

Friends of BUSHEY MUSEUM TRUST



A voluntary association in support of
The Bushey Museum Trust

Journal no. 1

Summer 1988

An eventful year in prospect

AT THE END of June a joint Bushey Museum Trust and Hertsmere delegation are flying out to Bavaria for the opening of the International Herkomer Exhibition in Landsberg. Part of the exhibition will later transfer to Church House, Bushey and Watford Museum where it will be jointly shown during October. The organisational, financial and logistical problems in assembling the exhibition have stretched even our indefatigable Trustees who, it should be remembered, also having livings to earn!

In addition to all that, in a few weeks, the Trust is again mounting another Festival Art Exhibition, featured on this page. The Friends of the BMT make an invaluable contribution in providing 'front-of-house' management plus dozens of members who volunteer as stewards, operating in relays throughout the exhibition. This year there is to be a 'briefing' evening shortly before the exhibition opens when stewards will be given a commentary on the exhibition and advice on how to deal with the public and cope with counter sales, etc. Late volunteers are still most welcome. Brief details of where to apply are in the June newsletter which accompanies this, the first issue of our new 'Journal'.

Friends will notice that we have decided to separate information and news from the more 'in depth' articles. The former are now to be in the form of a simple, quick-and-easy-to-produce bi-monthly newsletter. The latter will continue to be published twice-yearly in what was the old newsletter format.

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As part of the 1988 Bushey Festival (9–24 July)
Bushey Museum Trust is mounting another

Festival Art Exhibition: 'Kate Cowderoy and her Circle'

The Bushey Festival Fine Art Exhibition this July is to be centred upon Kate Cowderoy, supported by representative works by some of her contemporaries in Bushey. Kate Cowderoy was a very talented pupil of Herkomer who lived in Bushey from her student days in 1899 until her death in 1972. In her twenties she exhibited at the RA quite frequently, yet she was so modest that she almost entirely forsook painting in oils because her mother disliked the smell of the drying canvases! The Bushey Museum Trust has been given what amounts to the Studio Collection of Kate Cowderoy's work and is very pleased to be able to show a good cross section of her output. The pictures are mainly watercolours (as the foregoing would lead you to expect), but there are some drawings and some oils. Many of the watercolours show a broad style more typical of oil technique and as a result are often very strong and colourful. This is particularly true of the flower studies and garden scenes and we hope that the



Kate Cowderoy was fond of garden subjects and this watercolour is evocative of long summer days.

two massed displays of these will have considerable impact.

In addition, Kate Cowderoy made very many sensitive portraits of her family and friends; a selection of which will be on view. Other subjects in her versatile art include general landscapes, including some of Cassiobury shortly before its demolition, book illustrations and numerous studies of cats and farm animals.

Her circle of friends and acquaintances has been interpreted fairly widely by us to

include other artists resident in Bushey during her working life. Bushey was, and is, a friendly place and the art colony especially so. We would like to show a completely representative selection by these Bushey contemporaries but inevitably there are some gaps where at present we are unable to locate works by some artists who really ought to be shown in this context. Lamentable omissions are *original* works by Septimus Power, Pollie Clark, Elizabeth Milner, and the Tarver sisters. If anyone can remedy this we would be delighted to hear from them.

However there are many artists that we can show and these include some works by her close friends Sybil Barham (of postcard fame), Amy Mary West, (scenes in Bushey High Street), Elizabeth Baldwin Warn and Elizabeth Gulland. The wider circle includes a group of paintings by Dorothy Adamson, a pupil in Bushey of both Lucy Kemp-Welch and Septimus Power. She died at a tragically early age although she was already highly regarded as an artist. Her work includes landscapes, flower studies and animal pictures. Lucy Kemp-Welch will, of course, be represented, but Septimus Power only by a large colour print very kindly sent to us from Australia by Mrs Elaine Wotzke. Septimus Power was an Australian artist who came to England c.1914-1918 as a war artist and who settled in Bushey after World War I before eventually returning to Australia c.1935. His two most notable pupils in Bushey were Dorothy Adamson and Mabel Gear.

Another group of pictures will be by Kathleen Wilson, a Herkomer pupil in 1896 and another highly talented lady artist who sadly did not pursue her career. She married and settled in Bushey but is hardly known to us. Her very distinctive watercolours strongly painted, each one from a limited palette have an individual style which anticipates the Art Deco movement. None of these has been shown before.

