

The Journal of the Friends of Bushey Museum

New Series No. 5 Winter 2004/5

FRIENDS OF BUSHEY MUSEUM



A registered charity in support of
Bushey Museum
Registered Charity 1039713

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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 Bushey Museum and can be contacted via

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Printed by Shiremoor Press
Newcastle-upon-Tyne

Welcome to the latest edition of the Friends of Bushey Museum's *Journal*, a little later than was planned, largely because the editor has been suffering from the attentions of builders.

Particularly pleasing in this issue is the article about the Bushey Woodcraft Folk by one of our younger readers. I hope this will encourage others to put pen to paper about the more recent history of Bushey.

I am also grateful to the people who allow

articles about Bushey or Bushey personalities, which have been published elsewhere, to be included in the *Journal*.

Bryen Wood found photographs from the Museum's collection to illustrate the articles and Michael Pritchard undertook the technical side of the production. My thanks go to Bryen, Michael and all the contributors, without you the *Journal* would not exist.

Janet Murphy

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Bushey Woodcraft Folk

Laura Craig Gray

Every Friday night between 1979 and 1983, my two brothers and I went along to Woodcraft Folk's Bushey branch. My enduring memory is of playing some fantastic games: wink murder, British Bulldog (all the more exciting because it was banned at my junior school on the grounds that it was too dangerous), and a contest that involved linking arms and getting one another to kick over a milk bottle. Fan-dabby-dozey, as I would have said at the time.

Every so often we would go on little excursions at the weekends, piled into other people's parents' Renault Fours, or -, if it was a big trip - a coach. En route, we'd sing hippy folk songs - *Where Have All the Flowers Gone?* and *If I Had a Hammer*. These journeys were totally different from school trips. My classmates all seemed to be Brownies or Cubs and I vividly remember gold-fishing to their unfamiliar songs - *Ging Gang Gooli* and *My Hat, It Has Three Corners*. My fellow pupils responded with sneering incomprehension, when I feebly tried to rise a chorus of that old Woodcraft Folk favourite - *We Shall Overcome*.

The food we shared on coach trips was different too. On school excursions, you could generally rely on blagging a Monster Munch or two, or even a dab of someone's sherbet fountain. But with the Woodcraft Folk, other people's packed lunches always seemed to be the same as mine - carrot sticks, home-made parkin and a Quaker Harvest Crunch Bar.

I went on two Woodcraft Folk camping trips. One, to nearby Sarratt, was a complete wash-out. Within three hours of arriving, we'd retreated to the local church hall to play British Bulldog and to wait for all the parents to take us home again (Baden-

Powell's disdain for the 'tenderfoot' didn't really apply to the Woodcraft Folk). The other camping trip lasted a couple of nights. The food, as I recall, was rather strange. It was there that I had my first and, I hope, last encounter with a rissole. Clearly some kids were eager to get the taste out of their mouths: my brother Simon vows to this day that he saw one of his tent-mates consume an entire tube of Colgate Blue Minty Gel during the rest hour after lunch.

On the same camping trip, I took part in a three-legged race that got slightly out of hand. My partner Kate and I couldn't untie the rope around our legs. When one of the Venturers tried to burn it off with a cigarette lighter, Kate became terrified that it would set fire to her jeans. Screaming, she tried to run away across the field, dragging me with her. At times like that, I secretly wished I was in the Scouts, where I'd have been sure to have learned how to tie a spliced reef hitch, or whatever knot is best suited to three-legged-race situations.

The closest that we in the Woodcraft Folk came to learning such useful skills was the night that we

the big CND (Campaign for Nuclear Disarmament) march in London. They seemed quite impressed that their eight-year-old knew what the CND stood for. After a few questions to ascertain my grasp of concepts such as the Cold War and the international

'the Bushey branch of the Woodcraft Folk was run on particularly radical lines'

arms race, my Dad said he'd dig out his 1960s CND badge and join me. Looking back, I think I had a remarkably thorough understanding of the issues involved and I am certain that the decision to take part was entirely mine. Having said that, a day out in London with my Dad all to myself was quite a treat.

I loved the sense of occasion: we travelled in a convoy of double decker buses from Watford Junction, banners streaming from the windows, the drivers sounding their horns as they passed similarly decorated cars and the coaches on the M1. I particularly liked the fact that - for the purposes of the bus-fare - I was not regarded as a 'child' but as someone who was 'unwaged'.

The demo itself was also incredibly exciting: there was



Woodcraft Folk

were taught how to wrap a parcel securely. This involved tying layers of newspaper around old hairbrushes and bits of crockery from the jumble box, and then chucking the parcels around violently. After this simulation of the supposed rough treatment meted out by the Royal Mail, we'd open the packages and check for breakages.

I also went on several day excursions with Woodcraft Folk friends. One Easter, I vividly recall coming back from a Friday evening meeting and asking my parents if I could go on

chanting and singing and street stalls selling stickers, badges and hilarious Ronald Reagan face masks. Oakey, as the woman who ran my branch of the Woodcraft Folk was known, was the daughter of the veteran peace campaigner, Lord Fenner Brockway (or 'Fennel Broccoli' as I thought of him). One year she arranged for my Dad and I to gain admittance to the VIP marquee during the rally in Hyde Park. I found this rather boring but, for years afterwards, my Dad delighted in telling anyone who would listen how

I'd shaken hands with Michael Foot.

Another Woodcraft Folk outing was the annual gathering of the region's branches at a huge leisure centre in Luton. It was on these occasions that I became aware that Bushey Woodcraft Folk were a unique breed (not something eight-year-olds generally aspire to). Bushey is comfortable commuterville - an overgrown village on Hertfordshire's Green Belt with more than its fair share of antique shops and estate agents. It's probably not the first place you'd look if you were after a hot-bed of international socialism.

Looking back however, the Bushey branch of the Woodcraft Folk was run on particularly radical lines. For a start, Oakey clearly didn't believe in the uniform. The only shirts available in our branch were frayed and faded second-hand ones, and most of us just wore any old T-shirt. At Luton, the other children wore crisp, dark green shirts, the sleeves barely visible beneath layers of badges. None of us had more than one badge each: Oakey, I suspect, didn't believe in them.

Luton wasn't simply an opportunity for playing massed British Bulldog, there was competitive singing, country dancing and drama too. Groups from places such as Hemel Hempstead had clearly rehearsed Strip the Willow for months on end but Oakey was less enthusiastic. We learnt the basic steps in 10 minutes the night before and didn't get around to rehearsing our song until the coach journey there. I was fiercely ambitious (the sort of girl who was asked to sit-out musical bumps at birthday parties to give the other children a chance). But year after year, we returned from Luton to Bushey without a trophy to our name. The certificates we got for participating just rubbed it in.

Notes

This article first appeared in *The Independent*, 20 November 1999.

The activities of the Woodcraft Folk include games, drama, craftwork and music and are based on the principles of co-operation, peace, understanding and international friendship. Members are encouraged to take part in community events and overseas exchanges.

Elstree Aerodrome and Lysander Westland Aircraft Dennis Evans MBE

An item in the Autumn 2000 *Journal* mentioned Lysander aircraft flying from Elstree Aerodrome during WW2. The background to this activity was the formation of the Civilian Repair Organization (CRO), set up by Lord Nuffield in 1940, to co-ordinate the repair, rebuilding and conversion of operational aircraft for the Royal Air Force.

Civilian aerodromes in the United Kingdom were involved, Elstree Aerodrome being one of them. A civilian aeronautical company was contracted by the CRO and the Ministry of Aircraft Production. The Westland Lysander, Vickers Wellington, Hawker Hart, Bristol Blenheim and various military training aircraft were flown to Elstree by pilots of the Air Transport Auxiliary (ATA). After servicing or repair the aircraft would be test flown by RAF or civilian test pilots before being flown to RAF squadrons by ATA pilots.

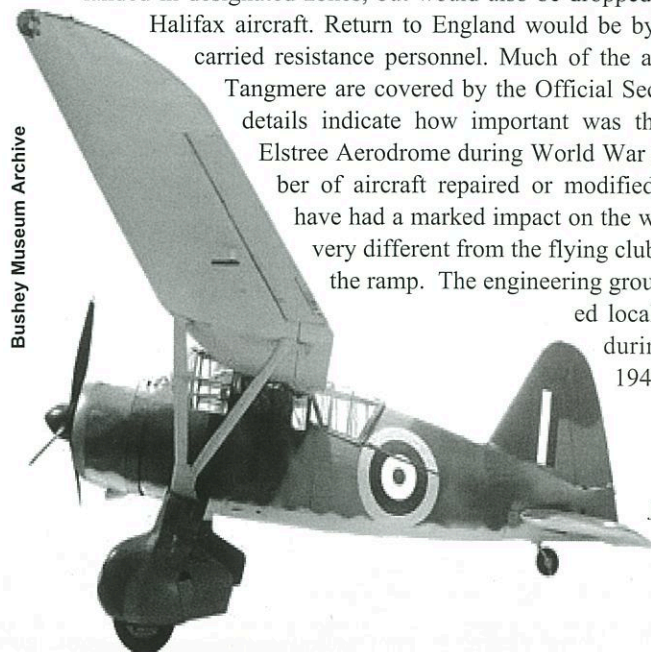
During test flights from Elstree Aerodrome the Lysander aircraft was occasionally used by locally based Ack-Ack units for range finding exercises and the short landing capability of this type checked by 'touch and go' manoeuvres along local meadows and golf fairways.

About one thousand Lysander aircraft were repaired or modified at Elstree Aerodrome during World War 2 - quite a record. Included in that total was a small number of special Lysander aircraft which were converted for use by the air arm of the Special Operations Executive (SOE). Under great secrecy these aircraft were fitted with higher powered engines, long range fuel tanks and the removal of some cabin equipment so as to accommodate two/three passengers and their luggage.

These special aircraft were flown by ATA pilots to secret locations, which are now known to be the RAF stations at Tempsford (St Neots) and Tangmere (Chichester), where the Lysanders joined Handley Page Halifax and Lockheed Hudson squadrons. I was involved for a time at Tempsford Aerodrome with operations which included clandestine dropping of supplies and agents to various areas in occupied Europe.

