went in through the front door there was a front room on the right and a passageway to the stairs and a back room: through the back room to the kitchen, which was like a scullery and through the back door and out into the yard, where there was a place which we called the wash house with a big boiler and a bath on a trestle thing. Inside the house, Mum had the back room and we shared the front room with Gran. Upstairs there were three more rooms; Mr and Mrs Wilson lived in the front room with their son and in the back room there was an oldish couple – to us children they were old but they might not have been. The toilet was outside in the yard and we had to share it with the people upstairs. I think it was rented from a landlord who used to come round for the rent.

In London all the houses had two or three families in them. Next door they were a load of crooks. We had a hutch with some rabbits in and I used to sit on the top of it and look over into next door's yard and, on a Sunday morning, they were sitting there gambling. They had a pigeon loft and all of a sudden you would hear this noise and whoosh — cards gone, table gone up into the loft and they'd be sitting there

drinking a pint when the coppers came running in to see if there was any gambling going on. They asked me once if I had seen anything and I acted a bit daft and said: "No" and when they asked what the men were doing I said: "Drinking beer".

Evacuation to Bushey

We came to Bushey when I (Eileen) was 10 soon after the beginning of the 1939-45 war. When the bombers came over in September 1940 the bombing was horrendous. We never went to bed - just went to the back door and waited for the siren and then we went down to the shelter. I can remember standing by the door and saying: "Mum can we go away from here?" and her replying: "I don't know love, but it's going to be all right." She was very calm so I didn't feel too frightened because I thought Mum's here and she wouldn't panic.

They bombed the docks: all our houses were blasted and the school at the end of the road. South Hallsville, was badly damaged and a lot of people sheltering in the school were killed.² The night sky was red and even after all these years I cannot stand a red sunset because it brings it back to me. It was as if the sky was bearing down on us and we could almost feel it. It took us a long time to get over it; when jets started flying over I wanted to duck and today if I hear an engine stall I want to duck; it's still in the back of your mind.

Our house wasn't flattened but it was badly blasted and the doors,

windows and floorboards had all gone. All we had was what we stood up in.

The next morning they brought us all out in buses, we couldn't bring anything with us. When we were on the buses we'd be asking: "Where are we going Mum?" She would say: "It'll be all right – it'll be nice you'll see."

They took us to a place called Chingford Mount. We stayed in the school for about a week and then it was hit by an incendiary bomb and so we were put on the buses again and brought to Watford. We were taken to Ellams the printers on Walton Road. We had a medical and were given food. A lady took off her coat and gave me her cardigan because I hadn't got a coat. We stayed there for a day and then they took us round to try to billet us in places round the area.

We went to a big house on Grange Road and the lady of the house said that she could take grandmother and me, because I was the eldest. The housekeeper came in wearing a black dress - I can see her now – and she looked me up and down, and my gran up and down, and she said:"Come to the kitchen." I went to the kitchen and she said:"You look a nice strong girl - you can scrub floors can't you?" Now that was the worst thing she could have said to my grandmother because my grandmother was true cockney, and I'm afraid my Gran told her in no uncertain terms what she could do with her house and what she could do with her scrubbing, and her granddaughter wasn't going to do that, so out we came and the poor billeting officer – I don't think he knew what had hit him and so we were back together again.

of two sisters



Mr and Mrs Vasmer in the porch at Caldecote.

Mum didn't want us children to be separated from the rest of the family so there was Mum, Dad, four children and my grandmother.

The families were kept together and those they couldn't billet were taken to Cox's on the By-Pass where we were given a meal and sheltered for the night. Next morning we were in the canteen and people from around the area came and said we've got rooms and could take this person or that person, but they wanted to take individuals, or two girls or two boys, but they didn't want mum and dad as well. Dad said that we'd come through this so far, you're not going anywhere and you're staying with us as a family. Mum was talking to Mrs Rogers who had her family with her. She had four sons, her mum and dad, and she was looking after poor Tommy Smith, whom she knew. His mother and three sisters

were in the school that got bombed; his mother and baby sister were killed and the two other sisters had disappeared, although they were found later on.³ He was 10 like me and his father was at sea. Mrs Rogers said that they were going to stay together too.

Mrs Vasmer and her two daughters lived at Caldecote at Bushey Heath. We called the daughters Miss Irene and Miss Dorothy, and I think it was Miss Irene who said to mum and dad that they couldn't offer a cottage, but they had some stables which were brick-built with a tack room on the side and, if we wanted to stay together, we could use it until Bushey Council could house us. Mum said we would go with them and Mrs Rogers asked if there was room for another family. Miss Irene said yes they could take another family and we went with them in

cars to Caldecote, which was down Elstree Road. There were seven of us in our family and seven with the Rogers family and Tommy Smith.

There was a lodge gate and we went up a drive to a biggish mansion house - well we called it a mansion house. There was a cobbled yard and there were stables the other side. The people who had most to do with us were Miss Irene and Miss Dorothy; there was a little housekeeper there and she used to give us a pie now and again, which was very nice.

I think we stayed there about seven months because we had a Christmas there. Whenever I see a crib at Christmas I think of this because our stable was a proper stable with a manger and Mrs Rogers put her youngest son in there, but he wouldn't stay put. They gave us mattresses on the floor – they gave us what they called paillasses. There were two corner stalls and four open stalls. We were in one corner stall and Mrs Rogers and her family were down the other end which was warmer. Gran stayed in the tack room – she slept on a chair thing. Grandad wasn't with us then. He'd got lost and didn't get on the bus. Aunt Liz found him: I don't know if she found him wandering around or sitting in the house on his own. Anyway she took him hop picking. When he finally came back to us Aunt Liz and Uncle Jim and their two children came too, there were about nineteen of us in the stables. Our name was Knight, Aunt Liz and Uncle Jim's name was Kemp, Gran and Grandad's name was Biggerton and there was also Rogers and Smith all in the stable at Caldecote. Just after Christmas Grandad died of pneumonia in the tack room. He lay on a table with a marble top and Gran had these candles put round it and she sat there night and day for three nights until the undertakers came and took him away and we kids couldn't go into the tack room.