In strong contrast to most of the others is the work of Ethel Gabain. The Gabain family lived at the Manor House Bushey for some years at the beginning of the century and her father was at one time Chairman of the Bushey Urban District Council. Her artistic career took her away from Bushey but her family retained an affection for the village and later donated a picture, 'The Bride and the Canary', to Bushey Public Library.

This exhibition will be our contribution to the Bushey Festival 1988, to run from the 9th to 24th July in the Lucy Kemp-Welch Memorial Gallery in Church House. G.L.

Chairman's Report for 1987

THIS is the first annual report to be written, although the Trust has been in existence for a few years. It is perhaps symptomatic of the rapid growth of the work associated with the Bushey Museum that I have not managed to write a report before now. For whilst exhibitions have been mounted two or three times a year with apparent calm regularity, the interest they have evoked has produced a flood of gifts for the Museum collection and associated information which has generated an immense amount of work in organisation and documentation. In addition we have been very anxious to take professional advice and to lay the foundations of the Bushey Museum as soundly as possible.

At this point I am able to make a first annual report which can describe the consolidated progress to date and set down some of the Trust's thoughts for the future.

The Bushey Museum Trust was set up in 1983 and as soon as possible became a registered charity and a company limited by guarantee. It also became a member of the Association of Independent Museums (AIM) and of the Area Museums Service for South East England (AMSSEE) which are respectively independent and official bodies offering sterling advice and assistance to local museums and galleries.

With the support of the Trust, Hertsmere Borough Council have declared a policy of establishing local museums, including one in Bushey. Working towards this end, the Council have already provided the Trust with an office and storage rooms in the Rudolph Road Council Offices and are seriously considering the Rudolph Road

building for conversion to museum use in its entirety. During 1988 some use of the Council Chamber in Rudolph Road as an exhibition area for Bushey Museum Trust and for Hertsmere Borough Council material is also planned.

In 1985 the Local Studies Centre in Church House was opened and has provided study and advice facilities every Tuesday evening since then to a great variety of people. Interests vary from those who are investigating their family history, to those with immediate concerns for some current problem and include academic studies ranging from junior school projects up to GCSE and on to postgraduate interests. Associated with this has been the monthly Sunday afternoon working parties of Friends of the Bushey Museum Trust at which tremendous progress has been made on indexing the 18th century militia lists for Bushey and the 19th century census returns as well as other important indices.

Very recently the Trust has adopted the Museum Documentation Association (MDA) system of indexing and cataloguing the Trust's collection. This is the standard and recommended documentation system for museums in this country. Although the work associated with this will be onerous and the printed stationery is expensive it is essential that our records should be set up for the long term on a sound basis. The Friends' gift of the MDA stationery is invaluable to launch this work.

Another problem to be controlled is conservation. Many items given to the Trust such as garments, old documents and watercolours need to be shown,

handled and stored in particular ways if they are not to deteriorate with time; and we are very keen that deterioration should be avoided. We have taken professional advice and as a result of this we have a list of priorities for the conservation of particularly valuable items. Grants from Hertsmere Borough Council and (we hope) AMSSEE will help this conservation programme during 1988.

This may also be the place to state formally our present collecting policy, which is as follows:—

- ★ We seek to acquire any material relating to the area of the Ancient Parish of Bushey. (The boundaries of this area may be broadly defined as: The River Colne to the county border with Middlesex in one direction and Oxhey Lane to Letchmore Heath in the other.)
- ★ In more detail we are especially interested in material relating to all aspects of the lives and work of the artists of the Monro Circle and of the Herkomer School and its successors.
- ★ We are interested in all aspects of the churches, schools, societies, administrations, crafts, trades and industries etc which have functioned in Bushey and we do not necessarily require a specific Bushey provenance if material serves to demonstrate them.
- ★ Likewise, material which illustrates typical Bushey domestic life or the local natural environment is also accepted.
- ★ In some cases, collections formed in Bushey or other material are also accepted.
- ★ We particularly explain that we collect originals and copies of local written, printed, photographic, cartographic, and oral (audio and video) records for the Trust's Local Studies Centre, together with appropriate local history works of reference.

Our policy is of course developing and evolving but the above represents the trustees' current thinking and is to be submitted for Museum registration with the Museums and Galleries Commission later this year.