A manor house near St Neots, previously requisitioned by the War Office, was converted for the briefing of agents, operational crews, administration, messing and the preparation of supply containers. These containers were designed for low level air drop without parachute. Supplies varied but included radios, arms, ordnance, forged documents, food, clothing, medical supplies and batteries.

All movement to and from the manor house would be at night. Flight operations were planned around full moon periods. Agents normally flew in the Lysander to be landed in designated zones, but would also be dropped by parachute from the Halifax aircraft. Return to England would be by Lysander, which also carried resistance personnel. Much of the activities at Tempsford, Tangmere are covered by the Official Secrets Act but the above details indicate how important was the work undertaken at Elstree Aerodrome during World War 2. The very large number of aircraft repaired or modified for operations would have had a marked impact on the war in many theatres; so very different from the flying club and private aircraft on the ramp. The engineering ground force, many recruited locally, worked long shifts during the period April 1941 to September 1945.



This is an extract from a book, Eight Million Miles, which is in preparation.

A Westland Lysander

Sparrows Herne Hall

Sue Matoff

Sparrows Herne Hall was built around 1730 and was at that time called Laurel Lodge. An earlier house known as Sparrows was the home of Dame Elizabeth Fuller, a well-known local philanthropist.

The estate surrounding Laurel Lodge was combined from smaller tenancies owned by the Manor of Bushey in the late eighteenth century. Five of these parcels of land are described in the Bushey Quit Rent Roll of 1792 and again in Manorial Records as the property of Sarah Isherwood, who became tenant in June 1788. Isherwood was granted a licence to enclose part of the High Road leading out of the turnpike at Sparrows Herne on 21 December 1791.*

When Sarah died in 1820, subsequent owners of Laurel Lodge were Christiana, her sister, then her brother Richard and finally Mary, wife of another brother, George, who was trustee of Mary's will. Mary's death in 1839 set off a complicated train of events, culminating in a Chancery action which divided the family for many years.

During the whole period of the Chancery action, 1827-1879, Laurel Lodge was let out to a number of different occupiers. The earliest known was in 1833, Stewart Marjoribanks, MP for Hythe and later owner of Bushey Grove House; he was one of the three original Trustees of Bushey British School and contributed generously to its building fund.

By 1840 the Tithe Map lists Henry Barkly as the tenant of a Mansion and Pleasure Grounds of over six acres, with the owner, George Isherwood, having a further sixteen acres of various surrounding meadow lands. Barkly became MP for Leominster and in 1845 moved away from Bushey. In his subsequent diplomatic career, he became Governor of British Guiana, Jamaica, Victoria, Mauritius and the Cape of Good Hope.

The next tenant moved in around 1845. This was Kirkman Daniel Hodgson who, like his predecessors Dame Fuller and Stewart Marjoribanks, was closely connected with improving education in the area. He was influential in converting the Bushey Heath Sunday School into a mixed Girls' and Infants' School in 1850, and was the sole support of the school for twenty years. Also in 1850 he gave a new pump to Bushey Heath, the only public water supply until 1875.

In 1867 Kirkman Hodgson leased Laurel Lodge for ten years at a rental of £237 per annum, but sublet the property at £350 per annum to Colonel George Sim. The lease includes Laurel Lodge itself and the surrounding land and outbuildings

totalling 29 acres 1 rood and 17 perches.

The lease document provides meticulously detailed information of all the fixtures in



every nook and cranny of Laurel Lodge and its outbuildings. For example the Drawing Room boasts: '30 inch bright steel stove, 2 white mounted level bell pulls, 5 fastenings to windows, 6 white shutter knobs, 12 brass curtain hooks. Mortice lock key, 2 white

The imposing front of Sparrows Herne Hall in 1910.



Photograph: W H Hoather

knobs and 2 white enamelled finger plates to door'. Other areas listed include a Knife House, Dairy, Lumber Room, Brew House and Saddle Room in addition to the Potting Shed, Cow House and Poultry Yard. The lease document also deals in great detail with the land and it is clear that at this time Laurel Lodge and its estate was run as a farm.

Once the Chancery action ended, a Deed of Enfranchisement conveyed the property to the Receiver on payment of £1000 to the Lord of the Manor. On 5 July 1879 an advertisement appeared in *The Times* offering Laurel Lodge for sale by auction. The description of the house is enticing: *'The residence presents a handsome appearance and contains a spacious hall, noble dining room, library, morning room and well-proportioned drawing-room; on the first floor are two large and three smaller rooms, bath room, a day nursery and bedroom, night nursery with four bedrooms and three servants' bedrooms, capital domestic offices etc. Stabling for eight horses, two carriage houses, man's room, lofts, laundry, cattle sheds, piggeries, gardener's cottage etc. Also a capital range of conservatory and fruit houses, forcing pits and well stocked kitchen garden.'*

Colonel George Sim of the Royal (late Bengal) Engineers, purchased Laurel Lodge, which he had already occupied as a tenant for ten years, at a cost of £9,582 10s in May 1880. He died there in June 1881, aged 58. His wife Emma and their children remained at Laurel Lodge for some time.

By 1886, the next owner of the house was Captain Thomas Cokayne Maunsell of the 12th Royal Lancers. It was Captain Maunsell who changed the name of Laurel Lodge to Sparrows Herne Hall, where he died in November 1887. He is commemorated by a plate by the East



Bushey Museum Archive

The Georgian staircase in the front hall from the 1948 Sale Catalogue.

window of St Peter's Church, Bushey Heath. His widow Catherine Maunsell and her son Cecil John Cockayne stayed on at the Hall until 1905.

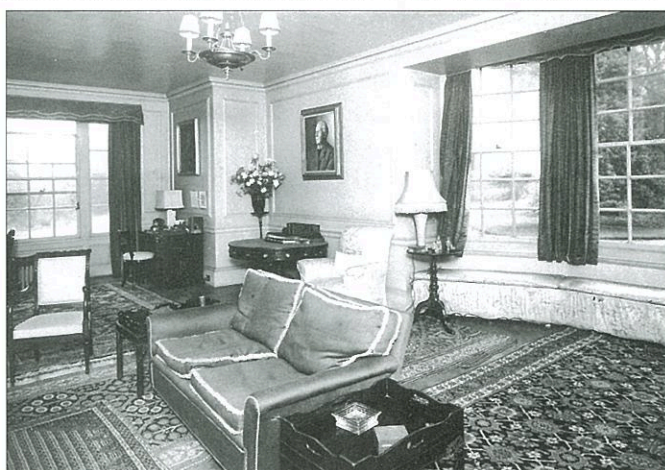
In June 1906 Sparrows Herne Hall was purchased by James Walter Smith JP for £11,000. In 1910 the Inland Revenue Valuation Survey mentions that Mr Smith laid out 'a considerable amount' in building and other matters, and in addition, that *'A small piece of land adjoining Little Bushey Lane was given up to Bushey Urban District Council for road widening and another piece taken in exchange, on terms.'* The survey describes the Grounds which: *'... comprise Lawn at the side of the house, where there is a covered-in Balcony, Fish Pond with Wood and Thatched Japanese House, Lawn in front of the house with a good number of trees, which are poor and not worth much. Large field of pasture trees as above.'*

The Fish Pond and Japanese House mentioned above were probably built not long after he purchased Sparrows Herne

Hall. From an obituary of his widow, Eliza, who died in London in 1943 we learn that: *'Her husband worked in London, but he was very fond of pictures and his garden. In the grounds of his home he laid out a wonderful Japanese garden in which was a pond stocked with goldfish, all of which he named and would come to the surface for food when called by Mr Smith. His wife took great interest in the plants which he collected from various parts of the world and Mr and Mrs Smith frequently opened the grounds for inspection by the public.'*

In July 1919 James Walter Smith's widow, Eliza Ledger Smith, sold Sparrows Herne Hall to John Duncan Nimmo, whose family, including three sons and a daughter, lived in the Hall until 1948. In the short time he resided there, until his untimely death in 1925, John Duncan Nimmo became a trustee and manager of Ashfield School. The Nimmos were benevolent: they improved and donated the hitherto derelict triangle of land by St Peter's Church at the

Left: The Dining Room complete with parquet surround and a fine carved oak chimney piece. Right: The South West facing Library.



Bushey Museum Archive



The colonnade along the SW side of Sparrows Herne Hall.

junction of Elstree and London Roads, and also presented the Haig cottages in Chiltern Avenue to Bushey after the 1914-18 War, 'making a contribution to the acute housing problems of the day.'

In 1948 the Hall including its stables had been listed as a Grade II building of architectural interest. Its citation read '*Large 18c house in yellow brick with stucco mid 19c trimmings. Stable range in red brick early 18c. Flat pediment over the bay with carriage arch.*' The Listing was deleted in July 1985. Pevsner described the house as '*C18 with long early C19 Roman Doric colonnade on the S front and wing added in 1938.*'

The Hall and estate was advertised for Sale by Auction in 6 lots on 25 May 1948, in Watford. The sale particulars offer a detailed description of the Hall itself, photographs of the main reception rooms, and also photographs and descriptions of the various other dwellings on the estate, such as The Lodge, Orchard Cottage, Homestead House and Gardener's Cottage. An accompanying map delineates the 6 Lots of '*Gardens, parkland, Woodland and pasture Land with Swimming Pool, Ornamental pond and Japanese Tea House*', totalling 49 acres.

Before the auction could take place, Hertfordshire County Council (HCC) made Lot 1 the subject of a Compulsory Purchase Order under the Children Act 1948, and thus for £10,000 became the owners of Sparrows Herne Hall and its immediate grounds, a total of just under 10 acres. It is presumed that the remaining lots were sold privately and subsequently developed into the roads and dwellings now built thereon.

The Council's purchase of Lot 1 sev-

ered Sparrows Herne Hall from the road whence its name derived, and access was thereafter from Little Bushey Lane.

Following the acquisition of the Hall, HCC turned it into a Children's Home. It later became an administrative base for part of Hertfordshire Social Services. The Council built a residential block next to the Hall, but retained the lawns and fine trees around the Hall. A large development in the grounds of the Hall was Heath House, a care home leased to Quantum Care, a non-profit organisation set up by the Council in the mid-1990s. There are also six flats fronting on to Little Bushey Lane, leased to Warden Housing Association and the Scout Hut, on lease to 18th Bushey & Oxhey Scouts.