There was a fire or range or something in the tack room and mum and Mrs Rogers, who got on very well, did the cooking for the group. We ate in the tack room. There was a brazier in the middle of the main room.

They really did look after us there, as best they could. A chap came and took some photographs of the poor people, who had got nothing, evacuated and living in a stable at Christmas. They put a Christmas pudding on a table and all the children sat round. Then they

took photographs of us lying on the floor, which is where we used to sleep. We thought it was hilarious, but I can't remember who took the pictures.

We only ever had a basin and a strip wash because we didn't have a bath. Once a week we had a hair wash: it was the girls first, then out came the watering can and then the boys – everybody was in stitches.

We used to help the gatekeeper, as we called him to gather up all the leaves and when the pond froze over he took us on it. We'd never had anything like it. We'd never seen the country and I'd never seen a cow except in a picture. When they came to be milked everyone flew – they frightened the life out of the lot of us because they looked so enormous. Imagine what it was like to a ten-year-old who had never seen one. But we had some fun.

Then Miss Dorothy got married

– none of us kids liked him very
much. He was middle class and wore
jodhpurs and we were lower class.
He used to come round and ask

John Williams V A London

Tony Woollard

ome months ago our good friend Dr Chris Jordan asked me if the Museum would accept a model of the ship John William V. It had been offered to him by the Revd. Geoffrey Farrar on behalf of the Trustees of St Thomas United Reformed Church, Watford. Because of the rebuilding of the church they were looking for a new, appropriate home for it. I was pleased to accept as originally it was displayed at the Bushey Congregational Church (subsequently the now closed United Reformed Church) and it had been renovated by a Mr Williams of Nightingale Road, Bushey.

We have discovered that a Herbert Williams did indeed reside in Nightingale Road around the time we believe the renovation took place, but as he is now deceased we cannot know if he had any relationship to the original Mr Williams after whom the boat was named.

So, who was John Williams? He was an English missionary born in 1796 in north London. In 1816 he was commissioned as a missionary by the London Missionary Society, and a year later he and his wife

sailed to the Society Islands in the South Pacific, which include Tahiti. They established their first mission post on the island of Raiatea and used Tahitian converts to carry their message through the many other islands (all with jungle-covered mountains, coral reefs and turquoise lagoons).

John and Mary returned to England in 1834, bringing with them a mature, Samoan man called Leota, who lived as a Christian in London and was eventually buried under a headstone provided by the London Missionary Society in Abney Park, the non-denominational place of rest.

The Williams returned to the Polynesian area in 1837 and resumed their successful missionary work. In 1839, however, John Williams, together with fellow missionary James Harris, visited a part of the New Hebrides where they were not known, and were killed and eaten by local cannibals.

A memorial to John was erected on the island of Rarotonga. Mary Williams died in 1852, and was buried, like Leota, at Abney Park.

The London Missionary Society went on to operate seven ships in the Pacific, each in turn named John Williams. The original was launched in 1844 and the last commissioned in 1968. Each replacement was

funded, as at Bushey, by children's collections of halfpennies (with the ship on the back). Models of the various ships were evidently an aid to encourage donations, as the Bushey example at one time had an accompanying collecting box. Another model is in the Powerhouse Museum, Sydney, and Radlett synagogue, formerly the URC, has a stained glass window of one of the John Williams ships in sail.

The SS John Williams V was built at Grangemouth in 1930 and was a steel-hulled, three-masted, staysail schooner with an auxiliary engine. It was used throughout WWII to distribute supplies to various islands, but having survived the war, was wrecked on a reef off Samoa in 1948.

The end of John Williams V

John Williams V was sailing on her last voyage in the Society's service when disaster struck her just two days before Christmas Day 1948. After visiting the Gilbert Islands she was making for Apia on Samoa before proceeding to Suva for laying up.

At 3.30pm on 22nd December the Master sighted the island of Savaii, the most westerly of the four main Samoan islands, a mountainous island devoid of roads and surrounded by an angry reef. The

what are you children doing, where are you going, where are the boys going? We felt here comes sourpuss and we used to scatter. Miss Dorothy had a beautiful wedding.

The Council rehoused us the day Miss Dorothy married and we were given a cottage on Highfield Road

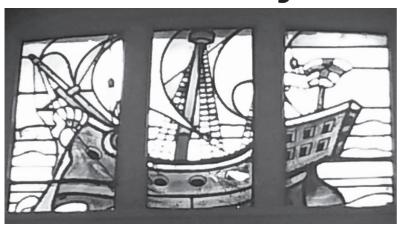
What was it like for us children to be evacuated? I think it was just such a shock that I don't think we took it in properly – it happened so quickly and then it became an adventure to a certain

extent because we had never been anywhere. We'd only ever been in London. Mum and Dad had been through the 1914-18 war. They wanted to keep us together, and they tried to keep everything as normal as possible. Being children we looked at everything as an adventure, something new, something different. It was a new world and we loved the freedom of it, and having our own space after living in such crowded conditions before. We weren't lonely because we were a big family and we were always together.

Notes

- I. The two sisters married two brothers and consequently shared the same
- 2. On 10 September 1940, local residents had taken shelter in the basement of the school when it received a direct hit, and the school was reduced to a pile of rubble. Although the official casualty figure was 77 dead, many years later it was revealed that the figure was much higher, making it the worst civilian tragedy of the war. http://www.eastlondonhistory.co.uk/ second-world-war-bombing-raid-southhallsville-school/
- **3.** Tommy was re-united with his sisters after their photograph appeared in a national newspaper.