All this work supports the exhibitions which are mounted with the valuable assistance of the Friends of the Bushey Museum Trust. In 1987 the two major exhibitions were the Festival exhibition of Wynne Apperley's art in July and the second Bygone Bushey exhibition in October. In most years we hope to strike this balance between fine art, which is Bushey's special claim to fame, and the wide spectrum of village local history. Both the 1987 exhibitions were very well attended and we continue to be gratified by the widespread public enthusiasm and interest.

The year also saw the publication of more booklets about aspects of Bushey's history. Some, like the biography of Wynne Apperley, are Trust publications: others, like 'Sir Hubert von Herkomer:

Who? Where? What? Identification is needed for this splendid group of builders from Bushey somewhere. All that is known is that the photograph was taken about 1910. A larger sized print can be inspected in the Local Studies Centre on Tuesday evenings.



Film Pioneer and Artist and Film-Making in Bushey 1912-1914', are joint ventures with a local publishing company. Our policy is to encourage research and publication in one form or another and the Trust hopes that the launching of this Journal will also provide a useful means for various people to circulate the results of their local history studies to an interested readership.

A word is also necessary about the finances of the Trust. Details will be set out in the next issue in a financial statement. Behind the figures lies the experience — which is that we have been working to a very tight budget and are unable to advance in some areas as rapidly as we would like. In particular, rescue operations on such things as oil paintings donated to the Trust, repairs to old pub furniture and an old tradesman's tricycle have to be continually deferred. A serious alternative is to look to commercial sponsorship for some of these restoration tasks.

During the year one large oil painting has been beautifully restored by the generosity of The Pittecroft Trust of Bushey and we are very satisfied with the result. The restored picture, 'Ode to Spring' by Beatrice Michell (Mrs Morton Nance), a Herkomer student of considerable talent who sadly died young, will be

on exhibition in July 1988.

Specific plans for 1988, developed in 1987, were: first, the July 1988 exhibition as part of the Bushey Festival, which will be 'Kate Cowderoy and her Circle' — a group of artists working in Bushey c.1900-1950. The exhibition will concentrate mainly on the work of Kate Cowderoy herself whose studio collection has recently been donated to the Bushey Museum Trust.

Secondly, a major international Herkomer exhibition with Watford Museum following on a similar exhibition in Landsberg am Lech, Bavaria, (Herkomer's other home town). Several large pictures by Herkomer, including, we hope, *Our Village*, will be on display as well as works borrowed from Landsberg and a wealth of other material, much of it never before seen in this country.

Tentative plans have also been made for other future events as well as future work to be done. I mention this really only to highlight the fact that museum activities are not self contained within an annual cycle but entail considerable long term planning. The Trust sees an exciting future for Bushey's museum and one which will, we hope, continue to entertain and provide interest.

Grant Longman
Chairman of the Trust

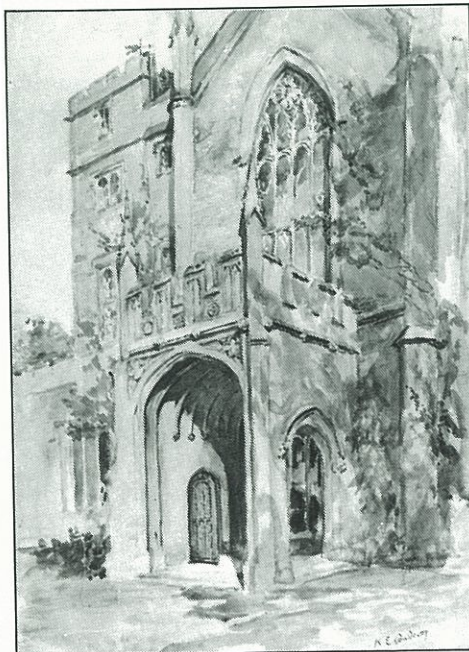
Hertsmere initiatives

Exhibitions in the Council Chamber, Rudolph Road

A MODEST but innovative use of the Council Offices, Rudolph Road, for exhibitions is planned for this year. Hertsmere Borough Council have taken the initiative on two fronts. First, they have invited the Bushey Museum Trust to hang a new collection of pictures in the Council Chamber, whilst the Council's pictures, which are normally there, are being cleaned and restored. Secondly, the Borough Planning Department is to mount some free standing exhibitions of interesting and historic building plans from the Council's archives. Norman Hedges from the Friends has been planning and helping to design these displays and is complementing the plans with related photographs from the Trust collection. It is intended that the Council Chamber will be open to the public when the offices are open for normal business. The new collection and the first of the displays will be completed in June.

