



Chairman's Letter June 2020

“HP Sauce – hard to get, but grand when you’ve got it!” This advert appeared in the VE day edition of the Daily Mail and is echoed again with the excited cry of “I’ve got a banana, a dozen eggs and fresh bread!” which has been heard in the last 10 weeks. Who could believe the joy and excitement of encountering these everyday items. And what lurks at the bottom of the freezer? Good grief, I can actually see the bottom of the freezer. Is that unlabelled item mince or stewed fruit?

Although the Museum is closed, one member of the Friends, Jane Parker, has posted daily notices on the Museum Facebook page. This has been great in keeping the virtual Museum alive. Many thanks, Jane. Do look out for her postings.

On a less happy note, I am sorry to record since March the deaths of 3 Friends: Ken Duncan, John Carleton and Dorothy Burr. Our condolences go to their families and friends.

This is the second online newsletter and we hope you enjoy reading it. If you know somebody not on line who would like to read it, please print a copy and give it to them.

Rita Castle, Chairman

200 Club

March Draw

169 (£20) Mrs Margaret Sibley
16 (£15) Mr John Gerry

April Draw

78 (£20) Mr. & Mrs. J. White
84 (£15) Mr. J. Gerry

May Draw

34 (£20) Mr. J. Crawford
145 (£15) Ms. A. E. Eames

Rudolph Road News

I hope that all of you have been isolating and are safe and well, and have been enjoying this extraordinary weather. No, I am not going to go on and on about “you know what”, instead a few words about how we aim to get back to normal, starting with when we are going to be allowed to open the Museum again. And are we going to open up then? No, we’re not!

Instead we are going to take about a further month of “safe time” before the doors open to the public. The first thing we will do is to carry out a deep clean of the Museum, checking that the water supply is fit to use, to wipe down surfaces etc., which will provide some reassurance for our Stewards and staff that it will be safe to come back after this, especially after the extra “safe time”.

While this is going on, we will be switching over the Herkomer Gallery with the Anne Blessley Gallery, to provide more space to display Herkomer artefacts which we previously did not have space to show, such as his carved bed and ottoman, and more of his artworks.

We will not be changing the exhibitions, as they were only set up just before lockdown, and we felt that people just hadn’t had time to see them. Mind you, they are available to see on the website right now, just go to <https://busheymuseum.org/virtual-tours/>. Enjoy!

New exhibitions will be planned and installed at a date in the future, to be decided yet.

We will also be setting up refresher courses for our Stewards, as it has been a long time since opening, and enough time to need that refresher!

So now you know what will be happening, but of course we cannot yet know when. If you think you can guess, answers on a postage stamp please!

Carey Keates

Bring and Buy event

We are hoping to hold a Bring and Buy in the autumn. We have to follow the government guidelines so as soon we are able, we will hold one. I expect you have cleared all your cupboards and drawers out so please could you keep any good items, for the event.

Many thanks.

Brenda Stebbeds and Jackie Taslaq

Herkomer Hoard

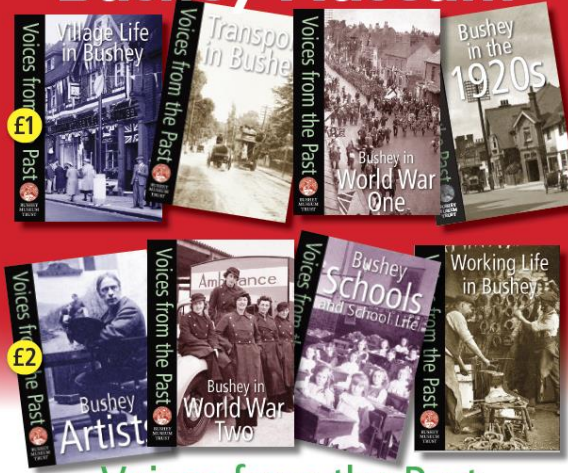
Last October, staff at Hertsmere Borough Council were startled to receive an email from the Royal Academy in London concerning a cache of architectural plans and drawings unearthed in their storeroom. The plans had been loaned to the Academy by the Council’s planning department back in 1990 and since forgotten. Now it was felt they should be returned. Many of the documents related to Herkomer and his home *Lululaund* in Melbourne Road, and thanks to Museums Officer Ruth Stratton it was agreed they should be given to Bushey Museum, home of a substantial Herkomer archive as well as a number of his paintings.

The drawings arrived, beautifully packed, in a large box and Museum volunteer Alan Guthrie-Jones undertook the considerable task of cataloguing them. As well as large plans for all four floors of *Lululaund*, there were designs commissioned by Herkomer for the Rose Garden and for more humble buildings, including a dairy and a coal shed. There were also a number of plans submitted by Mr Cuthbertson of Bushey House (now Beaumont House care home), as well as designs for assorted houses, commercial premises, artists’ studios and even a Mission Hall, dotted all around Bushey.