The Hall itself has not been in regular use for some years and was vandalised in

1991, when three original fire places were stolen and other damage perpetrated. In 2003, HCC decided to sell Sparrows Herne Hall and its gardens, having no further need of the premises. Heath House and other premises currently in use by Social Services are unaffected.

At the time of writing, Hertfordshire County Council has sold Sparrows Herne Hall to a private developer, Rialto Homes. The modern residential block has been demolished. The Hall itself is to become 26 flats and a further 38 flats and houses (the latter with private gardens) are to be built on the site. Under a legal agreement to be monitored by HCC, it was agreed that the grounds would be retained as they are including several trees with Tree Protection Orders. Apparently the original planning permission restricting building on the surrounding grounds has been amended since the sale of the property.

Sparrows Herne Hall, once Sparrows and Laurel Lodge thus enters upon yet another phase in its ever-changing existence.

Notes

* National Archives, C202/179/26.

A copy of the 1948 Sale Catalogue for Sparrows Herne Hall is held in the Local Studies Centre at Bushey Museum.

This is a shortened version of a report which may be consulted in the Local Studies Centre at Bushey Museum.

Postscript

Since this article was written Rialto Homes have applied to demolish the mansion and build a replacement. Hertsmere Borough Council have refused permission but the developers are appealing.

The swimming pool: 60 x 20ft with diving board and thatched Pavilion for changing.



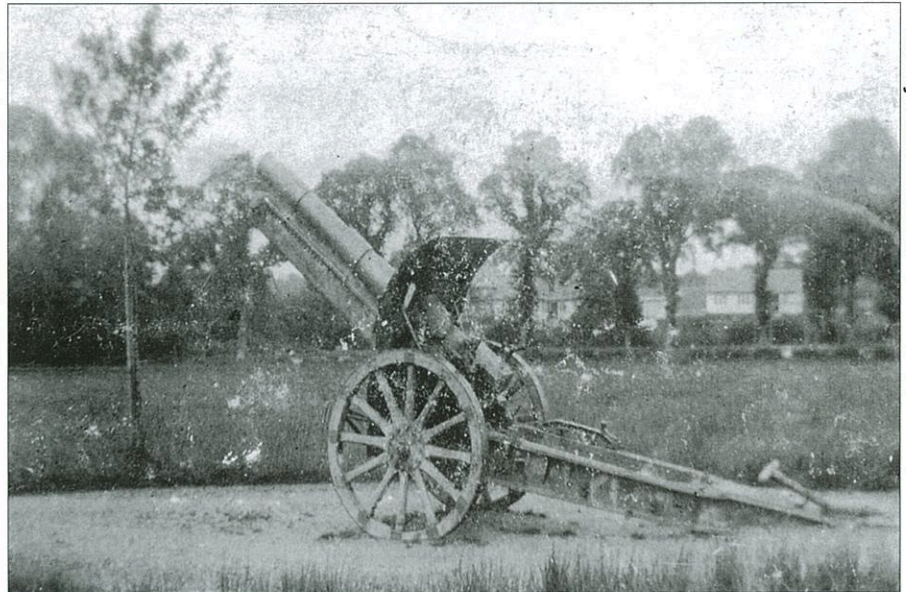
King George Recreation Ground

Mavis Filer née Merrison

How many readers can remember answering: 'The Rec' when asked: 'Where are you going?' Living in Somers Way in the 1940s it was just along the road, turn left and a huge oak tree almost hid the view of the 'dell'. A pathway opened out to the swings, roundabout, switch back, see-saw and of course a may-pole. In winter many people gathered at the top of the 'Rec' to sledge to the bottom of the hill, hopefully missing the oak tree at the bottom, the four-sided shed and the railings round the bowling green.

The bowling green was, and still is, used and kept in good condition. This and the putting green were the pride and joy of the park keeper, Mr Balls, and groundsman, Mr Gurney. Mr Balls would be horrified to see the grounds today; everywhere then was kept so neat and tidy. The grass tennis courts were always in use as were the hard courts. One would book a court well in advance in the ticket office at the side of the pavilion.

Ah yes, 'The Pavilion', flowers in bloom in the beds and a meeting place held in affection by many when Mr Griffin, 'Griff', rented the premises. He would befriend everyone and often enter-



Bushey Museum Archive

A snapshot of the 'cannon' in the Rec. Does any reader have a better photograph and can any military man identify it?

tained us by playing the banjo in the evenings. Refreshments could also be bought at the kiosk in the swimming pool. I was actually there the day the bulldozers went in to tear it down. I was joined by Fred Courtage and we reminisced on the happy times we spent there. Who remembers queuing up at 'sessions', or being the first in the pool at

the beginning of the season and the last one in at the end of the season? No filters then, the water looked like pea soup before it was emptied and refilled with very cold water. George Cusack, a regular contributor to the *Journal* will I am sure have fond memories of the pool.

Football was always being played, the changing rooms were at the side of a shed, opposite the putting green. Bushey Youth Council held its netball rally in the 'Rec', a competition well remembered by the youth of the day.

Whilst great fun was had in the paddling pool, it was pretty awful and is perhaps the one improvement in the 'Rec' today.

There was a cannon, dating from the World War I, situated, if I remember correctly, behind the hard tennis courts.

There is a place in the 'Rec' I visit almost every year and have done since the early 1940s. A patch of wild violets and hare-bells greet me - and no I am not telling where they are - I want to find them again next year.

The swimming bath in the Rec in the late 1920s not long after it opened.



Bushey Museum Archive

The Friends' Holiday Autumn 2004

Frances Hurndall

In October we enjoyed a six day visit to the Derbyshire Peak District, staying on the outskirts of Chesterfield. Derbyshire is about one and a half times the size of Hertfordshire. We were surprised by the variety of scenery in the small area we covered, with forests, beautiful valleys and clear rivers, serene open moorland and brooding crags dominating the skyline; and pretty villages and historic towns to delight the most demanding tourist.

After a two hour drive from Bushey in glorious sunshine, we stopped at Hardwick Hall. Over a period of about twenty years up to 1608, Bess of Hardwick, Countess of Shrewsbury, built two houses on the site of her ancestral home. The 'Old Hall', in use in her day for family guests and servants, is now in ruins. She then put her considerable energy and invention into her masterpiece, the 'New Hall'.

This wonderful house, with its huge windows, glows in golden stone; inside the stone staircase leads between tapestry-lined walls to the High Great Chamber on the second floor. The painted, modelled frieze, tapestries, panelling, pictures, furniture and fireplace are all of the highest quality and serve to emphasise Bess's semi-regal status.

'Mrs Digby', lady-in-waiting to Bess, welcomed us with tales of her mistress and family, whose portraits cover walls throughout the house. From the entrance cum servants' hall to the family rooms on the first floor and the superb suites of rooms at the top of the house, all is of the highest quality. Bess had all her building materials, lead, stone and wood, on her estates and

Hardwick rises proud and serene over her world.

On Sunday morning we went to Haddon Hall accompanied by Janet Murphy, now living in her childhood home in Chesterfield, and who gave us lots of interesting information on the way. At Haddon, we crept silently past the people and paraphernalia involved in filming a new version of *Pride and Prejudice*.

There has been a house on this outcrop overlooking the River Wye for 800 years. It is a beautiful site. Using local stone, the house was developed from Norman times through to Elizabethan times. It was owned by the Vernons, and then the Manners (later Dukes of Rutland), but was abandoned about 1740 and remained, uninhabited and untouched, for two hundred years, until the 9th Duke embarked on his restoration work in the 1920s.

The ancient chapel has beautiful carvings and rare wall paintings, uncovered when plaster was removed during restoration work. There is a typical 14th century Banqueting Hall; carvings and coats of arms decorate the dining room, created in the early 1500s by the horizontal division of a high ceilinged chamber. The kitchens are no less fascinating with benches, dole cupboards and well-worn chopping blocks.

Outside, the lower courtyard seems to echo with sounds of visitors and servants, horses and children; and the terraced gardens, with their superb views over parkland and surrounding countryside, invite the visitor to linger and smell the roses.

Our next visit was to the Midland

Railway Museum at Butterley, near Ripley. In pouring rain, we travelled (first class of course!) to Swanwick Junction and back, hauled by a steam engine. What memories were evoked by the sounds of slamming doors, engine noises, whistles and hisses! In spite of the rain, we loved it, and the summer holidays of childhood were brought back to life. Other attractions on this short line include Thomas the Tank Engine and friends, a railway museum, signal box, way-



Photograph: Patrick Forsyth

Molley Brain taking the waters at Buxton.

side chapel and old railway buffet-style cafeteria.

Monday morning began with a visit to Ladybower Reservoir, one of a series of three constructed in the Upper Derwent Valley, amidst magnificent scenery, to satisfy the twentieth century demand for water.

We made a brief stop in Eyam, where 260 out of 350 inhabitants died of plague during 1665-6. Memorials on old cottages make sad reading, but today, a wonderful sense of peace fills this pretty village. The Rector and the Non-conformist minister, in an unique act of ecumenical accord for those days, persuaded the villagers to cut themselves off from external contacts to avoid spreading the plague (which arrived in Eyam in a bale of cloth).

Our sombre thoughts lifted when we reached Chatsworth, surely one of England's most glorious houses. Bess of Hardwick and Sir William Cavendish (her second husband) built the original house. The First Duke of Devonshire made huge changes at the end of the 17th century, a tradition followed until the mid-19th century.

It is impossible to do justice to this great house in a few sentences. On a fine

Patrick Forsyth at Sir Richard Arkwright's Masson Mills.



Photograph: Jane Parker

day, the sun catches the gleam of gold around the window frames (longer lasting than paint!) and the warm local stone neo-classical portico and pilasters of the front façade. Woods rise behind the house set in a landscaped park; there are hidden areas of flowers, strange hedged 'rooms' for sculptures, old and new; the Cascade and the Canal with its Emperor fountain. The whole garden is full of fascination and secret corners, open grassy spaces and stunning views.

The interior is a staggering sequence of vast halls, staircases, dining rooms, galleries, bedrooms, a chapel and grotto - all filled with collections of paintings, china, furniture, mirrors and carvings, luxurious satins and tapestries. It is truly wonderful to see how all the treasures are splendidly preserved and loved, and visitors are made to feel welcome to enjoy the beauty that surrounds them.