The pictures which the Trust is providing include a number of fine mezzotints engraved by Sir Hubert von Herkomer, Elizabeth Gulland, Thomas Hamilton Crawford, Arthur Hewlett, Norman Hirst and Eugene Tily. All these superb quality fine art prints were produced in Bushey between 1882 and 1931 by H.T. Cox & Sons of Melbourne Road. Lucy Kemp-Welch is represented by 'Morning' and Marguerite Frobisher by a small selection of her oil paintings of local scenes. Over the fireplace hangs the superbly romantic 'Ode to Spring'

by Beatrice Michell (Mrs B. Morton Nance) — newly cleaned and restored as a result of the generosity of the Pittecroft Trust, Bushey. Other artists featured include Albert Chewett, represented by a painting of his mother in their drawing room at Bushey Heath, and George Harcourt, whose fine portrait of an (as yet) unknown lady awaits possible identification. *G.L.*



Another of Kate Cowderoy's water colours to be seen at the Festival Art Exhibition in July. Can you guess what the subject is?

Louie Burrell, 1873-1971



'An Edwardian Painter — Lost & Found'

THUS titled, the exhibition at the Barbican Centre between January 9th and February 7th gave a useful insight through its 40 exhibits of the skill of this former star pupil of Sir Hubert von Herkomer.

To the uninitiated, the scale of the showing, in numbers, was misleading, since it soon became readily apparent that the artist's forte was in her work as a miniaturist.

Born to artistic parents — her father was the landscape painter William Luker and her mother, Ada Margetts until her early marriage — she was a talented and successful painter of still-life. Whilst studying under Herkomer from 1900 to 1903 she supported herself in vacations by painting miniatures and exhibiting at the Royal Academy.

Subsequently she went to South Africa and met and married Philip Henry Burrell, a prosperous Johannesburg merchant. Her first child died at birth but she returned to England for the birth of her second child Philippa in 1908. Sadly this happy event was overshadowed by the sudden death of her husband from a heart attack before being able to join her.

Now without means, she returned to painting and was patronised by royalty, the rich and famous. Her subsequent life alternated between these periods of prosperity and penury, and she subsequently died in obscurity. Thanks to the initiative of her daughter Philippa the quality of her work is now receiving due recognition through regular exhibitions in various parts of the country.

Of the works themselves I thought that they had a refreshing honesty and naturalness in their portrayal and avoided the wooden representation that is so often seen in miniatures.

In preparing these few notes I have drawn on Rosemary Lomax's excellent

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Hard Times

(in Manchester)

In a year when there is to be an international Herkomer Exhibition to mark the centenary of the completion of Herkomer's Mutterthurm in Landsberg, Michael Pritchard reports on the exhibition 'Hard Times – Social Realism in Victorian Art' shown at Manchester's City Art Gallery at the turn of the year. Michael also looks at the exhibition catalogue which contains an essay on Sir Hubert von Herkomer.

The Exhibition

Britain's first exhibition of Victorian social realist painting was appropriately held in Manchester the scene of so much poverty, industrial might, class conflict and contrast during the nineteenth century. Manchester's perceived image of textile mills, polluted waterways and the grime of the city somehow seems even stronger than that of Victorian London – perhaps because it is largely untrue or because it is easier to draw a parallel with the present economic and social situation in areas outside the south-east.

In spite of, or because of, this the exhibition was continuously packed with visitors during its two-month run. The gallery was filled with art ranging from large oils to small engravings and delicate watercolours all of which, despite some unsympathetic hanging (some small pictures were too high) and poor lighting (which completely obscured some of the larger oils) came powerfully across. The subject matter ranged from Ford Maddox Brown's *Work* to Frank Holl's *The Song of the Shirt* and to Herkomer's *Pressing to the West*. Most of the pictures were superb and to some extent overcame the depressing subject matter so that the art could be appreciated whilst not losing sight of a deeper message.

The exhibition title *Hard Times* is taken from Herkomer's well known picture used on the catalogue cover and exhibition publicity material. It could equally have come from Dickens' book (1853) of the same name or similarly titled pictures by T.R. Laurant and Frederick Brown. Herkomer's work fitted well into the exhibition. His pictures shown were all impressive: *The Last Muster*, *Eventide*, *Pressing to the West*, *Hard Times*, *On Strike* and *In the Black Country*.