Missionary Ship



The window depicting one of the **Iohn Williams**

Master set his course to take the vessel clear of the island by 10 miles. There had been heavy storms in the vicinity in recent days and at 9.30 heavy tropical rain fell blotting out any sight of land. At 1:35am there was a crash as the vessel struck the reef. Although the engines immediately went full astern they were powerless to pull the ship off as the surf had already lifted the ship onto the reef. The waves pounded the vessel causing the seams of the plates to split and let water into the engine room and the water tanks in the ships bottom.

Rockets and wireless distress signals were sent out but there was no one to see them on this isolated coast at 1:50am. As the water was coming in slowly the boats were not launched immediately but by 3:30am

it was clear that the ship was being driven further onto the reef. First the seven passengers and six sailors in charge of the Second

Officer were placed in the surf boat with instructions to stand clear of the reef until daylight. A light was run up on the mast to show the position of the ship, but this soon failed when the rising water in the engine room put the dynamo out of action.

The Master then decided to get the crew away in the lifeboats. This was difficult because of the heavy seas and oil was poured onto the water to moderate the seas. The first lifeboat held six men and another six were placed in the second lifeboat which was launched by Captain Page and Chief Officer Ward, who then had to jump into the sea themselves and swim to the lifeboat which picked them up.

All three boats kept together with their oarsmen keeping them away from the reef. Just before dawn the lights of the Gaualofa

were sighted. This was one of the small boats which plied between the Samoan Islands carrying a few passengers and copra. The Gaualofa took the three boats in tow to near Avao. She was too small to render assistance herself and she took the passengers aboard leaving the boats to make their way to Avao, where there is a small sheltered bay. Early that morning two boats returned to the wreck, where another attempt was made to tow the ship off the reef but this failed. The ship's company and volunteers from Avao then began to salvage the ship's gear; the wireless set, mattresses, binnacle, chronometers, and an anchor – in fact anything they could lay their hands on; floating the booms and wooden gear ashore as a raft. Radio contact had been made with the harbour master at Apia who arrived on the scene to make a final effort to pump water out of the ship and tow her off the reef. It proved to be impossible and the vessel was abandoned as a total loss. A small ketch came into Avao, collected the gear, and took the ship's company to Apia with the three boats in tow.

At Apia the gear was stored in the Harbour Master's shed on behalf of the Receiver of Wrecks, whose property it now was. The officers and men were taken to the L.M.S. College for training pastors at Malua where they were hospitably entertained.

Bushey Grove Apple

Katharine Whitaker

t has been 29 years since Bryen Wood and Alan Pritchard wrote about the Bushey Grove apple, a famous local apple raised from an apple pip by Mrs Good in 1897. Alan Pritchard who was Chairman of the Friends in 1987, wrote in the Newsletter, No. 6 October 1987 that further research had revealed some more information about the apple and the people who were involved but no information on how the apple was marketed by Mr and Mrs Good.

In the last year I have been working with Mr Clive Thornton, great grandson of Mr and Mrs Good to document the history of A Thornton & Son, Carpentry and Joinery Workshop and Suppliers of

amount of paperwork dating back to before the First World War, we came across two new documents about the apple. One an article by Geo. W. King of Sidcup, Kent, who was Mr Good's cousin, and a letter from the Royal Horticultural Society. Both Mr Good and Mr King were Fellows of the Royal Horticultural Society.

On the 31 January 1922, the apple was unanimously voted an Award of Merit by the Fruit Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society and Mr Good received a letter from the secretary, dated (I February 1922,) to tell him of the good news. However, Mr Good had named the apple 'Good's Bushey Grove Apple' and the Fruit Committee recommended '...that a shorter name should be given to the variety as anything as long as "Good's Bushey Grove" would be much against its selling or becoming popular.' (Fig I)

The apple was introduced by Mr King in 1926 and he wrote an article in 1928 espousing its culinary delights to the fruit growing trade. I reproduce the article below which was written for The Fruit Grower magazine, proprietors Benn Brothers Ltd, Bouverie House, London, E.C.4 and must not be confused with the current magazine of the same name which was only begun in 1987.

AN OPEN LETTER from GEO. W. KING, F.R.H.S.

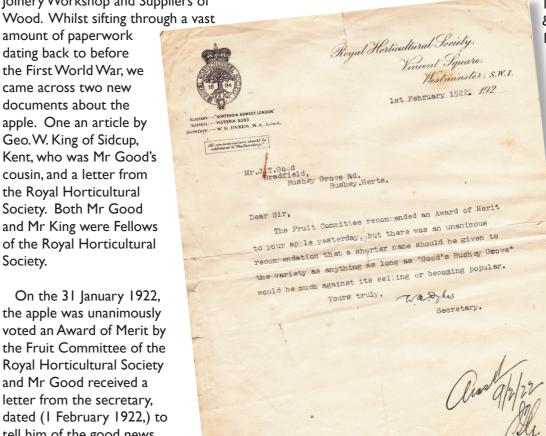
II, Stafford Road, Sidcup, Kent. Nov.1st 1928

> To: The British & Colonial Fruitgrowers.

Gentlemen,

Those of you who saw "Good's B. G. Seedling" at the Imperial Show, Manchester, have seen what has been called the Finest Culinary Apple yet produced. The large Apple weighing | lb. 5/2 ozs. shown on the Stand was a great attraction and just missed securing the Prize for the Largest Apple in the Show. - "Better luck next time."

This is the first time the "B. G." has been shown at a Commercial Show. I am very pleased at the reception it







Mr and Mrs Good with Mr King and granny Good

received and for the trial orders given. The supply of trees is, as yet, very limited. This New Variety was a great attraction to all Horticulturists, especially to scientifically trained gentlemen (and ladies as well) from our various Colleges and Government Departments. I put this question to a great number of callers – "Can you tell me of any variety of apple that can be marketed for 10 months of the year?" The answer was, invariably "No." The "B. G." is an apple that can be marketed in July, August and September when prices are good, and again in March, April and May when most other varieties are finished.