On Tuesday we visited Bakewell (no we weren't given the secret ingredient of the pudding!). This picturesque old market town, with its beautiful 13th century bridge over the River Wye, was a spa town, had a thriving textile industry and today retains its busy agricultural market and is a popular tourist centre. The parish church has a sharp needle-pointed spire and some strange Saxon carvings and, in the churchyard, two Saxon crosses.

On to Ilam Countrypark near Dovedale. Here we enjoyed views over the dales, and walked along the River Manifold, returning over parkland. Little is left of Ilam Hall, but the gardens and walks remind us of the time, money and efforts spent on 'improvements' by the gentry.

Masson Mill on the banks of the

pioneer (he started as a hairdresser and wig maker!) and admired the machinery restored to full and noisy life. Our guide brought the factory alive as he spoke of poor little children, who worked for a pittance in dangerous conditions for so many hours. Today we can admire the enterprise and achievements of those early industrialists, whilst deploring the barbaric attitudes they (and many others) held towards their workers. Arkwright was one of the more enlightened employers.

On Wednesday we explored Buxton after an unscheduled stop in Bakewell to allow one of our group to recover her reading glasses left in All Saints Church, for which she is deeply grateful! Buxton is a delightful spa town with elegant Georgian crescents and terraces (laid out by the fifth Duke of Devonshire), beautiful parks complete with a pavilion and hot houses, and even public fountains where today's visitors may fill their plastic bottles with spa water.

We had a tour of the newly restored Opera House, with its splendid gilding and painted ceilings. The huge stage is mainly used by touring companies.

There was plenty of time to explore the town. An auction of classic cars at the Pavilion proved irresistible to some, but the majority visited Poole's Cavern where we viewed stalactites, stalagmites and other strange formations.

Our last day started with a tour of Chesterfield, a cheery local guide escorted us around the town. We started at the church with its famous crooked spire. Perhaps the dearth of experienced craftsmen during the plague years of the 14th century caused the strange twist which was apparent from its earliest days. The church

itself has many reminders of earlier wealthy days. It's sad that today so little remains of the industries of the past; not only mining and its associated industries,



Hearing about working machines at Sir Richard Arkwright's Masson Mills.

Photograph: Patrick Forsyth

but also many excellent engineering firms have closed in recent years. The town boasts some fine buildings, including the Town Hall and a large market square, which was host to a flea market when we were there.

Our last visit was to Bolsover Castle. Once again Bess's familiar and powerful figure rose before us. Bess left the castle to her son Charles who developed the mediaeval site into a splendid aristocratic country house for recreation, entertainment on a lavish scale and sport - the pastimes of the rich who no longer needed to prepare for possible invasion and, after the Civil War, not even for war at home.

The 'Little Castle' has suites of rooms splendidly decorated and luxurious, although smaller than in the other houses we had visited. The feeling is much more of a country home than a walled castle.

Charles's son developed the vast stables and indoor riding school. The Terrace Range is unfortunately in ruins but its 17th century splendour can be imagined. Just as Hardwick dominated the countryside so does Bolsover and as we headed home down the M1, they stood proud on the hillside above us.

It was a very happy and busy six days. As well as the wonderful places we visited and the welcoming guides and stewards we met, we had plenty of time for laughter, conversation and vicious games of scrabble.

We owe an enormous debt to Pauline Forsyth and Anne Blessley for their excellent research and planning; to Jane Parker and Gulvie Tye for taking care of the administrative side; to Patrick Forsyth for his superb photographic record of the holiday and to Janet Murphy for sharing her love of Derbyshire and her local knowledge with us.

Why not join us in October 2005 when we are visiting Hampshire and the Isle of Wight?



Photograph: Jane Parker

Chatsworth Rock Garden. June Wood, Margaret Sibley and Josephine Ober.

Derwent at Matlock Bath was our next stop. Sir Richard Arkwright built the mill in 1783 and the old buildings are amazingly intact. We learnt about this industrial

The Mary Williams Collection of Herkomeriana

In March 2004 Bushey Museum was able to buy a substantial proportion of the Mary Williams collection of Herkomer material, which was the last major family collection of Herkomer material ever likely to come on the market. We had the support of the MLA/V & A Purchase Grant Fund, the National Art Collections Fund and the Friends of Bushey Museum Acquisition Fund. We were able to buy a little over one thousand individual items, some of them minor and ephemeral, but all important to the study of Herkomer and the Herkomer Art School. The most important were the volumes of *The Palette*, the magazine of the School which were almost entirely collections of original watercolours, drawings and other creative work by Herkomer students. The only copy was kept in the School library for students to browse through. The full story of these purchases was written up by Anne Blessley in the June 2004 *Newsletter*. A small selection of items is shown on these pages.

Bryen Wood

Clockwise, from top left: The Palette front cover from June 1887; The Palette contained poetry, music and essays as well as the students' drawings and paintings; in the early issues of The Palette the contributors all had pseudonyms, usually colours, this fantasy sketch is by Rose Madder - almost certainly Amy Sawyer; a New Year greeting for 1888 by an unknown student; The Palette from March 1886; pewter plates with repoussé work by Herkomer; a young Herkomer plays the zither, he was an accomplished player, gave concerts and wrote compositions

for the instrument; a delightful watercolour sketch of a young girl painted by Lockhart Bogle; Ellen Terry, the famous actress came to Bushey to see Herkomer's musical play *The Sorceress*, she clearly enjoyed it.

Thank you - & all the others too, for a great delight - I wish I might see it again - & again - I am indeed gratefully
 Yours Ellen Terry =
 Friday April 27. 88 =

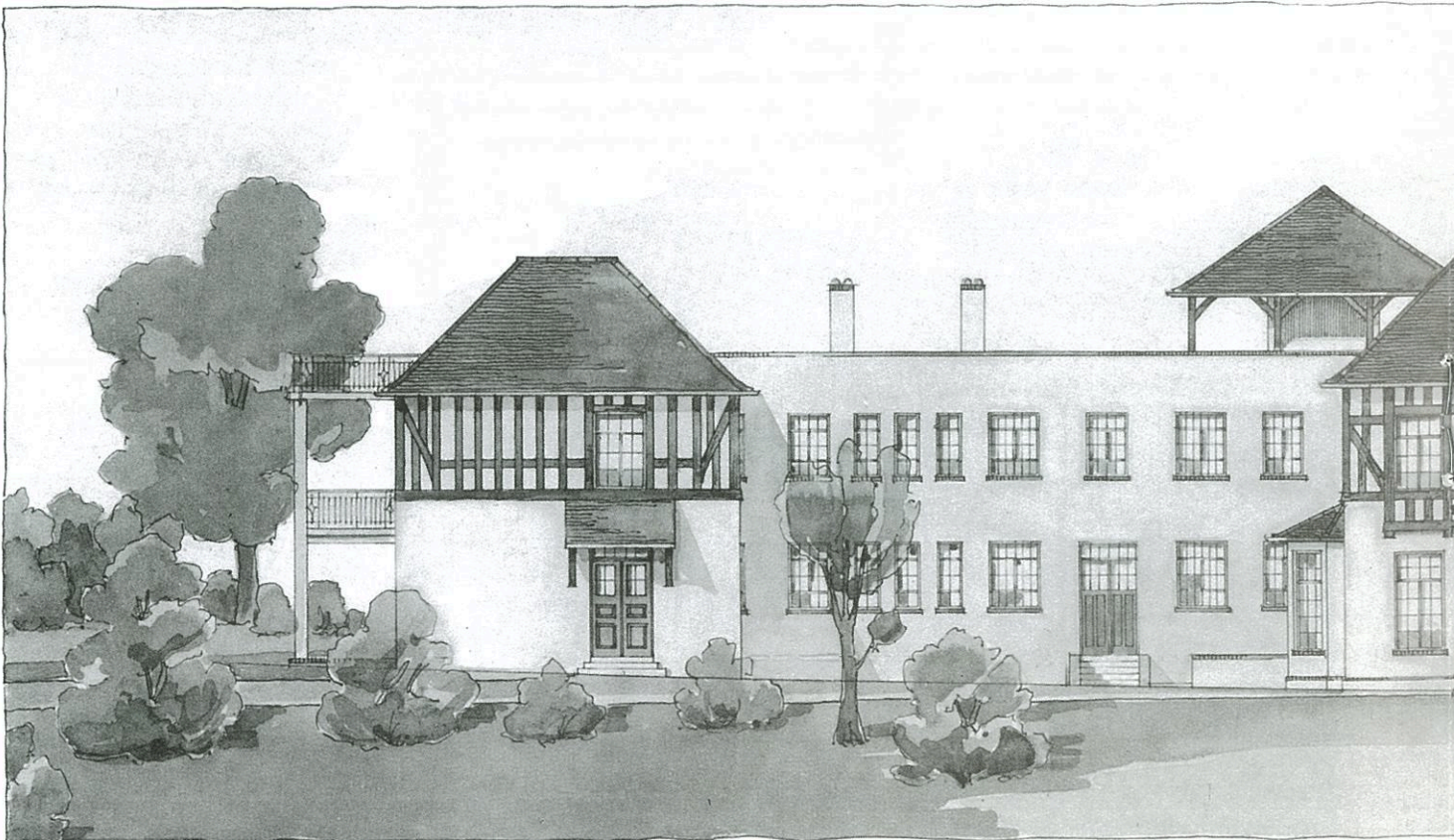
Bushey Heath Clinic Bryen Wood

I have only recently come across a brochure for the Bushey Heath Clinic, of which I had previously not heard. It was sited where the BUPA Hospital now is and I had thought that the only previous occupant of that site was the Bushey Maternity Hospital, which opened around 1939. We show here an architect's drawing, but the Clinic was actually built and opened as

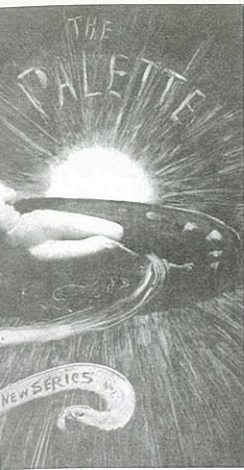
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The Clinic seems to have functioned for on
 directories. Its glossy brochure states that it is
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Bushey Museum Archive



BUSHEY HEATH CLINIC,
 BUSHEY HEATH, HERTS.

