

The Journal of the Friends of Bushey Museum

New Series No. 2 Autumn 2001

**FRIENDS OF
BUSHEY
MUSEUM**



A registered charity in support of
Bushey Museum
Registered Charity no. 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.

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Welcome to the second issue of the Friends of Bushey Museum's *Journal*. It contains material on a wide range of topics so there should be something for everyone. Thank you to all the people who have sent in contributions; shorter items appear in the *Newsletter*, longer articles in the *Journal*. Many of these arrive in the form of letters so rather than have a Letters Page there is a *Feedback* section for items relating to earlier articles.

Thank you to the people who sent in their recollections of their schooldays but we would still like more. Were the early days of Bushey Meads quite as chaotic as those at Bushey Grammar School? Did you attend one of the many private schools, particularly one of the smaller ones?

In this issue there are accounts of social activities including Scouting and the Bushey Flower Show. Do you remember any community social activities? Did you attend the dances at the Spiders Web or the Bushey Hall Hotel? Did you take part in any of the processions for the coronations or the Silver Jubilee of George V? And what about those street parties? There is plenty for you to think about.

Of course my job as editor would be impossible without the assistance of Bryen Wood with his encyclopaedic local knowledge and who found photographs to illustrate the articles. Michael Pritchard has been responsible for the technical side of the production. Thank you to everyone.

Janet Murphy

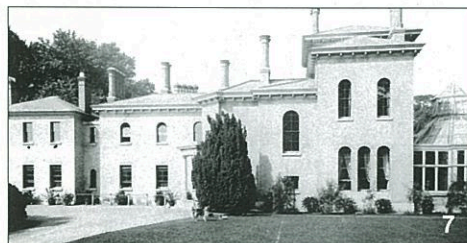
In this issue



3



5



7



12

Editorial 1

Schooldays in Bushey 2
Shirley Childs, George Cusack and Anthony Wildig recall their childhood schools

Scouting in Bushey in the 1930-40s 4
John Storey was a Cub Scout in the 1930s

Bushey Flower Show 5
The Oral History Group recorded the recollections of *Herbert Thornton*

The Lady in the Lake - and After 7
Kenneth Warr 'saved' Miss Attenborough

Feedback 9

Memories of Bushey 10
The Fishmongers Arms and more by *Wilf How*

The Role of a Museums' Officer 11
Julie Massey describes herself as a 'good swimmer'. Discover why.

More Recollections of World War 2 12
Tony Toms, Wilf How, Jean King, Frank Gillett

Mostyn at Cyfarthfa Castle 13
Chris Jordan finds a portrait

Herkomer and the Royal Prefix 14
New research from *Michael Pritchard*

Bushey Grange 16
Janet Murphy records the decline of an estate

Schooldays in Bushey

Three local people recall their experiences

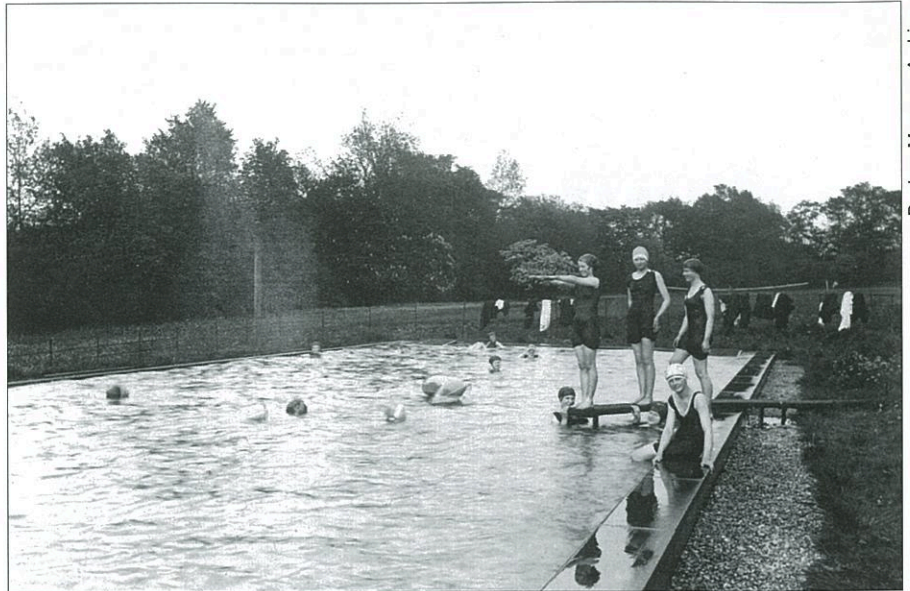
Shirley Childs (née Farrell) sent her recollections of the early days of Bushey Grammar School

My husband and I were among the first pupils at Bushey Grammar School. We started at the Central School in Derby Road, Watford. At the end of our third year as we broke up for the six week holiday we were informed that the school was closing and we were to start in September at the new school being built in Aldenham Road, Bushey. It had never been mentioned at school so we knew nothing of it and were all stunned. However my mother knew about it as the building had been started pre-war when we were very small and had been moth-balled at the outbreak of war.

The School opened in September 1950 and the beginning of the new term was a complete fiasco. The bus service had not been altered to cope with the large numbers going out of Watford at that time of day. Scholars came from Croxley Green, Leavesden, Garston etc so all changed buses in Watford High Street where there was pandemonium. Huge queues formed in Watford Market Place as buses filled up and departed leaving many waiting. For weeks many children arrived extremely late.

The school was not properly finished and we had builders everywhere for months. At the Central School the boys and girls were taught separately and had their own playgrounds, only joining together for assembly. There were 36 pupils in each class. At Bushey Grammar School the boys and girls were taught together. Each year was divided into three for some lessons (and therefore there were fewer to a class) but divided according to ability for others. At the Central School we sat at our desks and the teachers came to us but at Bushey Grammar School we travelled round to the teachers. We had a new set of teachers and at first they wore their gowns. It was all a novelty but must have been a nightmare for the staff.

The first headmaster was Mr O'Connor and at the same time there was a headmistress Miss Woolgar. Most of the teachers were very young compared with those at the Central School. Some of them were Doug Jackman, Mr Asbridge (English), Mr Caffell and Miss Bateman took sport. Mrs Richards and Miss Rice



St. Margaret's School swimming bath in 1925. There were no changing rooms as can be seen by the girls' clothes hanging on the fence.

(maths) came with us from the Central School; they seemed very ancient. We were at the Grammar School for two years and not only did we face the chaos of the new school but we were also only the second batch of children to take O-level - prior to that it had been matriculation.

George Cusack remembers his own primary school days at Ashfield School

To the boys there from 1925 to 1931, preceded by two years at Merry Hill Infants School and drawn from the area we regarded as Bushey proper, Ashfield was *the* school. Although some of our sisters and their friends attended London Road School, its strangers were from beyond our Pale.

The school was built in 1845, with an adjacent dwelling for the Headmaster and family. The buildings comprised five classrooms and a cloakroom, while at the south-east corner was a room which I remember clearly as cellar-like; in this room District Nurse Reeves (known to the pupils as 'Bug Hunter') conducted monthly inspections, chiefly for head lice, but also with comments on personal hygiene and general appearance. Two additional classrooms stood in the paddock at the southern end of the school, with the remainder of the paddock divided into small plots where we were taught gardening.

The main school building stood at

street level, while to its east about seven feet higher, lay a tarmac playground which led past the north end of the main building finishing at a timber fence on the School Lane boundary.

The game most often played on this playground was soccer in both summer and winter, using a tennis ball or a slightly larger rubber ball. However in winter when the weather conditions were suitable, another pastime was popular with older pupils. After rain, sleet or snow followed by freezing temperatures, the playground became like a skating rink. Equipped with the hob-nailed boots which most of us wore, we would cut a slide from the southern corner diagonally across the playground and down the aforementioned incline finishing up against the school gate. Quite a speed could be attained, and one would slam into the gates good and hard. Injuries were not uncommon, as I know full well, having once laid open my right cheek and eyebrow to the bone (the scars can still be seen).

The school comprised 7 standards with the teachers in ascending order, Mrs Fowler, 'Pedlar' Palmer, Mr Wilson, Mr Smith, Mr Field, 'Taffy' Morris and headmaster 'Tommy' Atkins. Mr Smith doubled as music teacher, leading the school choir to many successes at Berkhamsted Eisteddfod, while 'Taffy' took senior pupils for sport, including swimming at King George Recreation Ground. Of the

other teachers, I remember 'Pedlar' Palmer best, famed for his accuracy with a piece of chalk thrown to wake up dozers at the back of the room.

Apart from music and sport, teachers taught all subjects to their classes, basically the three Rs with a particular grounding in English grammar, spelling, essay writing (composition as it was then called) and arithmetic. Class sizes were between thirty and forty pupils and no one could advance without attaining a certain level of performance.