The Six Maidens on view at the Show were a surprise to everyone, "What leaves!" "What veins!" "What a growth for 6 months!" (They were grafted last April on Type 1 and were over 4 feet in Height and were showing prominent Fruit Buds). I told them that the 40 Trees in the Commercial Test at

the R. H. Society Gardens at Wisley showed a much better growth.

The "B. G." is not claimed as a
Desert Apple, but many people including experts — who tasted it at the
Show remarked "That's very fine." It
is the finest Culinary Apple yet raised.
The late Lord Peckover's Head
Gardener said to the raiser a few years
ago, "If all you say about your apple,
Mr Good, is true, we want none other."

The full page illustrations given in the last two weeks of the "Fruit Grower" shewed the parent tree in 1925 when it gave its record crop of 20 bushels of sound commercial fruit, it was then 28 years old. It first cropped in 1910 and

has carried heavy crops each year since that date. A successful exhibitor at the Show remarked that on account of the shape and attractive appearance it was ideal for boxing.

If you were not at the Show and would like to learn more of this Wonderful Apple, drop a postcard to Yours faithfully, G.W. King

Mr Good and Mr King marketed the Bushey Grove apple tree, producing a very colourful flyer, (Fig2) where they describe the apple: 'The fruit is a large, round, culinary apple of excellent keeping and cooking quality. It is pale yellow green, with distinct stripes and blotches of crimson covering fully two-thirds of the surface of the fruit. The flesh is white, juicy and firm. The tree is very vigorous, of upright habit and is a heavy and regular cropper. The fruit is in season Commercially for Ten Months, viz., August to May inclusive.'

When visiting The National Fruit Collection (NFC) at Brogdale, Kent recently, I found that they still have the Bushey Grove apple tree in cultivation and the description given by Mr Good in his flyer is still current as it corresponds with the information on the NFC website page for the BG apple. Hopefully this apple will continue to flourish in Bushey and that this article will encourage members of the community to invest in a tree to keep the vision of Mr Good and Mr King alive for future generations. The BG apple tree is available to purchase from the following Nuseries: Keepers Nursery, www.keepers-nursery.co.uk and Garden Appleid www.gardenappleid.

In this the 150th anniversary year of Bushey Horticultural Society, the continued existence of this locally raised apple ensures its survival as a fitting tribute to all Bushey gardeners who continue to follow the horticultural traditions which still exist amongst our community today.

A Goal to the Heath

Mollie Thomas

ow have you two got something to do?" our mother asked, pulling on her best felt hat and checking her appearance in the mirror at the bottom of the stairs.

"Yes," we said in chorus, and my sister held up her rather sad piece of blue knitting, which was the beginning of a scarf, but might, with luck, become pot holder size by Christmas if she was lucky. I held up my colouring book, and Mum seemed satisfied. We sat either side of the kitchen table."Now be good girls," she said. "You know your Dad likes to listen to the football." "Yes Mum," we said. We knew the routine. Dad was settled in his armchair as near the old wireless set as possible, looking forward to the afternoon's entertainment, especially as his favourite team, Arsenal, was playing. (He would have been proud that a great-grandson continues the family support of The Gunners). Once the match began, a disembodied voice in the background would call out letters and numbers which gave a clue to where the ball was moving on the pitch. We knew we had to be very quiet, and perhaps at half-time Dad would offer us each a sweet from the bag at his side. Nowadays he would be able to watch any game he wanted on television and read the endless reports in the press. But this was the 1930s. The little old wireless worked off a battery and something called an accumulator which contained acid, and which had to be recharged every few days at Smiths the ironmongers. The Smiths had a big Labrador guard dog called Bruno who barked at everyone. Recharging the wireless cost about tuppence



Mollie aged 9 at Merry Hill

(less than Ip) and woe betide you if you spilt any of the liquid on your clothes as you carried it back home from the shop. But for now it was enough, and Dad got his precious football.

"Will you see if you can get the evening sports paper." Dad reminded Mum. "Of course I will" she said. She knew how much he enjoyed reading about the men lucky enough to play the game at which he had shown such promise before suffering a leg wound serving in Italy during the Great War. He suffered much pain, particularly in very cold weather; and it was difficult to see how he managed all the miles cycling to and from work, and gardening on his allotment on Windmill Lane. In later years he would ruefully remark that the only sport he could now enjoy playing was darts, which he played at The Foresters' Arms on The Heath. Those chaps may not

have been physically 'with it' anymore, but their mental arithmetic was fantastic. Incidentally, when Dad died at a tragically early age in 1944 we found among his things, which were mostly military memorabilia, an old football shirt with BUSHEY HEATHENS printed across the back. Then it was kisses all round before Mum scurried off down the lane to catch the 142 bus to Watford. She always scurried, like a little brown hen in a hurry.

Have you never been called, "Dirty old Oxford" or "Dirty old Cambridge"? Then you haven't enjoyed the excitement of the **University Boat Race.** It was a springtime event which we looked forward to for weeks before it happened. Most of us probably had



Mollie Thomas (Norcutt) with Dad Arthur Norcutt and sister Eunice, outside 2 Orchard Close, The Rutts, Bushey Heath, before her christening in 1927.



Thought to be a Watford Girls' Grammar School gala at Bushey open air pool 1934 or 1935.

no idea what Oxford or Cambridge were, but we wore our favours with pride, light blue for Cambridge and dark blue for Oxford. For a penny or two you could buy perhaps just a small flag or similar sign of your loyalty, but the most prized were small celluloid dolls dressed in feathers of the colour you favoured and fastened to your clothes with a safety pin. We were even allowed to wear then in school! Perhaps they did not last very long, certainly not as long as your loyalty, but on the day of the Boat Race at high tide on the River Thames, who would not crouch close to the wireless to listen to the words, 'In, out, in, out' as the two crews fought their watery battle. And then, all too soon, it was over for another year. You might be lucky enough to see it on the Newsreel at the cinema, - sorry, pictures! And most newspapers would have a black and white photograph, but the excitement was over.