Many of these buildings no longer exist – if, indeed, they were ever built in the first place. Herkomer lived in *Lululaund* from 1894 until his death in 1914, and the house was demolished in 1939 after standing empty for many years. A revamp of the Herkomer Room is currently being planned (for details, watch this space!) and we hope this will present an opportunity to display some of these newly-acquired items in the future. And you can see a video about this on YouTube, click [here](#)!



Audrey Adams

**Available soon from
Bushey Museum**



Voices from the Past
A series of booklets recording life
in the village of Bushey, told in the words
of locals who remembered it

Prices from just £1 per booklet, or £10 for the set
To pre-order your booklets, for collection and payment
once the museum re-opens, please email us at
voices@busheymuseum.org

Bushey Museum Trust, Registered Charity (294261)

Outings and Holidays

Due to the Corona-virus, 3 Outings were cancelled as was the visit to Landsberg am Lech to see the Konkurrenz in July. Happily all the deposits and insurance payments have been refunded for the holiday.

We were offered alternative dates to visit Landsberg, 8th October, when it was planned to hold the Konkurrenz, but half the group were not free, and some diffident in committing themselves, not knowing what the situation concerning the virus would be then and we need a minimum of 10 for a group booking. So we have decided no holiday or outings this year, and are looking ahead to 2021, and I am interested to know if we can plan to visit some of the places we were proposing to visit this year.

It would be encouraging to know if a visit to Landsberg, regardless of a special event, would be welcome, visiting the town, Museums there and in Munich and visit to the nearby Lakes.

Regarding the outings, the places we planned to visit were Hughenden Manor, the River & Rowing Museum at Henley (there are other National Trust properties in the area), the guided visit to Hatfield House and to Southill Park home of the Whitbread Family for over 200 years, plus time in Bedford.

So please can you let the Friends' Committee know if you would like us to organise any of these events in 2021. Looking forward to hearing your responses.

Diana Spencer

What's happening at Reveley

We have, of course, had to close the tearooms and the Stable Gallery at Reveley in line with Government restrictions caused by the Covid 19 pandemic. However, the Trustees decided not to close the gardens as we believed the benefit to the general public in terms of mental health and exercise was greater than the risk. We put in precautions to ensure the safety of our staff, such as having their own tools, no shared refreshment facilities and social distancing. With the lovely weather and lots more people exercising, we've had a considerable increase in visitors coming round the garden, to the extent that there are now well-worn paths around the woodland area. As Rory and Sara have been pretty well restricted to the site during the lock-down, they kindly offered to open the gates on a weekend so the public has been able to come round 7 days a week. Even though most come from the immediate area of Bushey Heath, lots of them sing out the familiar refrain 'We've lived here for years but we've never been round'! The general reaction from the public has been excellent – they appreciate our remaining open, and think the garden delightful. Quite a few come every day or two as part of their exercise routine and are fascinated by how the plants change week-by-week.



We have cancelled all of our events for the foreseeable future. We were to have a VE Celebration event on 8th May and planned to have an exhibition, kindly funded by a donation from Jane West, a Bushey County Councillor. As the historical work was done, it seemed to waste an opportunity if we cancelled it, as long as we could ensure that it was done safely. The exhibition is called 'Reveley at War' and details the impact of the war on Reveley's occupiers at the time, Albert and Eila Chewett, through extracts from their diaries and letters. The exhibition consists of information boards mounted on the inside of the conservatory facing out, so that visitors can read the content in the open air, and are spaced so that the 2 metre social distancing rules can be maintained. Copies of the information boards used in the exhibition are on our website www.reveleylodge.org. Noting the similarity of the Reveley Rocket to the V2 rockets, we've even used that as part of the exhibition. Not as exciting as the original idea of having it upside down on the main lawn as if it had just smashed down into Bushey! Thanks go to Adele Taylor (pictured) for the text and research, Nick Overhead for the graphics, and Councillor Jane West for the donation and to Bushey Museum for the use of photographs of the local area.

For those stuck at home and not able to visit, perhaps I can recommend investigating our Instagram site, run by our gardener Lesley Powell, who takes some fantastic pictures of the garden and plants. See https://www.instagram.com/reveley_lodge_gardens/. Here is one of her entries concerning a very unusual plant which is now around 2 metres tall in the bed at the top of the lawn.



We've used some of Lesley's photographs to print a series of 5 greeting cards. Please contact Granville Taylor if you wish to buy any – they're £1.85 each or 3 for £5. Or a Friends of Bushey Museum special collector's edition of all 5 designs for £8!