The school and its headmaster 'Tommy' Atkins had a reputation for strict discipline, and I remember more than one occasion when pupils from London Road arrived, who needed bringing into line. Despite this, my memories are of a good and happy school with teachers who resorted to the cane only when it was richly deserved. Bullying was not tolerated by the staff, who co-opted senior pupils to help police the playground and the journeys to and from school.

Much 1960s architecture has come in for criticism. Anthony Wildig however remembers one such building with affection - Watford Technical High School

Looking back to the late 1960s when I attended Watford Technical High School in Bushey Hall Road, my recollections are of a modern building that functioned well and had a pleasant environment in which to work. I now realize and have come to appreciate that the British post-war school construction was pioneered by Hertfordshire, who built nearly 200 hundred schools during the first fifteen years after the war. They were designed in the County Architect's office, making use of mass produced components and prefabrication techniques. The system of steel and concrete supports with wall panels in a variety of materials allowed flexibility of design to suit different sites. Watford Technical High School did have some brick walling, but was mainly glass faced, an adaptation of the original concept which was for mainly lightweight single storey structures.

There were no problems in heating such a building in the days of cheap energy. So much glass made venetian blinds an essential requirement. Even so the classroom block would bake in a heat wave. I also recall the glass coming in for its fair share of breakages, particularly the doors. Flat roofs and skylights needed constant attention as well and there were certain places where you did not sit in



Bushey Museum Archive

Oswald 'Tommy' Atkins and Miss England with Standard 7 at Ashfield School in 1931.

rainy weather.

The site was on a slight gradient necessitating retaining walls. These were capped with paving slabs and were just the right height for sitting and working on. The area around the science and craft blocks similarly had raised beds of shrubs and all the pathways made use of the standard council paving slabs. There was no single 'playground' as such but a series of spaces between the various buildings, created an intimate environment and made 'outdoor living' pleasant. In wet weather there were large porches and overhanging buildings in which to shelter and generally 'hang around'.

The design of the building and grounds relied on rectilinear form with no frills. This was complemented by the many old fruit trees and the high brick wall along the length of the boundary. The land had been part of the kitchen gardens

of the Bushey Hall Estate and no doubt the wall would have been originally lined with greenhouses. When the garden was abandoned I am not sure, but Bushey Hall was eventually demolished in 1955 after being put to a variety of uses and the estate broken up.*

The school changed its name to Bushey Hall School and moved to the old Royal Masonic Junior School premises in London Road. The old building was demolished and replaced by housing development, but the old garden wall still remains.

** Editor's note. The estate had been broken up earlier and the land remaining around the Hall is now the Lincolnfields Centre. Does anyone have a photograph of the school that they would allow the Museum to copy?*



Bushey Museum Archive

St. Margaret's School riding lessons in 1925. Penelope Chetwode who married John Betjeman is second from the left.

Scouting in Bushey in the 1930-40s

John Storey

Scouting in Bushey was well supported in the years before the War. There were two troops, the 7th South West Herts, based at the Parish Church and the 18th based at the Congregational Church. The Cubs of the 7th had a green and mauve scarf and khaki shorts whereas the 18th had a green scarf and blue shorts. The Scout uniform for the 7th was khaki shirt and shorts with green and mauve scarf and the 18th a blue jersey and shorts with green scarf.

I joined the 18th Cubs in about 1933. The leader, Akela, was Miss Ada Potter, who kept a sweet shop opposite Catsey Lane. She was a very positive person and good leader, ably assisted by Miss McNamara and Miss Bish. The father of scouting in Bushey was Mr Painter (Pop). He appeared quite old and to me always seemed to be like Baden-Powell himself. He would always appear if there was anything to be done. He had a military bearing and spoke in a clipped military style that was much respected by all.

We met in the Congregational Hall, since demolished, which was well equipped with mats, a vaulting horse for P.T. and a climbing rope fixed to the roof with a bell at the top to ring if you got that far. Our weekly subs were a penny but I am sure that the church were generous to us. It was very much 'Duty to God and the King' with church parades together with the Scouts, Guides and Brownies once a month. At these times the flags were

trooped into the church during the first hymn and out during the last. It was a great honour to carry the flag. Otherwise we wore uniform on Empire Day and marched in the Armistice Day Parade.

I recall the camps, mainly at weekends but on one occasion a two week camp on the Isle of Sheppey. There must have been about twenty of us and the three leaders, together with tents and equipment loaded into a covered motor lorry one Saturday morning. Our tents were mostly bell tents, probably relics of the Great War, I know one of them failed in a rainstorm one night. It was quite a responsibility for the three ladies to take twenty nine and ten year olds to a camp for a fortnight. All the cooking was done over open fires and water had to be carried for some way. The tents and equipment were all owned by the 18th. I remember we carried our clothing etc in a kit bag, mine was used by my father in the Great War. Sleeping bags were hardly known then and we had blankets secured by blanket pins. We also had hessian palliases which were stuffed by straw provided on site. The cost to each individual was twenty-five shillings to cover food, travel and other expenses, not much by today's standards but bearing in mind that a working man's wage was about fifty shillings per week, it was quite a lot.

Other activities were a visit to the RAF Hendon Air Display. Seeing all those military aircraft with open cockpits

was quite a thrill. One Bank Holiday we were taken to Hampstead Heath. I had never seen such crowds and we didn't lose anyone. We put on a show in a District competition held at Beechen Grove Hall in Watford. I don't think we won anything, but I recall I sang a solo *Who'll buy my Calla Herrin?* Then there was the District Jamboree, in Bushey House Park, and there was a pageant, something to do with Cecil Rhodes I think. We Cubs were all Matabele Warriors and had to make shields and spears. On the day we stripped apart from a brief pair of pants and were then blackened all over, given a grass skirt and with our shields and spears were ready to perform. I don't think that any of us had any knowledge of the Master Plan but we ran about yelling and waving our spears and everyone seemed happy. My mother was not when she had taken me home and put me in the bath - when I got out there was a very black mark which could not easily be removed.

At the age of eleven, which would have been 1938, I became a Scout. The Group Scout Master was Richard Curme, there were several Assistant Scout Masters, Mr Parry, who lived at Pendle, Coldharbour Lane, Wilf How, who worked at Tweens the chemist and two or three of the Foskett brothers. The Troop had been given the use of a large wooden hut off Catsey Lane. This had been an indoor small bore range at some time.* We were at this time collecting waste paper to raise funds and had obtained a baler which was kept at the hut. I know we were out with the trek cart quite a lot in the evenings. When I think about it it was quite dangerous as street lighting was not good, the trek cart was dark blue as were our uniforms and the only light we had was an oil lamp on the cart often masked by the person pushing it. In the run up to the war, we were involved with gas mask distribution, providing casualties for Civil Defence exercises and filling sand bags.

All our officers went off once war was declared. Pop Painter came forward to help out but some drastic action needed to be taken. The Revd. John Scott, the curate at the Parish Church, was the Scout Master of the 7th and the two troops were amalgamated under his command.



The 18th SW Herts Cub Scouts Christmas party in the Co-op Hall in 1933. Pop Painter is top right. The ladies in the middle are Miss Bish, Miss Potter and Miss Macnamara. John Storey is on the right next to the Dutch 'girl'. He joined the Herts Constabulary and retired a Superintendent.

Unfortunately for the Revd. Scott, who wanted to go off and do his bit, the Rector the Revd. Leslie Beckley left and Revd. Scott became Priest in Charge. He was a good scout leader and the amalgamation was a success. He wished to be known as 'Skip' a tradition in the movement but unknown to us in the 18th. We met in various places including the Guide hut in Falconer Road but mainly in the Institute (now demolished).**

Summer camp in 1940 was spent at Ilmer House Farm, near Princes Risborough, by kind permission of Meric Attenborough, a member of the Bushey family which did so much for the village. Due to war restrictions we were not allowed to sleep under canvas so instead had to sleep in the stables. We were also introduced to 'kipper washing' - washing yourself all over from a bucket of cold water which you then upended over your head. At that time we had not had any bombs in Bushey but we were taken to see a crater in the wilds of Buckinghamshire.

Summer camps 1941 and 1942 were in a cherry orchard at Prestwood Bucks. We had the use of some very good equipment on loan from the Lord Mayor's Own Scout Troop. It included a tent (this particular restriction had been removed) and a canvas pool, which was most useful as the weather was hot.

Once Scouts reached the age of sixteen we were involved for some three nights a week, either fire watching at Ashfield School or Civil Defence messenger duties in the control room behind the Council Offices in Rudolph Road. Among the people I was on duty with was Mr Jaggard the builder who, when there was something to celebrate, would bring along an attaché case containing bottles when he came on duty. He would not let the messengers have strong drink but always found something for us.