All were very relevant to the title. *The Last Muster* and *Eventide* both deal with old age and death within institutions; *Pressing to the West* the squalid conditions of the New York immigration centre, the result in itself of the search for prosperity and a new life; *Hard Times*, *In the Black Country* and *On Strike* are all associated with work. The former two show the misery of hard work with poor pay for a man with a family and the latter the effect of a man's strike action on his family. Several engravings by Herkomer for 'The

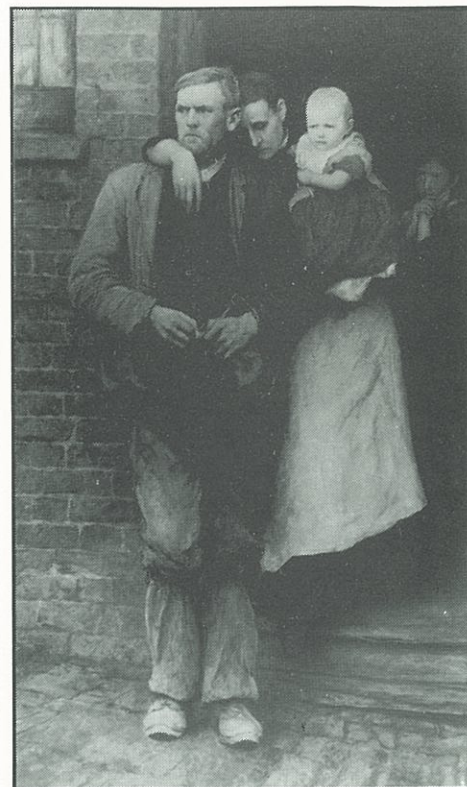
Graphic' magazine were also on display.

Seeing the pictures mostly for the first time brought home their sheer size. All are large. *On Strike* is life size and truly impressive at over seven feet high. The colours of each are still bright and each is very detailed with little brush strokes within overall areas of colour. Reproductions do little justice to the pictures.

The Catalogue

To accompany the exhibition a 152 page catalogue was compiled with sixteen chapters discussing the pictures within each theme. Reading through, one becomes aware of the desire of Victorian society to largely ignore poverty by refusing to purchase works showing reality unless repainting was done or the subject was dramatised as to become so removed from reality to be fictional. Increasingly through the nineteenth century, artists' patrons gradually accepted the new, real view of society and some encouraged its depiction. In Herkomer's case Clarence Fry, a wealthy Watford businessman, proved a useful patron when he bought *The Last Muster* for £1200.

The Herkomer chapter *Sir Hubert von Herkomer: 'Sympathy for the suffering of mankind'* is of special interest to the Trust and Friends. It was written by Lee M. Edwards an American art historian who organised the Herkomer section of the exhibition and who is currently writing a



'On Strike' (1891)

complete book on Herkomer. In 1984 Lee had written a university thesis on Herkomer and the modern life subject. She visited Bushey recently while researching for her book and has received help from the Trust.

Lee Edwards' illustrated essay in the catalogue gives a brief resume of Herkomer's life emphasising his own humble origins and his idolization of Frederick Walker. The work of Luke Fildes and Frank Holl for 'The Graphic' was important in Herkomer's development as an artist. It began in 1870 and set his style for social subjects. Some of his 'Graphic' engravings including *The Last Muster* were worked up into exhibition pictures and the resultant public and critical acclaim established Herkomer's reputation and introduced the Victorians to a new style of foreign-influenced art.

Edwards next discusses each of Herkomer's major pictures in turn. The

'Eventide: a scene in the Westminster Union' (1878)



RECENT ACQUISITIONS



success of *The Last Muster* (1875) overwhelmed even Herkomer (never the most modest of men). The work was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1875 and was awarded two medals at the Paris International Exhibition in 1878. The picture was based on a 'Graphic' engraving and was often misinterpreted by critics as being a military subject rather than a comment on old age. The figures in the background include Clarence Fry, Herkomer's wife, Mrs Fry and Hubert Herkomer himself.

Eventide: a scene in the Westminster Union (1878) explores the themes of old age, death and patriotism that are present in *The Last Muster* but to greater depth. The work was based upon a visit Herkomer made to the St James's workhouse in Soho, administered by the Westminster Union. The workhouse was an emotive subject and the picture, as Edwards states, 'while not necessarily an overt statement for political and social change, does encourage reformist sympathies'.