Shortly before the lock-down, the Trustees had decided that we would launch a Supporters of Reveley Lodge group. We were planning a public launch in June, but again that has had to be postponed until the Government restrictions are lifted. We will be giving details on our website shortly but the aims are:

- To support and raise awareness of Reveley Lodge
- To develop a volunteer base with a wide range of skills
- To ensure the long-term sustainability of Reveley Lodge by increasing community involvement.

There will be benefits such as an annual garden party at Reveley and discount on our hire charges, subject to some conditions. We hope some of the Friends will also become Supporters of Reveley Lodge, continuing a long tradition of mutual involvement and support over what will soon be 20 years.

Granville Taylor

A Room with a Zoom

As I write it's the Not-So-Merry month of May. The weather has just turned overnight from 24C on May 10 to 9C the next day. Bob Hope always joked that he loved coming to the UK as he enjoyed the four very different seasons... all on the same day.

As members of the HSS-A-H, [Honorary Society of Stuck-at-Homes] I'm at leisure to write for this illustrious Journal and give an account of how to stay sane and active without gym, flicks, theatre, pub, MacDonalds or Costco. [I do miss M&S, but then I worked there for 35 years. Please keep shopping online –you're paying my pension.]

Anyway, Chairmadam Rita of the Castle asked me to chuck a few bon mots – or even not very bon mots - together. You ever tried saying no to Rita? Didn't have to be Museum oriented she said. Right Rita, you asked for it.

Zoom... a discovery to many of us less technophile, but a true revelation, and a facility to communicate one-to-one or en bloc. We started, sadly, by link up for a very dear friend. At 85, he went into hospital with a bit of breathing difficulty. Start of lockdown – no entry for family. He phoned his wife to say he was sort of OK, a bit short of breath. An hour later the hospital told family to come, but it was too late. Not Corona they said, but who knows? His wife, three married children, numerous grand and great grand children were devastated. You may know that Jewish tradition embraces prompt burial followed by prayers at home each night for up to a week. His burial was accompanied by just his children.. and what to do about evening prayers? Zoom! The service was led by a young friend of the family from his house, the widow and children were together in her house... and some 500 people joined in 200 Zoom connections to support the family and remember a much loved man.

So.. Zooming along and retaining the religious theme, a Barmitzvah ceremony took place with, again, child and parents at home, Rabbi and family at theirs, both sets of grandparents ditto.. and numerous community members zooming in for the Sabbath service. Rather more fun than going to synagogue someone said [not to the Rabbi!] and you could keep your sweatpants on as long as you looked suitably attired up top.

Best of all, an hour's chat with good friends, just the four of us; an online lecture with music about great Hollywood lyricists and musicians - Gershwin era - another about WWII, then duty calling, English and Maths with two of the grandchildren, including a stern lecture from Grandpa about saying 'My friend and I went...' and NOT 'Me and my friend went..' Pedants rule OK!

Highlight of the stay-in? VE Day in our friendly close of 15 houses, where half of us have been for 40 to 50 years and the newcomers a mere 20 or so. We met in the street, stayed suitably distanced, with a cuppa or a glass of champers and did 'We'll Meet Again..' with the words amended to 'Keep smiling

through just like you always do, till the blue skies drive CORONA far away.’ Anyone remember Corona lemonade? [Actually it was Jaycon round our way –Clapton E5 – in varieties including Sparkling Special, Cream Soda and Limeade. All sugar heavy of course, but delicious.]

TV? Suffering withdrawal symptoms with the end of ‘Only Connect’ and ‘University Challenge and no decent Channel Four Scandi dramas, acquired Netflix courtesy of son-in-law. [Seeing as he, my daughter and two kids planted themselves on us for four months while their house was ripped apart September to Christmas Eve] No more than fair, plus my garage is still stuffed with the contents of his demolished one.

So, Netflix. ‘Grace & Frankie,’ a hilarious domestic-ish comedy starring the brilliant Jane Fonda and Lily Tomlin [Oh, come on what do you mean Lily Who? The Rowan and Martin Laugh-in? The West Wing?] Two wives and their soon to be ex-husbands and adult children. All with a screw loose. Don’t complain to me about the choice of subject matter, mostly sex, and the er, surfeit of F-words, but it’s a great tonic after Covid before you hit the hay.

So, I must be Zooming on before I’m all Zoomed out. We’ll meet again...’

Barry Hyman

Currently Furloughed Shop Manager

Celebrating the 75th Anniversary of VE Day in Koh-I-Noor Avenue



The day dawned amid the anticipated bright sunshine and every promise of an enjoyable street party, with social distancing taken fully into account. Our avenue looked marvellous, with bunting and union flags to the fore. Neighbours had been up ladders the previous day, stringing bunting along the houses, Jim was sweeping the pavements in the early morning, cakes were in ovens and tables and chairs emerged from gardens. Every family had their own food and drink (not always tea!), which was consumed at their own table, ensuring no close contact took place.