Scouting suffered when John Scott joined the RAF in I think 1943. We still had weekend camps and in 1943 and 1944 had summer camps in a cider orchard at Edington near Bridgewater, Somerset. Some of us cycled from Bushey, no mean feat when you consider that there were no sign posts. During the latter camp we visited John Scott now a Squadron Leader at RAF Weston Zoyland.

Editor's notes

* *It had been Bushey Rifle Club*

** *On the site of what is now St James' Church House*



The Congregational Church Young Peoples Fellowship outing in 1948 run by Edgar Fulkes. Frank Palmer is standing extreme right.

Courtesy Frank Palmer

Bushey Flower Show Herbert Thornton

The Oral History Group under the direction of Barry Hyman records the recollections of local people. In 1988 Herbert Thornton remembered Bushey Flower Show, the high point of the annual social calendar between the wars:

"...and then on the opposite side of the road was Lord Bethell's place, the big mansion.* The wall was much nearer the road in those days - 12ft high, you couldn't see the mansion at all. He let the park out for the annual flower show where the Golf Club is now. We knew old Trundle, the head gardener who lived in one of the houses up there. My mother was very involved with getting the breakfasts for the trades people who used to come.

There was another chap who lived at the top of Finch Lane, Norman Robinson, he was retired, seemed to have plenty of money. He had a gardener and general handyman. He had a little pony and trap which he used to run around in and when the flower show came around, Norman Robinson used to organize all the side shows and spend his own money making them. Much better in those days than it is now - a real country show.

And there was old Granny Bird showman who used to come up with the roundabouts. Used to get whacking big steam engines through the 7ft gateway opposite Melbourne Road. Had to skid them round on angle plates to get them in. A little old lady like Queen Victoria, she used to have her caravan opposite the main roundabout and she used to count all the people on it to make sure she had the right money. The entrance was through the pair of gates opposite the panel beat-

PROGRAMME OF EVENTS

2.30 SHOW OPENS.
WATFORD SILVER PRIZE BAND.
LORD BETHELL'S GARDENS OPEN (2.30 to 8).

2.45 BABY SHOW Class one first.
Class 1. Mrs. Armand Blackley's Challenge Cup.
Class 2. Mrs. David Blackley's
Class 3. Mrs. Isherwood's

2.45 'CHILDRENS RACES.

3.0 PET SHOW.

3.15 PUNCH AND JUDY (Nurses will collect for Bushey Heath Cottage Hospital).

3.30 CARBUSTER CARBARET.

4.15 PUNCH AND JUDY.

4.30 LADIES RACES.

6.0 TUG OF WAR.

6.15 PUNCH AND JUDY.

6.30 CARBUSTERS CARBARET

8.0 TENTS CLOSED (Exhibitors admitted on production of Claim Cheque).
DANCING.

8.15 SALE OF EXHIBITS FOR HOSPITAL.

9.30 FIREWORKS.

CARBUSTER CARBARET.

A 100% ALL SMASHING, BASHING & CRASHING PROGRAMME OF THRILLS & SPILLS, INCLUDING

MOTOR POLO, BATTLE OF FLOWERS, MOTOR LONG JUMPING, BALLOON TOURNAMENT, SURF RIDING.

The Chairman of the Society will sell by auction all the Exhibits given to the Society, at 8.15 p.m. Will Exhibitors give all they can of their Exhibits. Proceeds in aid of the Bushey Heath Cottage Hospital.



Above: Lord Bethell's park at Bushey House on Jubilee Day 6 May 1935. The house between the trees in the distance is to be set on fire and extinguished by Bushey Fire Brigade. **Below:** Fairground people brewing up in Lord Bethell's park before or after the Horticultural Show in 1937. The big lady might be Granny Bird.



ers.** One year the police were inside having a tug-of-war when some lads jumped over the fence to get in for nothing and the police collared them. There were two or three marquees and trades people came from miles around, specialist growers like the rose people from Colchester and Lanes the fruit people from Berkhamstead. Mr Trundle put on a big display from the greenhouses and the gardens were opened up for the public to go round at 6d a time.

One year they had motor car football - never seen anything like it - organised by young Aldiss, a bit of a lad, keen on motor racing. They had a lot of model T Fords, the chassis only and chased around playing football, one man driving, the other hitting the ball - then they unscrewed the front wheels so they came off.

For two or three years they had a house on fire and the fire brigade put it out. Bushey used to have an old fire engine - a Dennis with wooden wheels - quite a smart affair. They built the front of the house with a platform behind the second storey with wire netting baskets filled with wood chips to make a good blaze. There used to be a comic going around

the show, a police sergeant from Elstree. He used to go up into the house and someone set fire to it. The first engine was just a hand pump - never made an impression - and then they used to bring up the big engine. One year the comic nearly got trapped.

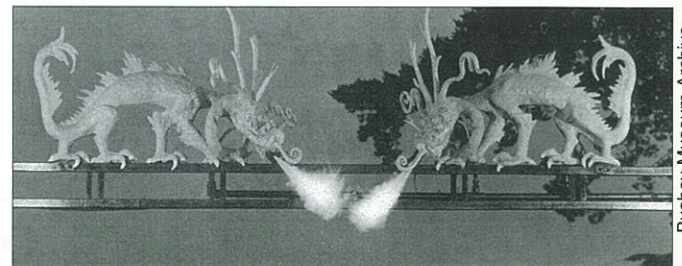
We used to have things like the greasy pole - a pole greased from top to bottom and there was a prize if you could climb it. The young bloods used to come in their overalls, climb a few feet and then slide to the bottom - never saw anyone get to the top. You got a prize for knocking nails into a piece of oak with an engineers ball pane hammer.

And then the war came along and put paid to it."

Editor's notes

* *Bushey House now Bushey House Beaumont*

** *Almost opposite Koh-i-noor Avenue*



Iron dragons above the gates to Bushey House breathed gas-powered fire. They disappeared after the Green Shield Stamp Co. occupied the house in the 1970s.

The Lady in the Lake - and After

Kenneth Warr

The author has kindly allowed publication of a shortened version of an article which appeared in full in the May 2001 issue of The Old Masonians' Gazette - the annual magazine for Old Boys of The Royal Masonic School.

"Help! Help! Help" Not the kind of cries I expected to hear while out on a Sunday afternoon walk in Bushey with my friend in Alexander's House,* Jim Treweek (tragically killed in a motorcycle accident not long after leaving school in 1942). But Jim and I distinctly heard them as we strolled across the fields in the Christmas term of 1939 - and that was the start of a series of events which to this day remain vividly in my memory.

Running as fast as we could in the direction from which the cries appeared to come, we soon came across a lady - she was probably in her fifties - half in and half out of a large lake in the grounds of Haydon Hill House, the Italianate-style mansion situated in its own extensive acres halfway up Merry Hill Road. Whilst feeding the ducks, she had obviously slipped on the mud into the lake and, although by grabbing the tree she had saved herself from falling in completely, her footing was so unsure that she was

unable to lever herself to safety. Grasping her by the arms, we were able to haul her out, none the worse for her experience, but richly effusive in her expressions of gratitude to her two 'rescuers'. Recognising us as Masonic boys from our School caps, she croaked in a high-pitched voice: "You don't know who I am do you?" We confessed that we didn't. "My name is Miss Attenborough and that's where I live" (pointing to the mansion). Frankly, we didn't believe her. Apart from the fact that her bedraggled overcoat reaching her ankles, her Wellington boots, which had seen better days and the battered old hat which nearly covered her eyes, hardly corresponded with our idea of someone who would live in such imposing-looking circumstances, the name Attenborough was one which we automatically associated with a man we knew to be impressively wealthy - and she looked anything but that.

Stanley J. Attenborough was deeply revered by Masonic boys not least no doubt - and this was characteristic of the man - because in 1938 to celebrate his 80th birthday he had treated the entire Royal Masonic School - every boy and every member of Staff (teaching, domestic and outdoor) at both the Junior and Senior Schools - to a slap-up supper. It

was an occasion which not one of us who was there to enjoy it is likely to forget.

Could this dowdy-looking lady really be connected with such a distinguished gentleman? Surely not! But we were forced to change our minds, when after an hour or so helping her to feed the chickens, pigs etc and other livestock on the adjoining farm, she walked confidently into the mansion and emerged with an apple for each of us. What is more, she added that we should be welcome to come back on any Sunday afternoon if we cared to help her out with the farmyard chores.

On many a Sunday after that Jim and I took advantage of her invitation and spent the afternoon on the farm, chatting with Miss Attenborough as we fed the animals. But one day things turned out differently. The next School play was to be 'Twelfth Night' and, having been cast for one of the principal female parts (!), I was needed for rehearsals on Sunday afternoons and so Jim used to visit the farm on his own. One Sunday however, having turned up for the rehearsal, I was told that I would not be needed and so I decided to make my way to the farm. But when I got there Jim wasn't there and, to my surprise, the cowman told me that he had gone into the house. After some hesitation I decided to find him. Going up to



The front of Haydon Hill House in Merry Hill Road in about 1910.