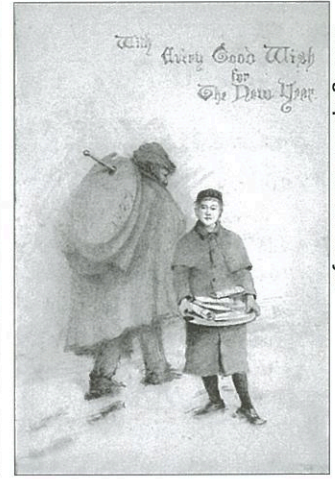
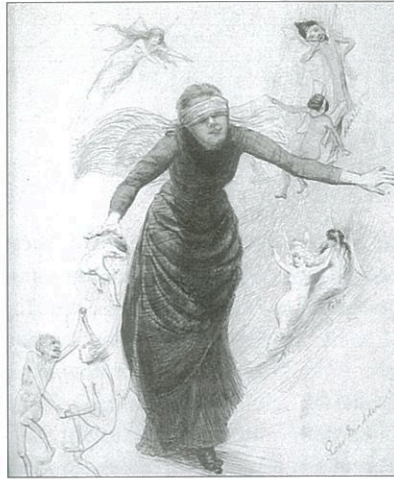


Little swallow on the wing,
Sloop and bear me as I sing,
Catch this fleeting Autumn day,
Snatches of my roundelay!

In your warm and ruby throat,
Carver up the Gaglioli note,
Bring it out some sunny day,
In the land so far away.

Where perhaps my truant lad
Wanders lonely, dull and sad,
Hearing it his pulses strong
Will leap to memory of the song!

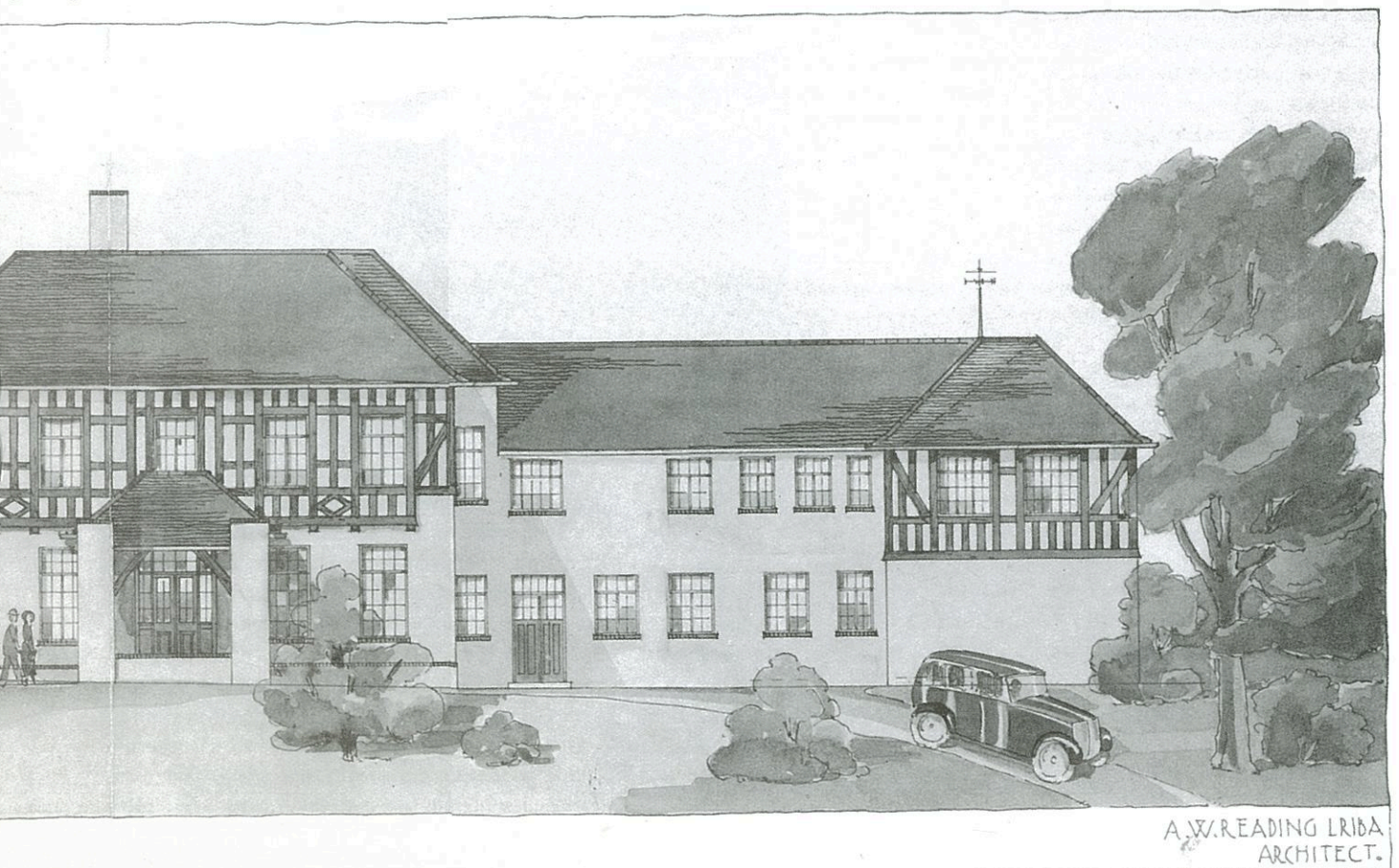
Pretty ruby-throated thing,
Come back with the coming Spring!
Come and tell me, nor be long,
What he answered to my song!



Photographs: Patrick Forsyth

photographs in the brochure and we have a letter from the Secretary inviting a tour, dated April 1937. The history of the Maternity Hospital is now hazy, so I would be glad to tell me whether this was the same building? The brochure seems to be a quaint mixture of art deco and Tudor style. It is a very short time. It does not appear in any map of London. Whether for rest care for tired patients or childbearing, the Bushey Heath

Clinic offers the patient luxurious comfort, perfect peace, combined with the wonderful service that only carefully selected nursing staff can give'. It also functioned as a Nursing Home and its features included doors that were impossible to slam, the Phoenix Silent Call System, indirect ray system lighting and a wireless receiver in each room. The operating theatre was claimed to be the most modern in the country and there was modern shock proof X-Ray apparatus. Balconies and a sun room on the roof provided fresh air treatment. In the grounds there were Rest Houses and also Tennis Courts, a Croquet Lawn and a Putting Green. Charges were 7 Guineas a week for accommodation and nursing care. The current charges at the BUPA Hospital for a similar level of care are £2877 a week, i.e. £411 a day.



A.W. READING LIBRA ARCHITECT.

Portrait of Two Artists

Kevin Matthias

The author has kindly allowed publication of an article which appeared in the December 1991 Rhuthin Local History Broadsheet.

In the Godsal family archives at the Clywd Record Office at Hawarden are eighteen volumes which give an insight into the development of a dedicated Victorian artist who had her works hung at the Royal Academy and the Paris Salon, and throw light on Hubert von Herkomer, one of the most extraordinary talents to be connected with Ruthin.

Miss Mary Godsal's diaries cover the years 1869 to 1905. The entries, in rather wayward handwriting, contain many tiny sketches showing her current work. Miss Godsal's home was at Iscoyd Park, in Flintshire's Maelor Saesneg, some four miles from Whitchurch. Philip Lake Godsal from Cheltenham had purchased the estate in the 1840's and added significantly to the mid-eighteenth century original house. Iscoyd naturally features in the diaries and Miss Godsal often visited her father there and writes of sketching the wood cutter on the moss. She also spent time at Gwernvale, the family's house in the Black Mountains near Crickhowell. The earlier diaries record her visits to the continent and her burgeoning interest in art and architecture.

On Saturday, 24th November 1883 at 2.00pm she enrolled at the opening term of a new art school at Bushey in Hertfordshire. She was one of nineteen ladies and fifteen gentlemen students there that afternoon and at thirty-four years of age was probably one of the oldest. The principal of the school was Hubert von Herkomer (1849-1914), a Bavarian by birth but who had been living in Britain from the age of eight. He was a renowned social realist painter, also known for his portraits, historical subjects and landscapes. He was a man of many diverse talents in fields ranging from engraving to composing (Mary Godsal was eventually to sing in his opera), acting, cinematography and architecture.

His most famous work *Hard Times*

gave the title to a recent exhibition of Victorian realist painting and the regalia and sword used by the Archdruid at the National Eisteddfod's Gorsedd were also designed by him.

The opening of Herkomer's school attracted the attention of the press who recorded the event in detail. There was no formal ceremony just 'general handshaking all round', then Professor Herkomer addressed the students and guests giving them his thoughts on art education. He had not opened the

school for any mercenary motives but 'to benefit future generations of art students'. They 'must not expect criticism of small details', he would give them 'direction of their studies which was more than teaching'. He would impose a strict regime 'to prevent niggling effeminate work' and warned that all his criticisms would 'be made before a l l'. Herkomer must have been a gift to the press. *Punch* satirized the whole affair

by saying that the students at the art school in order 'to be in harmony with the neighbourhood' were to let their hair and beards grow 'Bushey', and that the principal 'will be known down there as Mr HAIR COMBER' and

'retain to himself the right of giving severe reprimand to any pupil who may slip out late or break any of the rules'.

Mary Godsal, already extremely self critical and doubtful of her own abilities, should have been warned by the professor's forthrightness. On his first appearance at the studio he seemed 'cheerful enough, but that soon changed and he was not pleased with the work of anyone - quite the reverse.... no one understood what he wanted!' Only three days after she is



Bushey Museum Archive

A pencil drawing of Lulu by Herkomer dated 12 Jan 1885. She died later that year. Lulu hated being painted or photographed and images of her are rare. We know of only two; an unfinished oil portrait in private hands and this drawing. Bushey Museum was able to buy it at auction in March 2004. It cost a total of £4917 paid for by grants from the MLA/V&A Purchase Grant Fund, the National Art Collections Fund and the Friends of Bushey Museum.

saying that 'he finds fault all the time.' Mary however was able to witness the development of *Hard Times* when he told her to get 'real tramps and really pose them under a hedge'. He began his own 'tramp picture' in January 1885

and used a model often used by Mary, a Mrs Quarry. The sick child in the painting is Freddy Quarry, for whom Mary opened a national savings account.