Pressing to the West: A scene in Castle Garden, New York (1884) was conceived during an American tour in 1882/83 and partly recalls the time when Herkomer's own family were forced to pass through the immigration centre before settling in Cleveland. The picture is very detailed and, again, Herkomer appears in a cameo role along with his Uncle.

Hard Times (1885) was suggested by a group Herkomer saw resting at the roadside in Coldharbour Lane, Bushey. The group used by Herkomer as models were the Quarry family of Merry Hill Lane, Bushey and depict an out-of-work labourer with his weary family. When exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1885 the picture was viewed as reformist and was condemned by some of the more conservative elements. In her text Edwards explores the relationship with the family.

On Strike (1891) was Herkomer's diploma work and shows a lone worker living with the consequences of his strike action on his family. The man depicted was modelled on Tom Birch, a gardener at Lululaund. The picture appeared at a time when industrial action was on the increase and a damaging dockers' strike in 1889 had received a great deal of publicity. The sentiments of the picture and Herkomer's own views remain open to differing interpretation which make the picture one of his most intriguing. *In the Black Country* (1891) was painted in the same year as *On Strike* but was never finished. It is a dramatic picture showing a coal miner and his family in front of the works and shares affinities with *Eventide*.

In all cases Lee Edwards discusses each picture in detail and helps to set them into some context. An exhaustive list of references provides sources should any reader wish to pursue the subject. The joint Bushey Museum Trust, Landsberg and Watford Herkomer exhibition later this year will include a number of other works by this under-represented artist and it is hoped that *On Strike* will be on show

DUE TO the demands of the Bygone Bushey Exhibition in October, I could not produce this column for the last issue, so there is a lot to catch up on. In fact, there have been far too many gifts and deposits in the last six months to mention more than a few. However, we would especially like to thank all of you who have searched through your photograph albums and shoe boxes – or let us do it. We have borrowed many precious family photographs and made good copies of Bushey people and places. We sometimes take far too long to get them back to you and thank you for your patience, but the result is now over 2000 negatives. This is a great start – but only a start – to our photographic archive. The important thing is to keep them coming please – Bushey people and places.

Mrs Peggy Latham

It was with great sadness that we learnt of the death of Peggy Latham just after our October exhibition. She was an enthusiastic member of the Friends and indeed a good friend to the Trust. Her family have very generously given us many of the local items which she had collected. They included many presentation books from the Parish Sunday School signed by Rectors Kynaston and Montague Hall and by Revd. Burchell Herne of Bushey Grange. Also included were many plans and cards and local printed ephemera. Best of all

in the Gallery in Church House during the October Exhibition. *M.P.*

NB The exhibition catalogue 'Hard Times' and Lee Edwards' thesis 'Herkomer and the modern life subject' are both available for consultation in the Local Studies Centre.

'The Last Muster' (1875)



were the mezzotints signed by Elizabeth Gulland and Elizabeth Milner of which Peggy was so proud.

Fine Art

Visitors to our first Bygone Bushey in 1986 will remember a particularly interesting fine watercolour by Henry Brett Withers of the Lime Kilns near Bushey Arches. We are delighted to say this has now been given to us. We are also very pleased with the gift of a successful oil of a very difficult subject – the interior of St. James including the rood screen – by Hugh Boycott-Brown. Two unusual gifts were very competent watercolours by Revd. Shave, one time Minister at the Congregational Church. Doubly interesting was the gift of a watercolour of the Rose Walk at the old Manor House as it is by Beatrice Harford one of the members of the talented and well-known family who lived there in the Edwardian period. Herkomer is represented by the gift of several copies of his striking illustrations for the 'Graphic' in the 1870s. These were greatly admired by Vincent van Gogh and influenced his work. The story of this is told by Dr Lee Edwards in her thesis on Herkomer and can be studied at the LSC any Tuesday.

Herkomer

We have received a number of especially interesting gifts directly related to Herkomer, besides the 'Graphic' prints. On page 17 of Michael Pritchard's new book on Herkomer and his film-making – have you got your copy yet? – there is an illustration of Herkomer on the set in costume for his leading part in 'A Highwayman's Honour'. This is from a large hand-coloured photograph the original of which we have now been given.