The back of Haydon Hill House from the lake.

the front portico, I pulled the metal ring in the wall and in the depths of the building heard the clanging of the bell. The front door was opened by none other than Jim himself. "What are you doing in there?" I asked. Back came the answer with a self-satisfied smile: "I've been invited in to tea". At this point Miss Attenborough came to the door and, seeing who it was, invited me in as well.

This, of course, was the first time I had been inside the house and one could not fail to be impressed by its grandeur. I was led across the vestibule and across a large hall into the spacious drawing room where Miss Attenborough introduced me to her mother, a very dignified old lady in a blue velvet dress sitting in the corner of a be-cushioned settee. From the start it was made clear that she was seriously deaf but she sported a horn-shaped hearing aid down which one had to shout to make oneself heard. Tea was eventually brought into the room on a trolley and served by an elderly lady who, we were given to understand, had been a family servant for many years. From what we could gather, most of the other members of staff had now left for war work of one kind or another.

In the months that followed, whenever we visited the farm we were asked back for tea and of course got to know Miss Attenborough and her mother much better; both were more than interested to hear about our School activities. Miss Attenborough was a most lively and spirited character and I well remember that on one occasion when I happened to mention that I was a member of 'Jack' Blake's

hill-billy band, she hurried across to a cabinet, took a mouth organ from one of the drawers and proceeded to give us a tune.

Just occasionally there seemed to be a kind of family get-together when various branches of the family - adults and children - would descend on the house for Sunday tea. On such days it meant that the task of shouting down the hearing aid to old Mrs Attenborough - usually taken in alternate 20-minute stints (which could be quite exhausting) - could be more widely shared. Tea on these occasions was taken in the dining room where we all sat around an enormously long table which, despite the wartime rationing, appeared to be laden with delicious food. The conversation, I recall, was predominantly on farming matters. At 6.30pm my friend and I had to be back for Evening Chapel. Normally, of course, we walked back but on these family occasions invariably one of the members of the family would kindly offer to run us back by car - for in those early days of the war, a limited amount of petrol was still available.

Towards the end of 1940 Haydon Hill House was scheduled to be requisitioned by the military, much to the annoyance of the occupants who were forced to seek alternative accommodation. Mrs Attenborough had probably come there as a young bride while her daughter had no doubt lived there all her life. The prospect of moving somewhere else came, therefore, as an unpleasant shock.

Kenneth Warr went on to say that with the aid of Gordon Metcalfe, the then president of The Old Masonians'

Association and Grant Longman he was able to make contact with a surviving member of the family, 89 year old Meric Attenborough and his wife who live in Sussex, both of whom spent many hours at Haydon Hill in their younger days and were able to provide additional information.

Haydon Hill House and the surrounding estate was purchased by Robert Percy Attenborough in 1872. He married a cousin Laura Attenborough who was the dignified old lady with a hearing aid. They had five children, including Ella, Miss Attenborough. The eldest boy Henry followed his father into the pawnbroking business, but his son, Meric, became a farmer at one time near Princes Risborough, where the 18th South West Herts Scout Troop camped in 1940. Laura's brother was Stanley Attenborough who took such a close interest in the Royal Masonic School, serving on the Board of Management for over 60 years and who played such an important part with the then headmaster, the Revd. Harry Hebb, in drawing up plans for the new Senior School in Bushey.

What became of the two ladies? Reluctantly they started to view other properties but from the start it became evident that old Mrs Attenborough in particular would not be easily satisfied. The story goes that on being taken to view one possible property - a large house with no less than nine bedrooms - she stood in the hall, banged on the floor with her walking stick, and exclaimed "Pokey! Pokey!" But in due course they found a house which was tolerably suitable and how appropriate that they settled in The Avenue immediately opposite the Royal Masonic School. True, the style of living to which the family had been accustomed at Haydon Hill House was no longer possible (at one time it was estimated that there were 17 members of staff of one kind or another) but, although those days had gone for ever, even now Kenneth Warr counts himself fortunate in not only having a glimpse of what such a household must have been like in its hey-day, but also in having come into contact with such a charming family.

And yes there is a relationship with Lord Richard Attenborough and Sir David Attenborough; their father was a cousin of Meric's father.

Editor's note

* *Alexander's House was part of the Royal Masonic School.*

Feedback

Shirley Childs wrote about the lady who sat for Herkomer (Journal 2000)

Mrs Childs reminded me that the lady was her grandmother, Emily Sarah Bond, born in 1876. Known as Mitty because she was a tiny mite when she was born, she was a frail child and missed a lot of school, so much that the family was summoned to attend court, where she was defended by her grandmother. For several years the family lived at 22 Vale Road (the numbers have since been changed) where Emily and her sister Maud helped in the laundry run by their mother. She died aged 42 and Emily took over the running of the laundry. She employed many local women, especially when the neighbours' husbands were out of work. She paid them half-a-crown (12½p) a day and women would knock at the door asking if there was any chance of an odd day's work when money was very scarce for them. It was at this time that she would have done the laundry for Herkomer. She collected and delivered the washing with a handcart. She washed sheets for London hotels which were collected and despatched from Bushey Station. Emily said that she worked well into the night, once washing (by hand) 24 sheets. Water would have been heated up in the brick copper. She continued to run the laundry after her marriage to Herbert Pratt, a butcher. As was common with most men at that time he did not like his wife working outside the home and one day he came home and announced that he had rented a house in Watford and that was that. Emily lived to the ripe old age of 93.

John Storey responded to the mention of Bushey Co-op in the Museum's Annual Report 2000

The comment that it struggled to exist was a surprise to me as this was not my impression of those early days. I knew it from day one, having been present at its opening. The share system operated was an attraction for many I am sure. You became a member by purchasing a share which I think cost one pound. From then on you gave your share number when making each purchase and at the end of a period, perhaps three months, a dividend was paid on the total value of the purchases in that time. Whilst we are not talking about great amounts and remembering that a manual worker's wage was fifty shillings a week or less, it was of value and a means of saving. Of course, during the War, one had to register with one's butcher and grocer so there was a captive clientele. I think it began to fail



Miss Emily Sarah Bond 1876-1969

Courtesy Shirley Childs

after the War when it became a self-service operation.

It opened about 1933 and at the time there were four other grocers and two butchers in the village. The grocers were Dadsons, Unitts, Barretts and a small retail/wholesale business in Herne Road operated by Mr Kipling who was on the UDC. The Co-op was much more up to date with a grocers and butchers under the same roof, separate but with a connecting door. It was said that the intention was to extend this building to provide space for the sale of shoes and other items but this never happened. The site of the shop was a field that had been owned by Stokes the butcher and there was a rumour that as he would never have sold it to a competitor, a third party was employed to complete the purchase, much to Stokes's chagrin.

The ground was well prepared before the opening, a mobile butchers shop toured the streets of the village each week. This was not just selling from the back of a van. The purpose-built vehicle had a flap at the side which was raised to reveal a proper counter, the flap also protecting the customer in inclement weather. Milk and bread were delivered daily and a man (I believe a Mr Sears) would come to the door to take grocery orders, which were delivered on a Thursday. There were others who took orders at the door for later delivery. One came from Tesco Stores, which operated from Queen's Road in Watford. The shop had no door, just a shutter pulled down when the shop was closed. At first the Tesco delivery man would come round in a box tricycle, even taking orders as far as Bushey Heath.

As far as the social side of the Co-operative organization was concerned, the Co-op Women's Guild would meet in the Bushey Labour Party Hall, in Herkomer Road, just about opposite Bournehall Avenue. When the new building opened there was a well appointed hall above the shop where all sorts of organizations met. There were picture shows from time to time; the projectionist and his equipment did not always turn up and the three-pence entry fee had to be returned.

The Watford Co-operative Society was the successor to the St Andrew's Co-operative Society probably formed with political aims, as so many were. St Andrew's was the area closest to Watford Junction Station and I would guess that railway people were involved in its formation. They formed all sorts of organizations like thrift clubs and of course sports clubs. I recall coming across the full title of the organization operating the refreshment rooms at the station - 'The Watford Junction United Railway Servants' Coffee Tavern Ltd.'



Kipling's Stores in Herne Road in about 1936. From the left are Walter Kipling, Jim Spreadbury, Tom Stockman, Ken Ashby and Stanley Kipling.