Herkomer's first wife had died in 1883 and in August 1884 he married her nurse, Miss Lulu Griffiths, daughter of Thomas Griffiths, the Relieving Officer of Ruthin Workhouse, at Llanrhudd Church. Press accounts imply it was not a run-of-the-mill event - there were no bridesmaids and 'no jewelry', and Herkomer's daughter and son were 'charmingly dressed' as a nun and in Charles I costume respectively, of a terra-cotta colour. Presents on show at the Griffiths home in Stanley House, Llanrhudd Street, included his Bushey students' gift, a copy made by them of Leonardo da Vinci's *Last Supper*.

In spite of Herkomer's continual lack of encouragement, indeed he eventually refused to see her work, Mary Godsal became a family friend.

In June 1885, Lulu Herkomer was ill in York. In unsound health and pregnant, she had dashed out to save a child from being run over by a carriage and miscarried. By October however, she was better and helping Mary Godsal to move into her new studio. At an entertainment on 22 November, Mary notes that Lulu was ill. Two days later Mary was told that she was better but not up. Nonetheless at 6.15 in the evening, before her husband could return from London she died 'after two hours of suffering following a fainting fit from which she never revived'. Mary wrote the next day that she had been fond of her.

In July 1888, Herkomer married Lulu's sister, Margaret, in Bavaria as the marriage would have been illegal in Britain. Mary continued to paint, occasionally acted as hostess to Herkomer's guests, and showed visitors around Lululaund, the extraordinary house he designed in memory of his second wife. Herkomer painted Mary Godsal's father at Iscoyd in July 1886. She continued to live on an irregular basis at Bushey and became very involved in village life. She died aged fifty-eight on 27th September 1907. Her former professor, by then Sir Hubert von Herkomer, died seven years later aged sixty-five. Lady Margaret remained at Lululaund until her death in 1934. In spite of attempts to save it, the house was later demolished.

The St James' Wayfarers

John Storey

The St James' Wayfarers was a Youth Club, the brainchild of Canon James H Humphries, who became Rector of Bushey in about 1943. His predecessor was the Revd Leslie Beckley, who had resigned in the early days of World War 2 to join the Roman Catholic Church. The then curate, the Revd John Scott was appointed Priest in Charge during the lengthy interregnum, following which he joined the RAF as a Padre.

Canon Humphries was aware that John Scott had been very popular in the parish, particularly amongst the young, and he was careful not to come in as a new broom changing everything. Over a period, he made a few changes one being that he wished to be addressed as 'Father', something we were not used to in the Parish.

As there was no Church youth club, he formed the Wayfarers. There were some rules, the most important being regular attendance at Church. As the original membership was composed of servers and members of the choir or congregation, this was not a problem. As for management, it was left very much to the members to devise a programme. We met in the Institute (now replaced by Church House) once a week for a social evening, dancing or some other entertainment: there were rambles in the summer and each year we entered a one-act play in the local drama festival. It was fortunate that a local resident, who had much experience in producing amateur dramatics was prepared to help us. This was Mr Buckingham, who spent many hours doing his best but sadly, we did not win any prizes.

We, who grew up during World War 2, had no experience of a formal dinner and, after the end of the War, one was organised in the Parish Hall (now the Falconer Hall). The boys did not have dinner jackets: some were able to borrow from relatives, and one fellow turned up in his Father's white tie and tails. For the girls however, it was a different tale: where they managed to get their long evening dresses from, I have no idea. The evening was a great success, and was continued as an annual event thereafter.

I cannot say when the Wayfarers disbanded; usually when members got married or were called-up they did not come back. There were some romances which have sustained through the years and those days have not been forgotten. A few years ago, Irene Groves (née Lockwood) and Ann Hutton (née Stevens) had the idea of a re-union and some twenty of us meet each year. Most of us now in our seventies and reside in places as far away as Norfolk and Somerset; we have had members attend from the United States and Canada even. We meet for lunch at a local hostelry, followed by afternoon tea at Church House for a chat and to revive old memories.

The Wayfarers in 1948 or 1949. Revd Humphries is in the far right of the middle row. Can you identify the two Bushey Museum Stewards in the front row?



Bushey Museum Archive

The Broken Bulldozers

Childhood in the shadow of 'Lord Herkomer and Herkomer Castle'

Revd Vivienne Lake

Rumour had it, more than half a century ago, that the remaining ruins of Lululaund - known locally as 'Herkomer Castle' - were to be knocked down to make way for a British Legion hut. It had been demolished in 1939 except for some of the massive brickwork around the great entrance door - and the likely reason for this soon became clear. Although only a small girl at the time, I watched with quiet satisfaction as the builders broke no fewer than three bulldozers trying in vain to knock it down - before giving up and eventually building the hall, of no great architectural distinction, behind the great door. But Herkomer, who never forgot his humble roots and whose paintings showed concern for the less fortunate, would certainly have approved its use.

I lived with my parents in Herkomer Close from about 1939, and have always regarded myself as having been brought up in the shadow of 'Lord Herkomer' - as he was always known locally, and his 'castle'. Even though he died in 1914, his presence continued to pervade the area, and I think I can attribute my love of art and horses, at least in part, to the early influence of Herkomer and Lucy Kemp-Welch.

Around the corner in Lululaund Cottages lived several descendants of the



Bushey Museum Archive

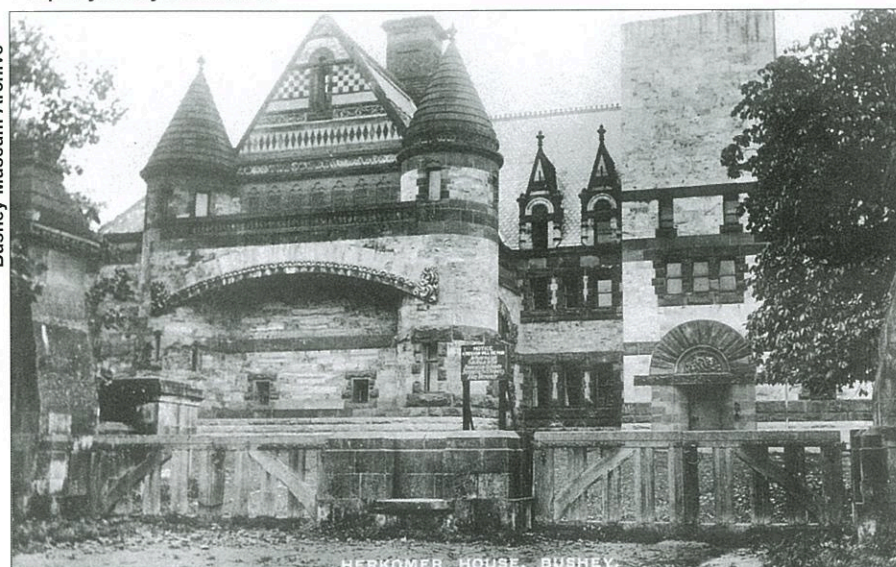
The remnant of Lululaund after demolition had been abandoned.

Herkomer family. I read with great interest in the Friends' *Newsletter* for June 2004 of the disposal of the effects bequeathed by his last wife to her great-niece Mary Williams (1913-2000) whom I came to know well as a young teenager, around the early 1950s. She was then in her late thirties, elegant, attractive and generous, and she lived with her mother,

Mrs Williams, a straight and dignified old lady, in the cottage nearest Herkomer Close. Mary Williams had a beautiful voice and, as an actress, radio listeners would have occasionally heard her in *Mrs Dale's Diary*, the daily story of a doctor's wife (and a forerunner of *The Archers*) in the minor role of the vicar's wife. They had two dachshunds, Lotta and Lisa, one black, one brown, whom I often used to take for walks. There is a photo of me with them at the 'Rec' (King George Recreation Ground) in 1953, and their yapping and welcoming presence seemed to haunt the front garden of the empty cottage I saw last week.

At the far end in the last cottage lived Mrs Herkomer, the widow of Laurence (Lorenz), Herkomer's youngest son. I remember her as an elderly red-haired lady, although she could only have been middle-aged as, according to a footnote in the biography of Herkomer by Lee MacCormick Edwards, Laurence died suddenly during surgery, aged 33, but she lived on in Bushey until the 1990s. I had tea with her once or twice, and remember her constantly recalling the good old days, and bemoaning the present. There was high drama when her television blew up and set fire to her sitting room; no lasting

Lululaund awaiting demolition. However the notice reads: **NOTICE. A REWARD WILL BE PAID for information that leads to the Prosecution of People Damaging this Property. Lady Herkomer.**



Bushey Museum Archive

damage was done, but I have disengaged television sets at the wall ever since!

In the field at the bottom of our garden horses grazed, and to the right at the end of the field were ramshackled studios - the former Meadow Studios - in which artists lived rather like squatters in the barn-like conditions which were the remnants of the studios Herkomer had originally built for his pupils, and which subsequently sprang up all around the area. Opposite was St Hilda's School, full of small girls' life and laughter.

Alongside the school, on the main road was the Fishmonger's Arms, a small local pub formerly frequented by artists and local residents alike. I queued there daily for the bus to school at Rosary Priory (Caldecote Towers), in Elstree Road, very near to Reveley Lodge. The restored historic film studios are now occupied by high-tech firms, the pub and bus stop have been replaced by smart new buildings and a bus shelter - but a few days ago, I waited for the 142 bus as I had done more than fifty years ago, which remarkably has not changed its number or route. Has any other bus route lasted as long? And the Rose Gardens (belonging to Herkomer's Lululaund) are also still there, but seemingly with fewer roses...

I went to school at the Bourne Hall kindergarten in Rudolph Road from 1943, and still have the reports signed by Miss Pollard. My father, an accountant, finished his working days at Bournehall Press (founded 1904) which, I gather from Grant Longman's booklet *The Herkomer Art School and Subsequent Developments 1901-1918*, helped pioneer art colour printing.

Vivienne Lake, then aged 14, embroidered a modern day sampler to celebrate the 1953 Coronation. She has given it to Bushey Museum.