Tennis we saw as a game for the wealthy, and we associated it with white dresses or shorts and socks, and special tennis shoes, and the sound of tennis balls being hit, and cries of joy or despair as the favoured few scampered about their court, usually grass, but sometimes a hard surface with carefully traced lines which seemed to mean, 'in' or 'out.' A large house in The Rutts had its own lawn tennis court - they had a fish pond too! We would peer through the hedge until the imperious wave of a bat, -. sorry, racquet! - told us to go away. The name of Wimbledon meant very little to us though we realised this, too, was something special, and you probably had to be an American or Australian to be any good at it. The King, George VI, was said to be a good player, though there was also a chap called Fred Perry who caused quite a stir! How strange that so many games which could only be heard and not seen by the wider public in those days should have caught our imagination.

Later, Bushey had its own tennis courts and for a very modest sum we could go and pretend we were Wimbledon stars. On moving to the Grammar and Central School, we were initiated into the mysteries of the game, but I will confess that one of our favourite tricks was to hit the ball over the wall into the road near

Ladies Close, then spend the rest of the lesson looking for it – much more fun.

Swimming was associated with the seaside, probably Southend, noted for its mud. My greatest achievement, aged three, was to lose a brand new pair of orange socks and get all my clothes so wet that Mum had to buy a sixpenny (2.5p) bathing costume for me to come home in. No such problems at Bushey Swimming Pool! The memory of it makes me shiver as it had no heating in its early days. On a Monday morning, Miss Judd would take some of us from the top class of Merry Hill School for our weekly swimming lesson. Maybe some learned to swim but I never did, but I would not have missed those weekly lessons for anything, and the pool was a favourite place during the school's summer holidays. During the Second World War it was very popular especially with service personnel who were keen to show us paddlers how it was really done. During the war Watford's very superior baths were closed, so I was spared the misery of a weekly compulsory school trip up through

the town and a day with wet hair and damp clothes.

Another sport, which service personnel demonstrated to us, was **Hockey.** Conditioned by a diet of soppy schoolgirl stories, my great aim was to play hockey for the House if not for Watford Girls' Grammar School. This I achieved and I loved the game despite the damage it did to my shins. No-one wore safety pads in those days. But when I saw those beefy airmen and airwomen playing hockey on Stanmore Common, apparently breaking all the rules, I realised it truly was a different ball-game.

We were more accustomed to seeing Cricket played on Stanmore Common, especially when we went out for the Summer Sunday evening walk, so common in those days. I thought it an incredibly boring game, but there was always the hope of getting a penny icecream from the refreshment hut. On one occasion, while sitting on the boundary benches I asked why a player was wearing a silly pink hat. A chorus of local disapproval and 'hushes' showed me I had said the wrong thing, and I had an early lesson in the significance of sports kit and that it was best for me to keep my comments to myself. We liked it when some of the players came round with an old bat with its inside hollowed out so that we could put a penny or more into the collection slot. Funnily enough, I found this ploy still in use in recent years attending a County Match. It was far more imaginative than the usual plastic bucket shaken under your nose.

There is another 'sport' we could connect with the Heath, - **Highway Robbery!** I can recall

being taken as a young child on a walk down Hartsbourne and asking about a most unusual cottage. I was told it was once the home of Dick Turpin, the infamous highway robber, and that the statue above the

porch was of his dog. It seems that the Heath and Stanmore Common were notorious for highway robberies, and Dick Turpin and his horse, Black Bess, were greatly feared in the area. Was there a touch of local pride and a feeling that no-one took liberties with the Heath? In later years, I was told that if you felt you had been overcharged in a local shop, you should mutter: "Dick Turpin rides again!"

Boats: living so far from the sea we had little experience of these wayward temperamental things, beguiling though pictures of them might appear, e.g. the building and launch of the first Queen Mary. The nearest we got to them was on a day trip on Kirby's Coaches either to Southend or Shoeburyness, and that didn't allow much scope for nautical adventures. Quite frankly, boats scared me, and I hated our walks to Cassiobury Park where we watched sturdy narrow boats carrying cargo negotiate those terrifying locks. It gave me nightmares. Not that the canal boat people were anything but friendly. On one memorable trip to the seaside my mother persuaded me that a voyage in a boat with room for about 10 passengers was the perfect complement to a lovely sunny day. "All aboard the Skylark!" shouted the bearded skipper as he collected our money. Well we weren't far from the shore when the boat's engine gave an asthmatic cough and stopped. "Oh dear, my worst fears," muttered my mother as I sat there expecting the worst. The skipper assured us we were in no danger but I was terrified and have never trusted boats ever since. Once safe back on shore, a stick of pink peppermint rock was hardly recompense for such an ordeal.

Skiing and ice skating,

were two other sports, which like tennis, we felt belonged to other people. But on a really frosty snowy morning we could not wait to set up a long and potentially hazardous slide down the sloping playground at Merry Hill School. The teacher on duty watched, whistle in hand and heart in mouth, as we raced and skidded down towards the adjoining garden wall. As we trooped back into school puffing and blowing and being exhorted to, "Wipe your feet," we promised each other what we would do at playtime, but by then the slide had turned to mushy wet snow. As we patted it disconsolately with our soaked footwear it was no wonder so many of us had chilblains. Only softies wore Wellington boots. A long lasting frost was another matter. Once we knew Spring Ponds adjacent to Stanmore Common were frozen over, we could not wait to go and see for ourselves. Few ventured onto the ice, fearing it would not bear our weight, but we watched the fully equipped ice skaters whirl and turn on the ice, risking life and limb and a cold watery grave. Strangely enough we never trusted the ice on Elstree Reservoir. During the war, the water was covered with wooden planks to prevent enemy flying boats landing. Snow was fun, but ice was a hazard to be treated with respect on the local hills, Clay, Chalk and Stanmore. We always felt particular pity for the Benskin's Brewery horses, which everyone loved, as we watched their grooms guide them up from Watford. It was around this time that the Norwegian Olympic champion figure skater, Sonja Henie, came onto the scene in a series of very popular feature films and newsreels. It was years before such exhibition and competition ice skating were widespread and it all seemed a world away from Bushey Heath.