Courtesy Eric Hemming

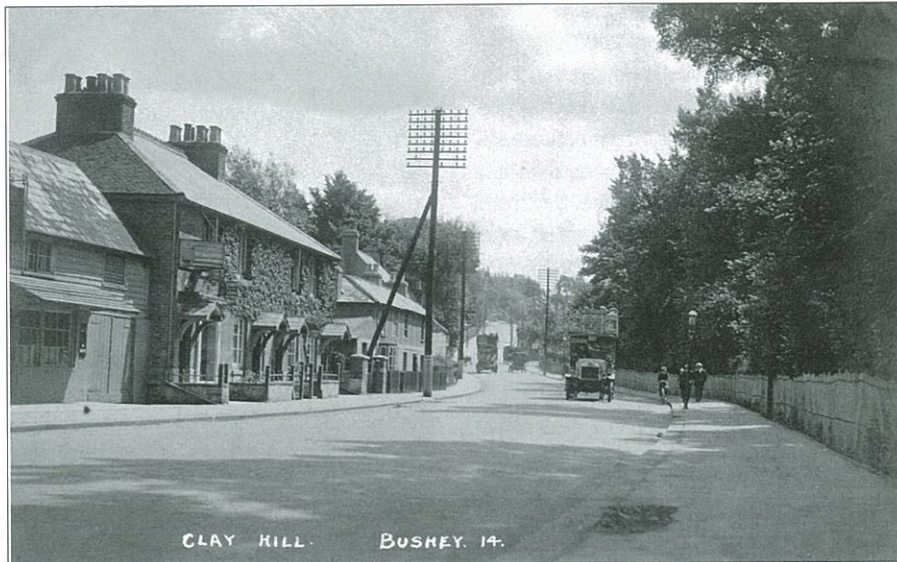
Bushey Museum Archive

Memories of Bushey

Random jottings by Wilf How

Opening the *Bushey Village Trail* at the picture of The Slads brings schoolday memories flooding back as this is how I remember it in the 1920s. Between the big house and the Fishmongers Arms were two tiny wooden cottages "two up and two down". In one lived the Haradine family. The daughter May was about my age. She painted tea-sets with wayside scenes round the edges, a tree, lamp post etc, anything that you would see on a walk. I have not seen any of her work but would recognize it if I saw it.

Beyond the Fishmongers Arms was a block of four houses, the first was Spinks, the cycle shop, and at the other end was a sweet shop run by Mrs Emmerton. The other two were private houses, one was occupied by a family called Capper. The lamp post was gas-lit as were the others in the village and they were serviced by a man called Bert Bartlett. He had bad feet and wore gaiters. He carried a little ladder which he rested against the arms of the lamp-post so that he could wind up the clock-



B-type No. 140 bus from South Harrow to Watford passes The Slads at the foot of Clay Hill in about 1920. Part of the Fishmonger's Arms is on the far left.

work timer to switch the light on and off.

That end of Melbourne Road was very busy in the twenties with films being made there. The films were of the silent type; 'talkies' didn't arrive until the late twenties. I remember the old silent films with their captions and someone playing soft, sloppy music for the love scenes and bashing the day-lights out of the poor old piano for the exciting bits.

I passed that corner four times a school day. Sometimes I would see Ben Lyon and Bebe Daniels between the Studios and the Fishmongers Arms. They were well known for their radio series *Life with the Lyons*.

The Studios made a series of Dr Fu Manchu films. A scene from *Monkey's Paw* was filmed at the junction of Melbourne Road, Herkomer Road and Coldharbour Lane. A film crew, a plane and a fire engine were on the green. On the opposite side of Melbourne Road (then a field) the façade of a house was built. The fire engine made the rain on the 'house', the plane's propeller made the wind that lashed the 'house' and the poor actor who knocked on the door got soaked. Then we all went home; such a lovely day.

The Daughter of the Regiment had a scene made on the balcony of Lululaund. The loser of the sword fight fell backwards onto a loaded hay cart.

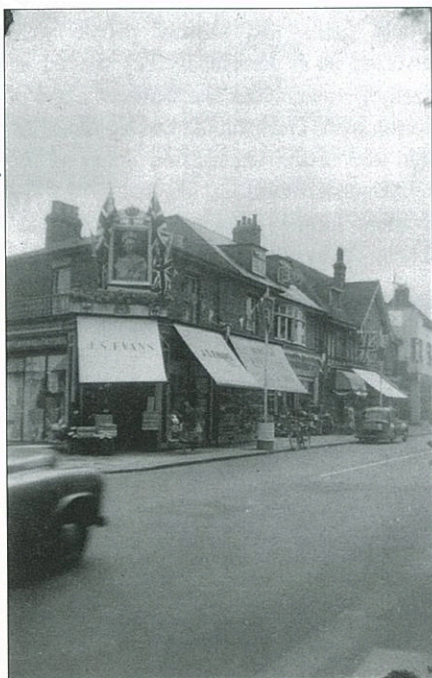
The cart was moved and the victim lay on the ground. A film company wanted to buy Lululaund but Lady H and her daughter-in-law said 'No'. They lived in the houses that lay back from the road. Eventually it was offered to Bushey Council. They didn't want it.

A group of Welsh ex-miners came to Bushey in the mid-twenties to build semi-detached bungalows in Chiltern Avenue. There was no work for them in the mines and very little elsewhere and then there was the General Strike in 1926.

Three of them lodged with my parents. I would dash home from school at midday, grab any mail that had arrived for the Welsh boys and dash up to Chiltern Avenue to deliver it. Those who expected it would be looking out for me. At the end of the week I would get a silver sixpence from those who had had mail. That money together with what I got for singing in St James' Church choir gave me some pocket money and some for saving. A penny at Mrs Emmerton's sweet shop would buy me four items at a farthing each. With 960 farthings for £1 life wasn't too bad.

The building of the bungalows on Chiltern Avenue and Oundle Avenue stopped when money ran out. The last one or two put up in a hurry collapsed. Most of the lads went back to Wales although one or two stayed.

Bushey Museum Archive



J. S. Evans, Bushey's nearest approach to a department store which could provide trousseaux and layettes, napery and drapery, and also lino and curtains. They decorated over all in 1953 for the Queen's coronation. Zin's Palace now occupies the site on the corner of Park Road.

Bushey Museum Archive

The Role of a Museums' Officer

Julie Massey

The role of a Museum Development Officer is a new idea for Hertsmere. County Development Officers have been around for years but now this role is beginning to be done at a more grass roots level. Hertsmere decided to go down this path three years ago when I was appointed to work primarily with Bushey and Potters Bar Museums. However it soon became apparent that there was a huge gap in heritage provision in Hertsmere with Boreham Wood and Elstree without any service at all.

The disparate nature of the Borough makes communication and travel very difficult between Bushey, Potters Bar, Radlett, Elstree and Boreham Wood, not to mention the small villages in between such as Shenley and Ridge. Museums and groups have tended to grow serving their own communities. Therefore the task of creating a museum for Hertsmere which would please everyone would be impossible.

So what is my job?

This is two fold; as an adviser to the two museums already established and as a project co-ordinator to develop services and resources across the Borough. My work with Bushey Museum includes writing management reports, helping to attract external funding, working on displays and giving advice on museum matters such as educational activities, marketing and the running of the Museum in general.

It is my responsibility to make sure that the Museum continues in the future and to help achieve this I will be writing the Cultural Strategy for the Borough which looks at heritage, the arts, sports, recreation and tourism amongst other cultural services. This plan will provide a framework for future action of which the Museum will be a part.

The process of writing the Strategy includes consulting current providers, such as Bushey Museum, to see what their needs are for the future. To help with this I will be setting up a Heritage Forum for Hertsmere, bringing together representatives from all the museums, history groups and organizations which are involved in looking after the area's heritage.

Working together, heritage organizations will be in a much stronger position to make their feelings felt politically. There



Photo: Marion Gee

Jonathan and Emily Kinna hold a diorama of Lucy Kemp-Welch's *Launching the Lifeboat* which they helped to make at a holiday activity organized by Marion Gee and Monica Law on 23 and 24 August this year.

will be co-operation on publicity and joint projects such as touring displays and training sessions. Some of this work has already begun with the Millennium Embroidery display touring to Radlett, Boreham Wood and Potters Bar later in the year.

As the only registered museum in Hertsmere, Bushey Museum has for many years taken a leading rôle in the heritage of the Borough by collecting items and information from Boreham Wood, Elstree and Aldenham. To place the Museum in a stronger position it needs to keep looking outside its own area, attracting users from and being involved in projects across the Borough.

So what am I working on now?

At Bushey recent work has centred around the new South Gallery, putting together an exhibition programme for the next two years. This new space gives the Museum a chance to exhibit displays from outside and to explore more of the Museum's social history collections. The current exhibition is a Christmas exhibition on childhood shown through children's toys, dolls and furniture. Further ahead is a display on the works of Myrtle Broome and a Woodland Roadshow from St Albans Museum.