Photograph: Michael Pritchard



Photograph: John Hudson

The 1953 Coronation Arch under construction. It was made of scaffolding and plywood but there were protests when it was dismantled six months later.

As we were constantly in the High Street, Lucy Kemp-Welch and Marguerite Frobisher were a familiar sight, sitting on wooden chairs on the pavement outside their home, Kingsley: two elderly ladies enjoying the sun, the house framed by the great purple wisteria which remains to this day.

Opposite, in the old Church Hall of St James's, Lucy's paintings were sometimes displayed for the village to see. I remember the effect on me as a child of one or more of the paintings of moving horses. Not surprisingly, I am unable to identify them, but closest to those strongly remembered images are paintings such as *The Gipsy Horse-Drovers* (1894) now in Bournemouth. I hope one day to be able to see the paintings which remain in Bushey, which may help identification.

A close friend was Dorothy Stainton; after she died of leukaemia at the age of twelve, her mother successfully took up painting under the expert guidance of Miss Frobisher and, I understand, exhibited her work. We remained friends and she gave my mother an oil painting of pink roses in a vase, which I have passed to the Museum.

I took up riding and became a horse-mad teenager, and where drawing and painting were concerned, I just concentrated on horses, which enabled me to scrape through Art in GCE (School Cert) with a painting of a man working with animals - I chose a horse of course! I probably failed the still-life section with some abysmal eggs in a dish.

In 1953 a number of riders took part in a procession on Coronation Day. I was

dressed Wild-West style as a cow-girl on my black Welsh Mountain pony Lucky Lad and almost certainly passed under the Coronation Arch. I was delighted to find a painting of it by Lucy Kemp-Welch in the *Best of Bushey Museum* exhibition. Her failing eyesight is apparent - she would have been about 85 years of age - but having been an expert rider, she quite possibly cheered us on. This was undoubtedly a sequel to her painting of the Jubilee Arch, which had been designed by her and erected to celebrate the jubilee of King George V in 1935.

I spent nearly four years in Rome, working for the UN (FAO) during which time I studied art extensively and later, after my return, in London. I eventually worked for the National Art Collections Fund, latterly becoming the Secretary to the Executive Committee, responsible for dealing with bequests and applications for grants. In 1983 the newly-formed Watford Museum put in an application for a grant for the *Portrait of Anna Herkomer* (the artist's first wife) strikingly posed with a fan, but visibly a sick woman. I duly prepared the required information for the next meeting of the Committee, taking great care to act impartially - but rejoicing inwardly when it was agreed. This painting was used as a poster by the National Portrait Gallery for an exhibition in 1992 of portraits in British art, bought with the help of the Art Fund. In the exhibition of famous Americans in 2002, the NPG displayed Herkomer's portrait of the famed architect, H H Richardson, painted in

...continued on page 17

Professor Herkomer and his Art Colony

The Honorary Secretary of the Ashburn Association (University of Manchester) has given permission for the publication of an article which appeared an 1893 issue of Iris. The magazine was published from 1887 to 1894 by the Women's Department of Owens College later the Victoria University of Manchester.

Readers of *Iris* have probably heard of Professor Herkomer and his Art Colony at Bushey - a simple, unsophisticated village in Hertfordshire, not too distant from London for the fair devotees of art to visit galleries and theatres, and to send up their annual contributions to the Academy and other galleries in a furniture van! Of course the whole vitality and interest of the place centres on the Professor, who lives and works among his Students 'merely as an older student,' to quote his own genial words, but as his brilliant and versatile genius so recently formed the Christmas Number of a well-known periodical, I shall not dwell on him here.

The school building is worthy passing remark (*sic*). The entrance, quaint and unconventional, is through cloisters, admirably adapted to picturesque grouping of maidens in their many-hued

aprons, and with a background of shadowy forms playing mandoline or guitar. From these cloisters open various doors, and also along the long corridor which leads to the Life-class rooms, the 'Angle' and 'Gallery' rooms, and the 'New Prelim'. The Reading-room boasts a grand piano and the best current literature of the day. In the school very few rules obtain, but one rigidly adhered to is the rather autocratic decree of the Professor that any girl who becomes engaged shall forthwith leave the school: of course no married woman is admitted. This rule does not apply to men.

As to the teaching, all responsibility rests with the students. New models arrive from London every Monday, and depart on Friday, they are posed and painted by the Students without assistance, the Professor merely criticising at the end of the week the work of each Student, followed, as he makes the round of the room, by the rest in pallid, interested silence. The Preliminary Class has, however, daily lessons from the only Undermaster. Much work is done outside the school, in the various studios which, built of tin and wood, have sprung up on every side. Two new blocks, one for men and one for women,

were recently erected as an experiment. In each block are six studios, whose inmates have a common dining-room, but otherwise live entirely in their respective rooms. The Professor periodically inspects the work of such outside Students at his house. On these occasions may be seen innumerable huge canvases moving apparently unaided, in reality supported by their quaking owners - quaking, for the Professor never softens truths, however unpalatable. Artists are proverbially Bohemians, and Busheyites are no exceptions to this rule, for they treat Mrs. Grundy with a polite unconcern, infinitely refreshing to the world-weary denizens of a town. Such utter freedom and unconventionality as here obtain are seldom elsewhere met with. Each Student has two rooms in a diminutive cottage; she has her own latchkey, and is certainly queen of her own castle. The Students are very sociable, of course there are sets, yet the festivities in each set are always general. Of these 'sets' the most important are the Aristocrats, the Lilies (so called because they work not), and the Tramps.

Tea and coffee parties are the favourite minor forms of entertainment, they generally take place in a girl's room, but are not unheard of in a man's. The men bring banjos, guitars, &c., and since most studios also possess a piano, the 'coffeés' are not the least charming part of Student social life. Sometimes the guests shoot with miniature bows and arrows, play clumps, and derive intense pleasure from many other infantile pastimes. Dances are given in the school once or twice a term, at which times the cloisters and the tennis ground, which is on a terrace, form a romantic and delightful promenade; other dances are frequently held in the studios and are sometimes graced by the presence of Professor and Mrs. Herkomer. One big social function takes place once a week - the Professor's Sunday reception, at which celebrities of all kinds are to be met. On the door of the Dyreham is the inscription 'Students please enter - neither knock nor ring.' The drawing room acts as a cloak-room, where umbrellas, hats,

Apple-bobbing was seriously competitive at the Herkomer School sports days.



Photograph: A R Chewett

and cloaks soon cover every available space. Mrs. Herkomer and the Professor cordially receive each guest, while the former dispenses tea and cake.

The Professor's work, in its various stages, is disposed on easels about the room for the inspection of Students - a privilege the Professor considers not the least valuable part of his teaching. The new house, which is quite close, and of which the architect is the versatile Professor himself, is open to visitors. Great interest is always excited by the Bushey play, which takes place annually. The Professor, for whom it is especially written, always takes the principal part, the others being filled by professionals. The music and staging are as perfect as possible, and the theatre in which it takes place is thoroughly well appointed. In this theatre also during term time concerts are frequently given by the students and their friends. A great institution, too, is the Bushey string band, which is much sought after at coffee parties. It consists of mandolines, guitars, one violin, one clarionette (*sic*), and one banjo. These parade the village *en masse*, serenading their friends and acquaintances, and are usually accompanied by many others of the male persuasion, who, dancing to the light of the moon, materially assist the performance. As may be imagined, the effect on a moonlight night is idyllic.

Top: Herkomer School easels made useful stands for the high jump bar at the Herkomer School sports. **Below:** Mixed races were considered to be very suspect by local villagers. The expression 'hold onto your hat' has real meaning here. The Angle Studio is in the background.



...continued from page 15

1886 in return for designs by him of the exterior of the future Lululaund.

Twenty years ago, if I had said that I had been brought up in Herkomer Close, it would have meant little to people even in the art world - but that is no longer the case. Since it was becoming increasingly obvious that the available supply of old masters was drying up - and those coming on to the market were starting to fetch astronomical sums - paintings were needed which were more accessible both financially and in terms of availability. Victorian pictures and works of art helped to fill this gap, and whilst this boosted their status and appeal, it also caused prices to rise, which is not good news for small museums such as Bushey who seek to collect the work of one or two, increasingly high-profile, artists.

Herkomer's painting *Anna Herkomer* cost £1,850 in 1983 with an Art Fund grant of £462. By 1999 his painting *Our Village Nurse*

cost Bushey Museum £15,291 with a contribution of £3,283 from the Art Fund plus other grants. In 2002 Lucy Kemp-Welch's war painting *The Morning* cost £16,000 with an Art Fund grant of £4,000 and further grants of £9,000. At the end of last year the terracotta *Bust of Herkomer* by Edward Onslow Ford was eventually obtained for £22,500 with an Art Fund grant of £14,500, more than thirty times the grant for the portrait of Anna twenty years ago.

If a substantial painting by Herkomer were to come on the market today, it would probably cost at least ten times that of the works bought in the 1980s and substantial donations and bequests will be needed to keep up the flow of acquisitions for Bushey Museum.

In *Bushey Church and Pond*, Lucy Kemp-Welch painted two working horses in front of the village pond by St James's Church and opposite her house - a painting she kept all her life. Inside the church is a plaque to commemorate 'Lucy Kemp-Welch 1869-1958 and the Artists of Bushey' - in Bushey, the village of artists.

A Day's Ride

D W Parry

Mr D W Parry wrote concerning the farm photograph on page 12 of the 2003 Annual Report of the Bushey Museum and Art Gallery.

I moved from the West Riding of Yorkshire in 1936; part of the population explosion which took place around London, when all Fathers seemed to want to be 'something in the City'. Living on the outskirts of Wembley, where New Ideal Homes were selling at the rate of 1000 a month, there were many, many children thrown into the melting pot, all trying to find interesting things to do. We had explored the old Wembley Exhibition Grounds and spent the day on the London Underground for sixpence. We had bicycles, so what better to do than explore the countryside. We formed gangs, who understood each others strange dialects; most Southerners thought we were foreigners.



Photograph: John Hudson

A day's ride covered Stanmore, Bushey Heath, Bushey and beyond. Firstly we went from Kenton Lane to Stanmore, where we watched the

Bushey High Street in about 1950. The Bell and Unitts the Grocers on the left are where the supermarket is now. Evans of Bushey on the corner of Park Road is now Zin's Palace.