The undoubted highlight was a performance of voice and guitar by two young residents. All present thoroughly enjoyed the uplifting, modern songs and two even younger residents played alongside the lads, on toy guitars.

As the sun went down most families decamped into their houses, leaving the final group of hardy souls to carry on into the night. We think they finally packed up at midnight.

Janet McNulty



Working the Land by Sir Hubert von Herkomer, 1885

Oil on Board 38.1 x 61 cm

We are delighted to announce the purchase of the above painting to add to Bushey Museum's collection. It is a significant addition in terms of demonstrating the influence of the artist, Frederick Walker, on Herkomer's career and artwork.

Sir Hubert von Herkomer was justly proud of his own success. When he was honoured by a Bavarian knighthood he chose as his personal motto, *Propriis Alis* (By my own Wings), in other words, his achievements were by his own talents, abilities and hard work. As a student he had become impatient with academic training and the masters, whose teaching, he felt, could only lead to mediocrity. As for other artists, he was about a decade younger than the majority of the Impressionists and the Pre-Raphaelites – he was a contemporary of the immediate Post-Impressionists, Van Gogh and Gauguin – there was a lot happening in the art world around him to which he was not totally immune. He did pick up a few trends, but it is very doubtful that he would admit to this influence. He had his own ideas and tended to promote and adhere to them.

However, there was one artist he did acknowledge as having a great influence, particularly in respect of the techniques of watercolour and subject matter. This artist was Frederick Walker 1840-1875, who began his artistic career as a wood-engraver and book illustrator and he contributed, as did Herkomer, to the *Graphic*. Herkomer must have attended the 1866 exhibition of the Old Watercolour Society, when Walker's watercolour *The Street, Cookham* was exhibited, as he admitted that Frederick Walker had guided his hand in his painting, *After the Toil of the Day*, hung at the Royal Academy in 1873. A decade later when he had started his school in Bushey he was telling his students that he did copy Walker – that Walker painted yellow, so he did – Walker avoided skies, so he shoved the picture up – Walker was fond of geese, so he put in geese.

After the symbolism and mythology of the Pre-Raphaelites, Walker seemed to herald in more realistic material, but at the same time not in a vulgar way. Herkomer himself considered that Walker combined the grace of the classical with the realism of Victorian England. Most of Walker's paintings were in rural settings with rustic old or poor people, hard at work or in dire circumstances, but upholding a dignified appearance and attitude.

The painting Bushey Museum has now acquired reflects these qualities. The year it was painted, 1885, was a very significant year for Herkomer – his second wife, his beloved Lulu, died and he became Slade professor. It was in the April of that year that Herkomer attended a posthumous exhibition of Walker's artworks at Dunthorne's Gallery (later the Rembrandt Gallery) and he must have been inspired to paint *Working the Land*. The horizon of the rural scene is high on the picture plane and all the country folk are hard at work, but are not portrayed as servile or oppressed. As the labourer in *Hard Times*, the lone male field worker carries out his work with a straight back and head held high in a classical mode.

Very much later in his career Herkomer would tell his students that such admiration as he felt for Walker, leading to the copying of another man's work, was a restraint on a young artist's own identity. But this was in itself an acknowledgement of the debt he owed Walker for the inspiration earlier in his career.

In the same way the acquisition by Bushey Museum of *In the Black Country* related to Herkomer's contribution to Social Realism, so *Working the Land* fills in yet another important part of the Herkomer narrative, when as a young man he was sufficiently impressed to pay homage to another artist for quite a period during his career.

However, Herkomer, with his fellow *Graphic* artists, Frank Holl and Luke Fildes were far more robust in terms of Social Realism. Walker would never have painted *In the Black Country*. He was far too effete for that. He was a nervous, highly strung sensitive young man. From the 1860s, he was at the heart of a group of like-minded artists, known as Idyllists, seeking perhaps a sense of a pastoral paradise – they certainly aimed to paint outdoors from nature. Unfortunately, most of them died before they were 40, - Walker at 35 from tuberculosis in 1875, the year of Herkomer's great success, *The Last Muster*.

Frederick Walker's artwork can be seen on Art UK, - a Wikipedia site is devoted to him where 'External Links' lists the sites at which his drawings and illustrations can be viewed.

Also, a great friend of Bushey Museum, Donato Esposito, had a book published in 2017, entitled, *Frederick Walker and the Idyllists* (London: Lund Humphries).

Early in the New Year your Art Curators saw, in Bonham's on-line catalogue, that the picture was coming up for auction. The Friends Committee decided to try to buy it. In March, John arranged a telephone bid with Bonham's but the auction was postponed because of the Corona Virus lockdown. The auction finally took place on 19th May with no bidders present in the auction room and John's telephone bid was successful. The painting has now been brought to Bushey and is in the Museum's strongroom.

Pat Woollard and John Gerry

STAY SAFE!