Sooner or later, most of us have to leave home, and when I went away to college I took with me both there, and into my chosen profession, those values which I had learned in Bushey Heath from the people I knew and the other children I has played with. The values of fair play, fun, and developing the courage to 'have a go.'

The Locked Shed



Robert Norman

his photograph is of an ordinary windowless shed. An ordinary windowless shed however with a bit of history.

It was built next to the old gas showroom on the High Street* and was used by gas fitters as both a depot and a workshop. There they would repair cookers, gas fires and indeed most gas appliances you can name and some I'll bet you can't.

I first set eyes on the shed in 1957 when I was employed by the Eastern Gas Board as an apprentice based at the gas works on Lower High Street. I would cycle round Watford with a fitter from either my own base, or one from Bushey, while learning my trade. In fact all the fitters used push bikes in those days. All that is except the foreman who had the use of a little Ford 8 canvasroofed van.

However, soon after I joined the Gas Board, the Bushey depot was

closed down and all the fitters then worked out of Watford. All that is except Len, who was 'Gas Street Lighter Man'. There were a number of roads in and around Watford that were still lit by gas; Heathfield Road, Woodlands Avenue, Belmont, Silverdale and Aldenham Roads were some that come to mind. Len used the windowless shed to store the materials he needed for his work. This would include mantles, Hosman 14 day clocks (the street lights were regulated by these) etc as well as his bicycle which was specially modified for carrying his ladder.

The story goes around that the foreman would become very angry

with Len because he could never find him. He could tell that sometimes the lights were not being attended to as they would be coming on in the middle of the day which indicated that the clocks were not being wound.

However, about a year later, the Aldenham Road lights were switched to electric. The now very happy foreman locked up the windowless shed and kept the key. He then told us that Len had lost his job and gone home. Len was never seen again and I believe that the windowless shed has never been opened again. A coincidence? Probably but I'm sure you'll agree, the mysterious shed is perhaps not quite so ordinary.

If anyone gets permission to gain entry to this shed I would like to be present. Who knows what might be in there.

* Now William Hill



Bushey High Street showing the entry way to the shed.

Down Your Street

Herkomer Road has been transformed from Back Lane into a Mini Bypass

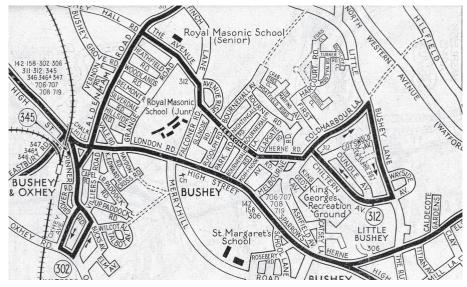
This article is reproduced from a report by David Cutler published in the Watford Observer dated 18th September 1970. The cutting was discovered by Ian Read amongst the Museum's photo image collection and the accompanying images are from that collection.

ich man, poor man, beggar man....doctors, artists, builders, labourers, road sweepers.....we have had them all in Herkomer Road, and still have residents coming from a remarkably wide range of walks of life.

It will be deduced from the "we" that this well-known Bushey 'back street' running more or less parallel to the High Street provides me with my place of abode, and has done for the past 14 years. But my memory of it goes back some 40 years (i.e. to the 1930s) - to the days when, as a youngster living in Oxhey, I frequently used it as a quiet, pleasant, traffic-free route for a cycle ride to Bushey's swimming bath (in the Recreation Ground).

In those days it also led one to Lululaund, in Melbourne Road, which was a magnificent replica of a medieval German castle and one-time home of Sir Hubert Herkomer, whose name Herkomer Road perpetuates. Sir Hubert was, of course, the man who made the greatest contribution to Bushey's fame as a centre of art.

But Herkomer Road was not always so named and, if and when the local authority carries out its long-standing intention to bring Ashfield Avenue right through to Coldharbour Lane at a point near the Melbourne Road-Herkomer



Map showing proposed conversion of Ashfield Avenue

Road junction, it will, in fact, be turning back the pages of history. For in days long past Herkomer Road, then called Back Lane, continued in a more a less straight course, joining what is now Catsey Lane to the High Road in Sparrows Herne.

Back Lane was one of only three roads in the village, the other two being High Street and Grove Lane (now Falconer Road, in which Grove Cottages still remain).

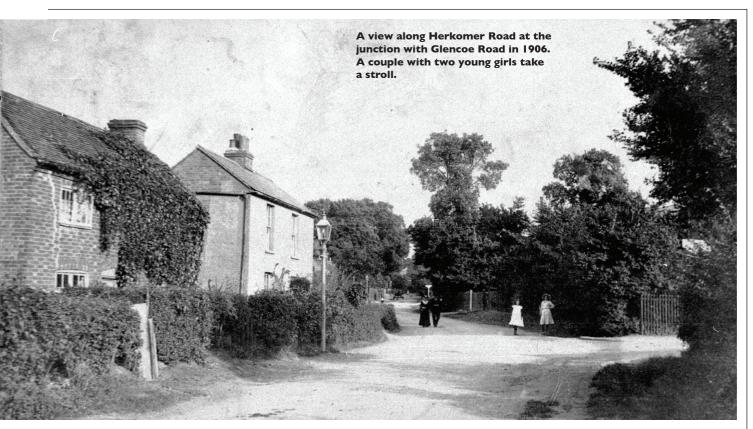
And in Back Lane was situated the old Manor Pound (for impounding stray cattle!) a small part of which can still be seen in the form of a recess in the brick wall on the south side of the road

immediately opposite Bournehall Lane. It was about 33ft. long and 191/2ft. wide and protruded some way into the road. It was purchased in 1898 by subscriptions collected by the surveyor, a Mr. Lay Renton. But as residents know only too well, Herkomer Road today, though still somewhat winding, is far from a quiet back lane.