LMSR puffer; then up Brockley Hill (where Bentley cars were put into top gear at Spur Road and had to climb to the hospital at 30mph); then to Elstree and back past Aldenham Reservoir with the test beds for Napier engines on the left; up Caldecote Hill to the Rutts, and then down Little Bushey Lane. Just past Coldharbour Lane and on the right, Tyler's Farm had a pond, but I don't think this is the photograph. Further on past Burnt Farm was Bushey Grange Farm and I think this is the photograph. The lane to Bushey Grange Farm was on

the left where Little Bushey Lane bends three times. By the entrance to the lane was Long Pond, larger than the one by the farmhouse, which was further along the lane. I think the photograph is looking south east from the farmhouse, slightly uphill, towards the hilltop that is north east of the Moatfield. I may be wrong but this seems to fit the picture.

We would then cycle on towards Watford, along Bushey Mill Lane. Mill Way, where the houses were built in 1953, used to be Fisher's Field. He was an aviator and inventor who, back in the 1920s was trying to build a V.T. aircraft by tilting the engines to a vertical position, rather like a helicopter. I later bought 131 Mill Lane for £1900; the present prices are close to £250,000. We then went back past the Royal Caledonian Schools; along Grange Road and up the hill to Bushey. Years later I lived at 36 Falconer Road, where Forster lived.*

Then we continued up Clay Hill.



Bushey Museum Archive

Little Bushey Lane bending round Bushey Grange Farm.

We always seemed to meet the lady who lived in the old cottages opposite St Peter's Church, where the old road ran to the right of the 'new' road to the Alpine lights. The public house** faced this road and we always listened for the change in the road noise, as there was supposed to be a secret tunnel from the pub to Bentley Priory. It is still a secret! Later, when I came to live in the area, I found my wife's aunt and her husband lived on Windmill Lane; my wife has medals from their World War 2 duties on the Heath. Uncle Tommy was a sidesman for many years at St Peter's and Mr Steele made the font cover in his memory. Then we went back past Harrow Weald Common, which we called Wilson's Wood; the Kiln, the 'Casa Alta' pub and Grimsdyke. Later Roddy Barker was the gardener there, his wife always made jugs of lemonade. The it was through Harrow Weald and along Kenton Lane to home; always to be greeted with cries of, "Wherever have you been?" and, "You're very late."

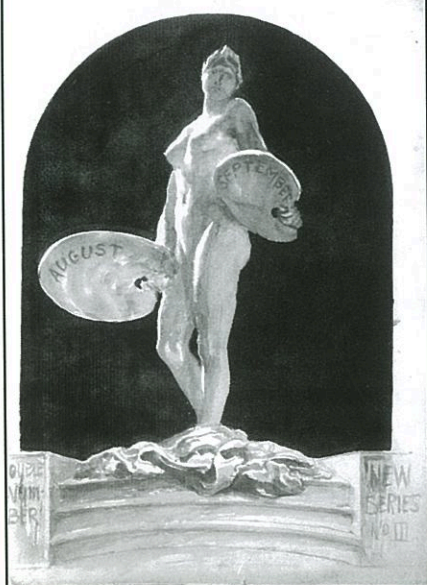
Over a period of 36 years I lived in Mill Way, Wayside Avenue, Falconer Road and Pickets Close. The family enjoyed their time there.

Notes

* Joseph Wilson Forster ran a small school of portraiture. Bushey Museum has a collection of important works by him.

** The Windmill.

A front cover from *The Palette*, part of the Mary Williams Collection. See pages 10-11.



Bushey Grange Farm

Derek Fowers

Derek Fowers, who lived at number 2 Bushey Grange Farm Cottages from 1939 until 1952, has some information about the photographs of the farm which appeared in Bushey, in the Archive Photographs Series.

The photograph on page 37 was taken from the Little Bushey Lane side. You can see that our cottage and cottage number 1 (the nearest in the photograph) have identical windows. We had running water but no gas or electricity. There were three sheds at the back of number 3, one for each cottage.

Long Pond was a few yards further along the footpath. One day when I was 7, in 1945, a woman fell in the Long Pond and my mother lent her some dry clothes. Our front gate was opposite the gate leading to the farmhouse. If I kicked a ball against the wooden shed shown in the photograph, Farmer Hedges would shout at me.

Page 49 shows harvest time. I used to go with my father who helped to load the carts. All



No 2 Bushey Grange Farm Cottages in 1951.

Mr Hedges's carts had H.R.H. painted on them. This stood for Henry Richard Hedges. The two POW were Adolph (the youngest) and Joseph who used to live in cottage no. 3. Mrs Agnes Hedges used to cook them a meal on Sundays. The white horse was called Blossom.

On the field towards Aldenham Road, there was a dell. My friend and I used to play in this. I remember a very tall and wide cedar tree

near the dell. The sides of the dell were quite steep to walk down. It was full of trees and bushes. One day I bought a water pistol in Mrs Middleton's toy shop at the corner of Falconer Road and accidentally squirted it in my mother's face. I hid in the dell for about four hours afterwards.

The bank on the opposite side of Long Pond to the footpath was quite steep. It was a job to get down without slipping. There were a lot of grassy islands, where moorhens used to nest. This must have been a good breeding place for dragonflies as there were always plenty flying about. At the end of Long Pond furthest from the cottages were two farm gates and an iron gate. The gate on the Aldenham Road side led to the orchard. The gate opposite led to the footpath we used. In this field was a very tall poplar tree. The iron gate led to where the only footpath is now. On the Aldenham Road side of this footpath was a wooded area which stretched

The Long Pond near Bushey Grange Farm. Present day footpath No 12 from Finch Lane to Little Bushey Lane runs alongside it. It is now no more than a muddy depression.



as far as the hedge on the other side. There were two or three garden gates in the wooded area. My father said that there must have been cottages there once.

Farmer Hedges had a flower garden at the front of his house. Just along the lane towards Aldenham Road were the dairy and cow sheds. Then there was a farm gate leading to a red coloured Dutch barn. Through the next gate along the lane, he kept a pile of mangolds covered in hay to feed the cattle in winter.

More than a Museum...

Alec Just

Bushey Museum Trust was formed in 1983 and Bushey Museum itself has been part of the local scene for over ten years. It's already become a local institution although occasionally - and amazingly - people living within a stone's throw of Rudolph Road are surprised to discover they've got a museum on their doorstep. The question 'why have a community museum' or to put it another way 'what is its value?' is worth asking. I will suggest some answers and leave you to decide if our Museum is worth having and keeping.

Starting with purpose - or rather purposes since there's no single purpose - a community museum isn't only about what's gone before. Of course it's about the history of the community and its people, both past and present, and how they lived their lives. It's also about what makes a locality and its people distinctively different from elsewhere. That involves providing some understanding of the local geology, natural history, geography and other factors that affect the evolution of a community.

'Community' implies, as the dictionary defines: 'common possession or enjoyment'. Successful communities are the ones whose people consciously share a sense of that ownership and pleasure. A community museum is both a repository for and a symbol of the qualities and attributes that go to make a locality recognisably special. It not only records the story of the place that was; it constantly renews and reinforces for every local visitor the sense of community they themselves enjoy - even if it's merely that they like the area better than others they've lived in. We all have a natural desire to belong and awareness and understanding of the history of the place where we live leads to appreciation and respect for the present.

A community museum, run by community volunteers with the support of local government, can be a socially unifying force at a time when so many factors in society seem to work in the opposite direction. Take Bushey Museum for example. Apart from being a passive repository with displays and exhibitions which attract many thou-

sands of visitors every year, it is also a place of great activity involving many of the 750-plus members of the Friends of the Museum. The Friends themselves organise a regular programme of talks, outings and entertainments which attract steadily increasing numbers. You could argue that those things are no different from the benefits available to members of a social club or a local society devoted to some special interest or other. A look at the wider picture soon shows that an excellent community museum like ours actually does far more.

In our increasingly secular and materialistic society, people still need to express an attachment to values beyond price. The physical world changes but human nature does not. The public response to the recent South Asia tsunami disaster demonstrates how interest in and concern for others is never far below our consciousness when the facts are made known to us. In the past the church was the symbol of values beyond price. For most people today - not all - a place of religious worship is no longer at or near the centre of their lives. I would argue that a community museum dedicated to the interpretation of enduring human values in history and art can

active volunteers from within our community, some with specialist skills, who choose to express through the Museum their pleasure in being part of a successful community: the classic virtuous circle. In particular, the Museum's Education Service, run by retired education professionals with support from other committed volunteers, has had outstanding success with its regular programme of organised interactive school visits always fully subscribed. Excited children enjoy bringing parents and grandparents on later visits. Such experiences can be formative in important ways by introducing to our youngsters that sense of ownership and enjoyment that defines community spirit.

Over these past ten years or so, Bushey Museum has been steadily building up its collections of art and artefacts. Such has been its success in being seen by local people as a physical symbol of public trust that the flow of donations and gifts has steadily increased culminating in the recent charitable bequest by Mrs Eila Chewett of the Reveley Lodge Estate with all the challenges and opportunities that offers for the future.

The next ten years should see the start of a two-stage process of consolidation on what has been achieved so far. First, our community museum will need new people at the helm as the founders retire, their groundwork done. Second, the process of reaching out to, and engaging with, local people will be further developed with the museum becoming a hub of local life built on the eternal verity that courtesy and tolerance based on knowledge and understanding underpins a happy civilised society.

I have already provided one simple answer to the question 'why should we keep the Museum?' - because it is a force for good. There are other, more hard-headed, reasons too - related to value-for-money. In Bushey Museum, we have a substantial community asset, acquired and maintained at significant cost in both public and private resources of money and time. I predict that the outward flow of community benefits will continue to grow as volunteered resources of time, enthusiasm and money continue to produce exceptional returns for the public purse.

I hope you agree.



The Museum Visit a watercolour by Maureen Miles. The original was presented to the Museum by the Friends and a greetings card made from it is on sale in the Museum shop. Maureen, who is herself a member of the Friends, has developed her own quirky style which shows her admiration for LS Lowry. She has exhibited widely in the locality.

go some way towards filling the void left by the decline in religious observance. In a secular, materialistic society values beyond price become ever more valuable and sustaining.

Our museum is volunteer-run with its activities supported by over one hundred