Attracting external funding is crucial to any growth in services at the Museum. An application to the Clore Foundation for help to develop school resources based on the Museum's social history and art collec-

tions was eventually successful. The idea to move the art studio from Glencoe Road to the Museum site will potentially be a huge project and this will lead to applications for external funding.

Apart from my work with Bushey Museum, I also advise and support Potters Bar Museum, bringing them to a level where they are now ready to apply for registration status. A large part of my time over the last 12 months has been involved in creating a history society for Elstree and Boreham Wood and last November securing premises and overseeing the setting up of a local history room which is quickly becoming a small museum. When time allows, I also help other groups such as the Radlett Society and the Shenley Village Society.

With funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund I am now in the second year of a three year project to record and interpret the history of the film and television industry in Hertsmere, gathering hundreds of photographs, objects and interviews from people who have or are still working in the studios. This is no small task as very little research has been done on the studios, especially on the workers. However thanks to the Lottery, I am able to employ an assistant to help with this project.

As you can appreciate as a one woman band it is sometimes very difficult to keep my head above water. Fortunately I am a good swimmer.

More Recollections of World War 2

Four residents of the time tell their story...

From Tony Toms in Australia

When war started, we had to carry gas masks, and parents would have to escort us home during an air raid. I can remember my mother herding us against the fence near Melbourne Road as an enemy plane came low down Bushey High Street. Incidentally students were instructed to return home if an air raid siren sounded before you got half way to school. I cheated once getting to the Horse and Chains and then going home, Mum wasn't too pleased. If a raid came while we were at school we were marched to the shelters and sang songs or tried to knit scarves or gloves for the servicemen. My brother Vernon would take his banjo; he thought he was a budding George Formby.

Reading about the air raids reminds me of the time when they became so frequent that my parents thought it better to sleep downstairs in the middle room. The four youngest ages ranging 5 to 11 topped and tailed on a double mattress; eldest brother Derek (when not fire watching at Ashfield School at 15 years of age) under the dining room table and my parents in another corner. We tried to sleep with guns and bombs echoing all around us. After the first night a piece of shrapnel was found on my sister's pillow having penetrated a slate during the night. My mother always maintained that she had a sixth sense.

Wilf How writes from much closer to home. At the outbreak of war he was a well known figure in the village having worked at Tweens the chemist since 1929. He also helped with the Scouts

I was also in the St John's Ambulance Brigade. Through them I joined the Military Hospital Reserve. War was declared at 11 am one Sunday morning and

by 2pm I got my call up papers! Together with two other lads from Watford, I joined the Royal Army Medical Corps at Millbank on the Monday. We were posted to the Guards Depot in Caterham and about ten of

to meet friends and stopped at Mr William's tobacconist shop (now Ting-a-Lings). A young lady I knew passed the shop. I caught her up and walked her home. By now it was getting dark and the sirens

had gone so I went home and stayed with Mum. She had an internal shelter, a sheet of metal, angle iron legs and wire mesh surround. We heard a stick of bombs drop and George came home covered in dust, to say that a hole had been blown in the Club wall where we usually sat. The lych gate had also gone, but only later did we hear of a soldier's death.*

When I wrote to my mother to tell her that I had been 'Mentioned in Despatches' the news must have gone round the village like wildfire. Stokes the butchers, three shops along from Tweens, cleared one of their windows and dressed it with sand, toy soldiers and ambulances.

** Editor's note. In fact two soldiers were killed*

Bushey Museum Archive



St. James' lych gate was destroyed and the Bushey Conservative Club was severely damaged by one of a stick of six HE bombs which fell on the evening of 7 October 1940. Two Royal Fusiliers on exercises near the lych gate were killed.

us together with St. John's Ambulance Brigade and Red Cross (VAD) nurses, a few FANY (First Aid Nursing Yeomanry) and Ambulance (Laundry Van) Drivers we took over the Depot Reception Centre before moving to a large house in 1940.

We were called up as trained soldiers and attached to the 16th Coldstreams and were expected to behave as guardsmen. I bought a peaked cap, set it up in true guards fashion, the edge of the peak 1 inch from the end of my nose, I must have done a good job as a Guard's sergeant offered to buy it from me. To go on leave, I used the Green Line Coaches. When patients heard we were going on leave they would shine our brasses, buff our boots and blanco our webbings. NCO patients taught us what to do and how to do it - all the tricks of the trade.

One evening, when on leave in Bushey, I was on the way to the Conservative Club

From Frank Gillett

The Dig for Victory campaign started up further allotment space. The field which is now Homefield Road was added to the existing Finch Lane allotments and was marked out in 10 pole plots by Bushey Fire Brigade. Over the years various members of our family had allotments at all the local sites.

The Gilletts also kept pigs on Finch Lane (The Fir Tree Pig Club), up in the

World War 2 in Bushey CD-ROM £25

To run on a PC with Windows 95 or later. Published by Bushey Museum and Art Gallery 2001

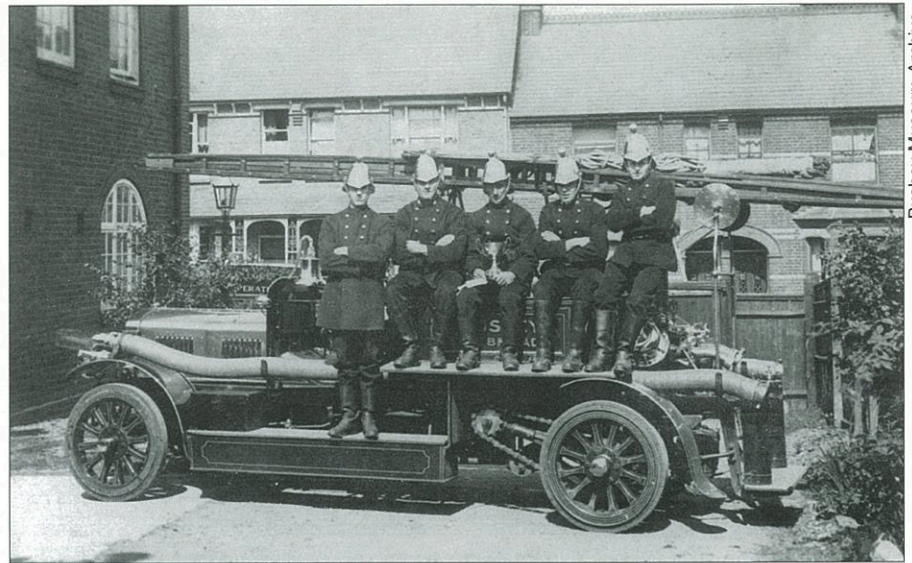
This CD combines international and national issues of World War 2 with local implications and effects. It is for school children in the last year of primary school and includes much local material never before published.

top corner. Bob Slough from Herkomer Road and Arthur Daley from Park Road also had two small pig sties on Finch Lane. Bob was a butcher - that was very handy. Mobile fishmonger Cobb buried all his fish bones and scraps in his runner bean trench - you could see what organic was all about when you compared his vigorous row with those of his neighbours. Commander Brown was a perfectionist when it came to gardening, saving his own onion seed, etc.

Come the outbreak of war Commander Brown, who had been in charge of Bushey's Volunteer Fire Brigade, was recalled to the colours. Dick Smith, who was second officer took charge. Volunteers came flooding in from all over the place; he was soon in charge of the organization. Five Gillett brothers were already trained firemen and they became leading firemen.

Jean King (née Ferguson) was approaching her third birthday and living in Langmead Drive, Bushey Heath when war broke out

There was a brick street shelter in Langmead Drive by the side of the Church Army flats. I don't know if it was used by the residents. My own memory of the shelter is of playing in it towards the end of the war and the smell of damp. My family and most other people I think used the Anderson shelters which were built in the back garden. Later the people opposite had a Morrison shelter erected



Bushey Museum Archive

Percy and Ted Gillett (second and third from the left) in the proud cup-winning team of Bushey firemen sitting on their chain-driven engine in the late 1920s. The building on the left is the Council Office in Rudolph Road before the new Council Chamber was added.

inside the house.

The back garden was used not only for the shelter but to grow potatoes and other vegetables. All the peelings and scraps were given to another of our neighbours to provide food for the hens which were kept at the end of the garden. Other neighbours did likewise. An early childhood memory is the sound of the cockerel and the hens. As a youngster I only became fully aware of the limitations of war-time rations when the food situation began to improve in the forties and early fifties. We saved jam jars, brown paper and string (habits which sur-

vive). In particular I remember saving paper bags to take to a small shop in Windmill Street, almost opposite the ARP post, owned by a Miss Foskett. If we wanted to buy sweets, we had to produce a paper bag.

Around the corner in Windmill Street was an ARP post situated on the right hand side of the footpath which ran between Bushey Hospital and the allotments, leading eventually to Clay Lane.