The advent of Watford's oneway system saw the channeling of more traffic into Water Lane, with the result that Herkomer Road has become more of a mini bypass, and some people are apprehensive as to whether the highway improvement and one-way scheme, which Bushey Council has in the pipeline for



Black Cottage was situated on the corner of Herkomer Road and Bournehall Avenue.





The exterior of **Bournemead viewed** from Herkomer Road around the time the house was being used to accommodate St Hilda's School.

the roads linking Herkomer Road with the High Street will bring the greater degree of safety at which they are aiming.

Plans include improvements to various junctions (making for easier turning), straightening and provision of a south-side footpath between Koh-i-Noor Avenue and Bournehall Road and straightening and provision of a north-side footpath between Falconer Road and Glencoe Road.

Probably one of the earliest of the larger houses to be built was Bournemead, premises at one time used as St. Hilda's School. Today it is the home of Lady Marjorie Stopford, a very well-known figure in local guiding circles.

Lady Marjorie was formerly Bushey District Guide Commissioner and South Herts Division Commissioner. Now,

she presides over the South Herts Liaison Committee of the Duke of Edinburgh Award scheme, and is advisor to Hertfordshire guides on the Duke's award scheme. The daughter of an Earl of Courtown, she came to Bushey from Ireland in 1934 and moved into Bournemead from Chiltern Avenue just after the war. 2

Almost opposite, on the corner of Herne Road, is Crossways, a house of charm and character built for the late Dr. R. C. B. "Clem" Ramsay, a medical practitioner in the village for 36 years. Today it is the home of Mr. Peter Thackery, a well-known member of the local Conservative Party who, last year, was chairman of St. James (Bushey)

Branch of the South-West Herts Conservative Association.

The somewhat tree-hidden house in which I live, and which is apparently of no further significant local historical interest, is called Shaldon Cottage – or, rather was, until someone stole the name off the front gate.

It is situated at the junction with Nightingale Road, but I have found that the simplest way to pin-point it is to tell people: "We're next door to the Faithfulls." Mrs. P. E. Faithfull has been associated with Bushey all her life and since 1937 has lived at The Nutshell - one of several Herkomer Road houses designed by her architect father, the late James Sefton Harwood, who lived in Grange Road. Mr. Sefton Harwood was a great early motoring enthusiast and was the first honorary secretary of the Herts Automobile and Aero Club. Mrs. Faithfull treasures childhood memories of outings with her mother and sister in her father's Lagonda tricar – a vehicle in which passengers sat in basket seats in front of the driver who rode in a saddle. Both Mrs. Faithfull and



The Bliss family. LtoR Martin, Margot, Kathy, Bill and Andrew

Nightingale Road, is a well-known soprano who has taken leads in many Watford Operatic Society productions.

Mr. Ian Faithfull was for 20 years captain of Colne Valley Cricket Club and has played for Bushey Cricket Club. In the 1930's his late father captained the second XI. One has only to nip next door in the other direction from my house to meet the "reigning" President of Bushey Cricket Club, Mr. William Bliss and his family. "Bill" Bliss, as he is best known locally, has been about everything there is to be and done about everything there is to do for Bushey Cricket Club. His two sons both play for the club the elder, Andrew, being the present vice-captain. And, of course, Mrs. Margot Bliss and daughter, Kathryn, are often in the local limelight in connection with youth and amateur theatrical work.3

Immediately opposite this row of semi-detached properties are the Reveley Almshouses situated on the corner of Park Road. Here over the years, through the bequest of the late George Johnson Reveley, a number of Bushey's elderly widows and spinsters have spent the twilight years of their lives in the seclusion of their own single-storey terraced homes, but with a warden on call to help with fires and shopping and in case of emergency. George Johnson Reveley lived at a house

called Reveley Lodge in Elstree Road. He died in 1877, and left in his will £1.500 for the erection of 10 almshouses and £10,000 to provide for ever their repair and maintenance. Unfortunately, a legal dispute arose probably due to the fact that Mr. Reveley died soon after making his will, and the £1,500 beguest was nullified. However, two citizens of Bushey, Mr. George Lake of Bushey House, and Mr. John Middleton, the postmaster, collected the necessary money from parishioners and purchased the site where the houses were built in 1883 for a total of £1,760. The almshouses are managed by a board of trustees and the occupants are elected by secret ballot following the advertisement of a vacancy and the receipt of applications. Under the bequest applicants must be bone fide residents of the district, over the age of 60, and of good character. There is accommodation for 10 persons, but one is occupied by Mrs. F. C. Brainsgrove, who has been warden for nearly two years. Eldest resident and still remarkably active for her years, Mrs. Gertrude Marjory Perkins is in her 90th year. She has occupied No. 6 for the past 13 years. For some years Mrs. Perkins was in service working as a cook in Hempstead Road, Watford, for the late Mrs. Kate Freeman whose name will long be associated

'Aunt Hen' (Mrs E Hannell) bicycles along Herkomer Road in about 1925.

with the Save the Children Fund and Watford's United Charities Bazaar. But when the last war broke out Mrs. Perkins was employed as an office cleaner at the RAF Fighter Command Headquarters, Bentley Priory, and was one of those picked out to work in the highly secret underground operations rooms. "We had to take an oath on the Bible that we would never describe or discuss anything we saw or heard down there", she recalls.

They say you can't make a silk purse out of a sow's ear. Well there is, living in Herkomer Road, one man who can, and, in my opinion, has confounded the theory. And few who have seen the transformation that has gradually taken place at No. 139 since Mr. Victor Snowball moved in nearly three years ago will disagree. When Mr. Snowball took it over, the property was an ordinary cottage dwelling with a dilapidated stable at the rear. At one time it had been used by a local haulage contractor. Today the residence is approached through a smart carport (formerly the stable entrance) leading to a Regency-style porch. The inside has been completely ripped out and reconstructed in open plan to provide a modern studio-type property. All the work has been carried out by Mr. Snowball and



one helper. There is, he tells me, still much to be done before his plans for the property are complete, but this work must take second place to his professional commitments as a design consultant, and thereby, of course, hangs the secret of Mr. Snowball's remarkable "homework". An international exhibition designer, Mr. Snowball has also been responsible for many shops and the interior of large public buildings. He is a Tynesider, but has spent many years in Devon.

Herkomer Road has, of course, had its share of artists but the majority of houses with "built-in" studio facilities have long since disappeared. There is, however, an exception - the spacious studiohome of sculptor, Mr. George Stephenson and his wife. Their premises at No. 101, formerly used by a pupil of Herkomer, were acquired by Mr. Stephenson in 1950. A descendant of the famous British engineer, Mr. Stephenson is an Associate of the Royal College of Art, and was, until his retirement in 1963, craftsmaster at University College School. Recent work undertaken by Mr. Stephenson and his wife in their artistic interests are the replacement ornamental oak border carving for the Guildhall, and a giant 10 new penny piece in metallised plaster which formed the centrepiece of the Metal Box Company's stand at a recent exhibition at Olympia.

- I. Never completed, but shown as such on local street maps and in London Transport timetable booklets from the 1950s on.
- 2. Lady Marjorie (1904–1996) lived at Bournmead with her companion, Miss Florrie Cobb until her death. Bournemead was sold for redevelopment after Cobby died in 2003. The new 'town houses and flats' were put on the market in late 2006 (see Journal Winter 2005-6 p14).
- 3. Margot Bliss 1919-2003; Bill Bliss 1923-2006. Bill was educated at Watford Grammar School and became a sub-lieutenant in the Royal Navy on Arctic convoy duties during the Second World War. He met Margot whilst both were in service, she in the WRNS.

Feedback

The last issue brought back memories for Derek Fowers

I read with interest the article about today's Jewish Community in Bushey. I lived with my parents and two sisters at 2 Bushey Grange Farm Cottages (Hedges Farm), the other side of Little Bushey Lane from where the first synagogue* and caretaker's cottage were built. I wrote an article about the farm which was published in the Winter 2004/5 Journal. I notice the new synagogue is now further along Little Bushey Lane to where Burnt Farm house and barn were. The barn had a trap door in the top so that produce from Burnt Farm could be loaded into carts standing in Little Bushey Lane.

There were a few cottage between the barn and Sandy Lane. There was also an orchard on the other side to the barn. From Burnt Farm towards Aldenham Road there were some gypsy caravans. My sister was friendly with a girl from one of them.

I also saw the article about the buses. I used to walk from the cottages down Little Bushey Lane past Farmer Hedges' house, past the cowsheds to catch a 311 bus to go to school. I attended Oxhey, Ashfield and London Road (Bushey Manor) Schools.

*The building was a prayer hall not a synagogue.

**For further information about this farm see an article by John Storey in the Autumn 2003 issue of the Journal.

Andrew Thomas supplied additional information about Frank Chester

In the last issue of the Journal there was an article about Sporting Bushey, which included a piece about Frank Chester. Andrew Thomas, son of Mollie Thomas, who also contributes to the Journal, contacted me as, by coincidence, he had recently written the history of Worcestershire County Cricket Club. Andrew kindly sent me additional information and some extracts from Frank Chester's autobiography How's that' written shortly before he died. In the knickerbocker era at the turn of the century I learned to bat and bowl among the Hertfordshire hedgerows in the cricket conscious village of Bushey - my birthplace, my haven in

retirement. At the age of 12 I scored 165 in a junior match against a bigger and

older team from Watford. A year later I topped Bushey's averages and in three years I was on the

Worcestershire ground staff. What excitement for a frail, slender lad of sixteen! Thank heaven there was no hint of the heartbreak ahead.

I had been spotted playing for Bushey by Alec Herne, who was there to coach Geoffrey Cuthbertson, later to play for Middlesex and Northamptonshire.*

Frank Chester played for Worcestershire for three seasons before serving in the Great War and losing his right arm in Salonika in July 1917. Invalided out of the army, he found life difficult.

The year 1919 was a difficult one with a small pension my only income. I tried playing cricket with a hook at the end of my false arm and remember seeing Gilbert Jessop, in match at Bushey, going to the wicket with his left arm in a sling and slamming the first five balls one-handed to the boundary.

During the winter I did some refereeing and recall having to send off three players in a cup-tie at Hemel Hempstead. **

He also gained experience as a cricket umpire in matches involving Hertfordshire Club and Ground and Hertfordshire Gentlemen before following the advice of Sir Pelham Warner, and becoming the youngest umpire to stand in the County Championship.

Frank Chester did not return to Worcester between 1914 and May 1948, when umpires were finally allowed to stand in matches involving their old playing county. Although well received he only umpired in the one match at New Road where he met the young son of his landlady of 34 years before

* Geoffrey Cuthbertson also featured briefly in Sporting Bushey **Another coincidence – he refereed matches involving Ashfield School see p. 20

And an apology

Unfortunately Katharine Whitaker's Christian name was misspelt on the front cover and in the article about Edgar Fulks and the Toc H in Bushey the last mention of his name was accidentally changed to Edward – sorry!

Ashfield School Football Teams 60 years apart



Ashfield 1919-20 Back row: Frank Chester (referee), Mark Thatcher, Arthur Thatcher, Bob Gear, Len Shepherd, Teddy Jacks, Harry Cobb, Charlie Cobb, 'Pedlar' Palmer Front row: Ken Hall, Percy Cobb, Fred Cobb, Ted Archer, Gilbert Wells



Ashfield 1979

Back Row; Oliver Butler, Marco Martin, Anthony Goodall, Jason Read, Robert Murphy, Matthew Reed-Smith, Stephen Whitbread, **Angus Sipthorpe** Front Row: John Walker, Jason Goodall, Darren Ford, Nicky Blake, David Smith, Stephen Hipkin

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