(Two of the items were summarized in the October 2000 Newsletter).

Mostyn at Cyfarthfa Castle

Chris Jordan

Cyfarthfa Castle, the former seat of the Crayshaw family, ironmasters of Merthyr Tydfil, is an imposing early nineteenth century castellated mansion overlooking the site of the former Cyfarthfa ironworks. The basement exhibition on the harsh lives of miners, foundry workers and their families is a stark contrast to the grand rooms on the upper floors which are an uncomfortable reminder of the wealth and status that could accrue to a privileged few.

Various Crawshay generations were in the fortunate position of being able to indulge in their taste in archaeology and the antique



Unsolved. Tom Edwin Mostyn c1903. Oil on canvas 3' 3" x 4' 2" Courtesy Cyfarthfa Castle Museum and Art Gallery

and the house contains a range of accumulations that reflect both their professional and other interests, The picture collection is the usual array of family portraits and a selection of other works, most of which appear to have been added on an ad hoc basis during the last century, such as some fine drawings by Burne Jones and Augustus John.

There are one or two notable oils, probably the finest being a large composition entitled *Unsolved*, by Tom Edwin Mostyn (1864-1930) dated c1903. Unfortunately the picture is not easily seen to advantage, being highly varnished and hung opposite a window and the glare of a large chandelier! It is arresting for its fine portrait of a young woman sat in contemplation. The picture was exhibited at the Royal Academy 1903, St Louis Exhibition, USA 1904 and the Franco-British Exhibition 1908. Mostyn studied at the Manchester Academy of Fine Art and at Bushey under Herkomer.

As the curator notes, his work has been 'sadly overlooked in recent years as an artist of quality'. There are no visual clues as to what the young lady is trying to solve or resolve in her mind and it is left to us to contemplate an answer.

'A Private Adventure'. The Herkomer School and the Application for the Royal prefix

Michael Pritchard

Introduction

In my job at the auctioneers Christie's, I often have the opportunity to undertake research in various libraries and on the internet and I always take the opportunity to look for any references to Bushey and Herkomer in the hope of find something new or a source of material that might throw a new light on a local subject. Over the years, for example, I have come across source material on Bushey station, a number of Bushey companies and the records of Bushey Maternity Hospital and Bushey and District Hospital.¹

Recently while doing some work at the Public Record Office in Kew, I took advantage of their newly computerised catalogue and entered 'Herkomer' as a keyword. This produced a variety of references. Some, such as the records of the Herkomer Film Company, I knew having discovered them when researching this subject in 1987,² but the search also showed two records that were new to me and turned out to be connected.^{3,4} The records have not been described before in any of the previous publications on Herkomer and his school⁵ and relate to an attempt by Herkomer to have his school of art recognized as the Royal School of Painting.

The Herkomer School

The Herkomer School was formally opened in 1883 with the construction of premises being financed by Mr T E Gibb, one of Herkomer's neighbours in Bushey. Gibb originally asked Herkomer to give lessons to his niece, Annie Salter, which he had refused, although he would not give lessons to one, he would to a group. The Herkomer School quickly became popular and attracted a mix of students who were talented and attracted by Herkomer's teaching methods that aimed to allow students to develop their own artistic style. He was adamant that no Herkomer School student should produce work that could be linked with the school and his style. He

succeeded in this aim.

By 1899 the school was well-established and internationally recognized. It was formally known as the Herkomer School and had been registered as a limited company on 25 February 1887 with its registered office at High Road (*sic*), Bushey. It had a special dispensation from the Board of Trade, then responsible for company registrations, to drop the 'Ltd' from the name.⁴

Professor Herkomer wrote from

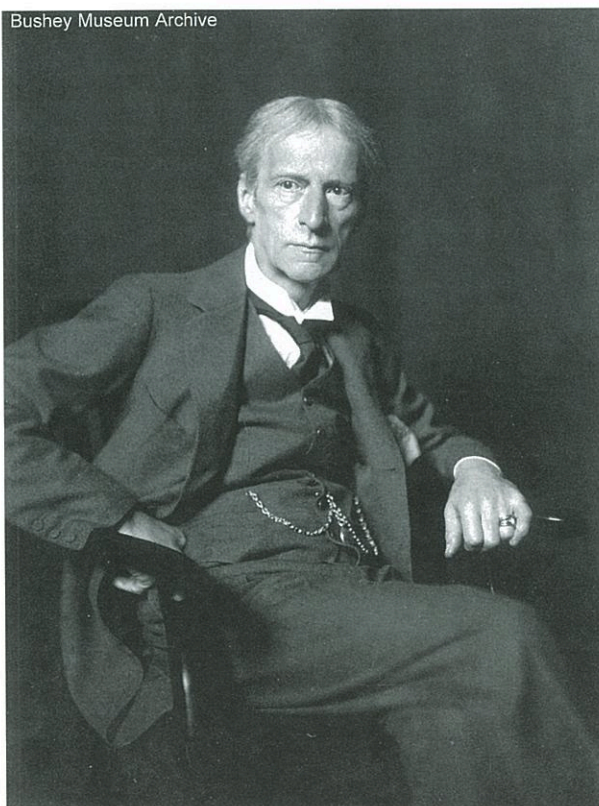
Home Department, stating that a special resolution had been passed under the Companies Act to change the name of the Herkomer School to The Royal School of Painting, Bushey. This had followed an Extraordinary General Meeting of the Herkomer School held on 10 May 1899 which had approved new articles of association that would increase membership from one hundred to nine hundred and the name change in anticipation of the request being granted.

Home Office civil servants began to examine the request. The first official comment is not credited but stated 'Such applications as the present are not numerous' and gave four examples where the 'Royal' prefix had been granted including the Royal Society of Painter-Sketchers and the Royal College of Art. On 17 May another comment was added to the file: 'Professor Herkomer wishes to leave the school permanently established. It is a very important and valuable institution'. Civil servant WPS writing on 19 May 1899 stated:

'This school is well known to members of the Royal Family and (in a general way) to the public: but the privilege asked for is an important one and I suggest that Mr Herkomer be asked to give particulars of the work and history of the school and also that the Lord President be consulted.'

Herkomer wrote again on 23 May 1899 to the Home Office supplying some additional material in support of

his application. He gave a detailed description of the origins of the school: 'Mr T E Gibb offered to build the necessary accommodation. I stipulated only for absolute power in fixing the plan of tuition and in carrying it out'. He reported that the school issued debentures and was formally incorporated in 1887 and was 'the first school away from but within easy reach of a large town' and could therefore offer both classes in life-rooms with models and painting from nature. He felt that 'socially it means safe camaraderie between the sexes' and



Photographic portrait of Hubert Herkomer in about 1900.

Lululaund to the Home Office on 10 May 1899 asking for official permission for the school to use the title The Royal School of Painting, Bushey. Herkomer enclosed new articles of association for his school 'founded by me some 15 years ago' and stated 'I have a heartfelt wish, however, to know now that my work may be carried on in the future'.⁴

His solicitors, Linklater & Co of London, followed this up on 13 May by writing to the Rt Hon Sir Matthew White Ridley Bt, the Secretary of State for the

that the 'influence of the school means £10,000 a year (at least) to the village'.⁶

The school was, he said, 'purely a school of painting' with students 'on their honour' and that he had had no trouble with them. He outlined in detail how the students worked and that he permitted the students to come each week 'to see my work in progress' and that 'he received life class students on two evenings a week when they can ask questions and get answers'. He stated: 'In these 15 years some 62 independent studios have sprung up in Bushey, built and occupied by students who have graduated in the school... In the Royal Academy and other exhibitions in London students past and present represent 50-90 works [each year]'. He concluded his lobbying by saying:

'It is self-evident that such a personal form of school would die with me. Hence my earnest request to put it on a new footing, a footing that will work when I am no longer here to direct the school. To give it permanency the prefix Royal seems to me almost imperative'.⁷

The Science and Art department's Mr J F Donnelly provided a response on 29 May 1899 to the Home Office's request for their view.

'...it is not possible to [know] what this Institution really is, whether it has an endowment or property of any kind, or whether it is simply supported by the fees of students'

Donnelly questioned whether the school had financial stability which he felt would be important in granting the title 'Royal' and felt that 'as it stands it appears to be a private adventure very much in the hands of one man, the present principal, but Herkomer does not have any remuneration' and 'may cease to be principal at any time'. He concluded his report by saying:

'as it is I do not know that the school at Bushey is doing more work or more important work than the schools under this department at say Birmingham, Sheffield, Manchester, Glasgow, Edinburgh, Dublin amongst others and these have many more students and are in no sense private adventures. It seems to me that they would have a greater claim to the title Royal'

Donnelly's conclusions and the Home Office view based on precedent seemed to

prevail. A Home Office minute written on 25 May 1899 stated that 'The Science and Art department are against the grant of the title 'Royal' and the President of the Council apparently endorses their view' although the writer asked 'shall Professor Herkomer be asked whether the school has or will have any property, it is or will be endowed and if so what are or will be the value of such property and endowments?'

The Home Office's view can best be summarized by quoting their own statement:

'No doubt excellent work is done now; but it seems to be quite dependent on Mr Herkomer's personal qualities and efforts and notwithstanding its merits, might not the public and other artists especially consider that the school was receiving an inappropriate as well as an unprecedented honour?'

The absence of any financial endowment and the fact that the school was 'mortgaged up to the hilt' also counted against it (a 5 per cent mortgage debenture had paid for the school buildings and was still outstanding) in 1899. The Privy Council added another view. In a memo of 2 June 1899 from the Privy Council Office to W P Byrne at the Home Office they stated: 'there does not appear to be any precedent for allowing Professor Herkomer's school to be granted the privilege of using the title 'Royal'.'

Disappointment and closure

A letter from the Home Office to Herkomer was drafted for approval on 21 June 1899:

'I am directed by the Secretary of State...that he much regrets that he could not, consistently with the general practice in regard to the grant of Royal titles, recommend the application for the favourable consideration of the Queen.'

This letter was presumably approved and sent to Herkomer at Lululaund. There seems little doubt that Herkomer was bitterly disappointed by the rejection. He was a man that enjoyed receiving honours and relished in their display. He was made Slade Professor in 1885, gained the Prussian Order of Merit and the right to use the prefix 'von' in 1899 and was knighted in 1907, in addition to being awarded numerous medals and exhibition honours for his artistic work. Permission to use 'Royal' in the name of his school would have been satisfying personally as well as possibly contributing to the continuation of

the School.

By 1904 Herkomer was tiring of the demands that the School made on his time, for which he took no salary and he no longer needed the prestige it conferred on him. In a special resolution confirmed at an extraordinary general meeting held on 23 June 1904 approval was given to voluntarily wind up the Herkomer School because of the resignation of Professor von Herkomer and the consequence that this made the continuation of the school impossible. The company was formally dissolved on 6 June 1913.

This end vindicated the Home Office view of five years previously that the school could not continue without Herkomer being present.

Notes

1. Details of many of these have been passed to Bushey Museum over the years. Many would justify further research. The hospital records, for example, are held at the London Metropolitan Archives. See: <http://hospitalrecords-pro.gov.uk/>
2. See Michael Pritchard (1987), *Sir Hubert von Herkomer and his film-making in Bushey 1912-1914* available from the Museum.
3. Company file The Herkomer School Ltd held at the Public Record Office, Kew. BT31/3822.
4. Home Office file held at the Public Record Office, Kew. HO144/443. The file was closed until 2000.
5. Publications by or about Herkomer and his school include Lee MacCormick Edwards, *Herkomer. A Victorian Artist* (1999); J Saxon Mills, *Life and Letters of Sir Hubert Herkomer* (1923); E Grant Longman, *The Beginning of the Herkomer Art School* (1983), *The Herkomer Art School & Later Developments* (1981); Watford Museum, *Stand to Your Work. Hubert Herkomer and His Students* (1983).
6. Part of this letter is quoted in Saxon Mills *op. cit.*, pp. 223-225.
7. To enhance his claim Herkomer enclosed an extract from *The Universal Review* titled 'The Teaching of Art'. The Herkomer School Prospectus; Herkomer School Rules [for students], Herkomer School Time Table of Work for One Week... Annual Reports of the School for 1899, 1898 and the First Annual Report for 1888 (each includes a list of students). This latter includes the cost of the school buildings at £12,255 with a contribution from Gibbs of £4255, debentures of £10 each were issued and there were four free open scholarships. These are all part of PRO file HO144/443.

Bushey Grange and the Burchell-Herne Family

Janet Murphy

Bushey Grange was owned by the Burchell-Herne family for about one hundred years. The line of chestnut trees standing just to the south of the playing fields of Queens' School mark the line of the carriage drive from Finch Lane to the site of Bushey Grange.

In his will dated 1837 Basil Burchell said that he had purchased the property from Mr Bellis (who died in 1818). The amount to be repaid on the death or remarriage of Ann Bellis, widow was £1,250 so this was possibly the cost. A valuation of the Great and Small Tithes belonging to the Rectory of Bushey as occupied in 1832 indicates that a mansion house stood on the site, with Basil Burchell as occupier and proprietor. It was built of brick stuccoed with slate and had a lead flat roof.

A London attorney, Basil Burchell married Sarah Herne whose brother William was an Alderman and Sheriff of London. They had two sons Humphrey Harper and Basil Herne. Humphrey succeeded to the estate on his father's death in 1838. Included in Basil's will was a bequest to Mary Freeman, housemaid to his deceased wife Sarah, of £200, his large parrot and cage and any of his dogs that she might select.

Humphrey Harper Burchell was a solicitor and Bushey Grange became a centre of social and political life in Hertfordshire as he was a Deputy Lieutenant and in 1847 the High Sheriff of Hertfordshire. About this time chestnut trees were planted either side of the main carriage drive and along Finch Lane and elm trees along the rear drive.* The conservatory was probably added later and a croquet ground laid out together with a kitchen garden with greenhouse and small lean-to tomato house.

In 1854 William Herne died without issue and left his property to his nephew Humphrey, provided that he added Herne to his name, so he became Humphrey Harper Burchell-Herne. He had two daughters and a son Humphrey Frederick. Like his father, Humphrey Frederick had a privileged education at Eton and Trinity College Cambridge, obtaining his BA in 1864 but he trained for the priesthood,

being ordained deacon in 1870 and priest in 1871. He became curate of Carrington in Nottinghamshire from 1870-3 and of Holy Trinity Chapel, Brighton before he resigned because of ill health in 1876. In the meantime, Bushey Grange was let. The censuses show that in 1871 it was occupied by a magistrate and in 1881 by a school. The farmhouse, which had been occupied by gardeners, was now let to Henry Squires, farmer.

When he returned to the Grange in 1882, Humphrey Frederick Burchell-Herne soon became a prominent member of local society. Every year the old people and the children from the Workhouse had a day's outing to Bushey Grange. When the Conservative Club found itself without a home, he purchased the present

Bushey Museum Archive



premises, which he let to the Club. A member of the Watford Church Extension Society, he gave the land on which St Paul's was built. To encourage the popularity of allotments he provided for lease, the land on which the Windmill allotments were developed and he was also president of the Bushey and Bushey Heath Cottage Gardening Society.

When he died in 1910 the church was packed for his funeral. Mrs Burchell-Herne died in 1917 shortly after the family butler, James Fassnidge, had been killed in the Great War.

Her death left their only child Mary Dorothy, unmarried and now aged 41, alone at Bushey Grange leading a very secluded life with only servants for company. In 1925 she let the Grange and moved to a villa in Bushey. Rumours began to circulate and she left without telling her servants where she was going. A few days later she married William Henry Whitmill, sixteen years her junior and who, since his discharge from the

army after twelve years service, had eked out a precarious livelihood as an odd job man. Photographs of the wedding at Telscombe, Sussex were splashed across the front page of the *Daily Sketch*. The couple went to live at Peacehaven in Sussex. Mary died in 1940 and was buried in her parents' grave at Bushey.

Barely six weeks after the wedding a preliminary announcement of the sale of the estate appeared in the *West Herts and Watford Observer*. Included in the estate was the farm, three cottages and a lodge. The property was described as offering exceptional opportunities for development as one of the finest building estates North West of London, particularly as it was bounded by roads on three sides. Although a large company attended the auction on July 11th the estate was ultimately withdrawn unsold.

Eventually the estate was purchased by the Royal Masonic School and although it was safe from development the decline of the estate began. The house was demolished in the 1930s, the Old Lodge in Finch Lane in 1948 and the Burchell-Herne cottages in 1952. During the sixties the orchard, where local boys went scrumping, was chopped down, and the Dell and the Long Pond filled in, although parts of the latter still reappear after heavy rain. The line of chestnuts along Finch Lane were needlessly destroyed in 1972 and the elms which had formed the rear drive succumbed to Dutch Elm disease in 1976 although a few pine trees remain.* Alexandra School and the Metropolitan Police sports ground were built on some of the land.

For many years the tenant of the farm was Henry Squires and then members of the Hedges family. When Mr Hedges died in 1957, his widow remained there for a few years but after she moved out, squatters wrecked the farmhouse and it was demolished.

Now little remains of Bushey Grange and its beautiful gardens, just a few chestnut trees, a cedar of Lebanon, a Wellingtonia and some Corsican pines.

* *The fields of Bushey Grange*, by John Sears. *Hertfordshire Countryside April 1979*.