During his lifetime Herkomer received many honours, especially from his native Germany and we have been given the original investiture documents for his Knighthoods from Saxe-Meinigen, Prussia and Bavaria, the latter including a hand painted emblazon of his coat of arms. Also there are documents awarding him Academy medals from several distinguished institutes and the document conferring the rank of Commander of the Royal Victorian Order signed by Edward VII in 1901 – one of the new King's first investitures. Particularly special is the original document complete with seal and magnificently framed, which conferred the Freedom of Landsberg on Herkomer in 1888. This is the year of the completion of the Mutterthurm, the centenary of which is being celebrated by the International Herkomer Exhibition of which we are a part later this year. More on this next issue.

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RECENT ACQUISITIONS

**Bushey Hall and the War**

In the August issue I wrote of the photographs and other memorabilia from the US 8th Air Force who were stationed at Bushey Hall in the latter part of the last war. Since then, visitors to the October exhibition will have seen the uniform which Ruth Kallman Lambert sent us from Illinois and now she has found and brought another over for us complete with all the badges and the owner's medal ribbons. With it was an enormous panoramic photograph of over 100 of the Air Force girls outside Bushey Hall in 1943. When we show it we hope many Bushey people will be able to identify the American friends they made and in some cases have kept from over 40 years ago.

More from the Wars

We have some ration books and we are pleased to have more but we especially like the less common ones such as the Clothing Coupons (more on these recent acquisitions in the next issue) and the Utility Furniture Buying Permits unearthed for us. Also come to light is a copy of the 54 page Invasion Defence Scheme prepared by Bushey Urban District Council in 1943 and of course marked 'Secret'. We have also been given a complete Civil Defence uniform and many photographs of CD exercises. Where is that elusive Home Guard uniform etc?

A particularly poignant gift has been the home memorial to Ernest Drake who died of wounds in 1915 together with his medals, photographs and papers. The memorial in fretwork and pokerwork was made by his brother-in-law who was also wounded, during his rehabilitation from his wounds.

Buffaloes

The late Mr Percy Gillett was a staunch member of the Royal Antediluvian Order of Buffaloes at its Bushey Lodge and his family have generously given us a fitted case containing his regalia together with several photographs of Buffalo gatherings and a beautiful collection of medals in gold and silver gilt. Who can tell us more about the Bushey Buffaloes?

Archives

A daunting but fascinating gift has been the van load of archives from Messrs Weller, Hill & Hubble. We have only looked at a small part of this material so far but it includes many maps and plans from Watford and Bushey. Did anyone in the Friends invest with the Watford and West Herts Building Society? We have their bronze name plate.

Tools and the Household

Our local tool collection grows only slowly but we have had the gift of some joiner's planes and shaves and moulding planes. They all have that special soft sheen which comes from the craftsman's constant

MORE ON MERRY HILL

Many will recall this article which was published in March 1987.

Other members of the Friends now tell us of their school-day memories, fortunately happier ones.



ADVICE TO A BUSHEY SCHOOLGIRL

LAST spring I was very saddened to read the feature article on life at Merry Hill School in the 1950s. (Newsletter No 5, March 1987.) Something has been nagging away gently at the back of my mind to try and redress the image that must have been left in readers' minds, for life was not all doom and gloom at Merry Hill.

Perhaps it is just as well that the classroom windows were high, or else we would have been forever looking out of them, rather than concentrating on our lessons. The cold was something that we all had to put up with, teachers and children alike. (Your writer is too young to remember the winter of 1947 when the River Colne froze and flooded deeply under Bushey Arches, and when we went to school for half-days to save the precious fuel for

use. One highlight item is the beech and brass combination plane with a full set of irons. They have been stamped 'A Gregory' who was one of the craftsmen working on Lululaund. We already have a mortice chisel of his. Does anyone have any more named tools? The household items include flat-irons and foot warmers, whisks and curlers, and some more milk bottles with local dairies' names on. We very much like household packets with pre-decimal prices, so keep remembering us when you spring clean. Especially favourite are the bottles and boxes with local traders' names on them, like Robert Gant, Shinwells, Tweens — these are all local chemists. In the pharmaceutical line we have been given an Edwardian traveller's medicine kit with some of the phials still containing such lethal preparations as belladonna, calomel, paregoric and ammoniac.

Commemorations

Lastly, although we have a number of commemorative book gifts we have few such articles. We were therefore very pleased that the Bushey and Oxhey Methodist Church has deposited with us the silver trowel used to lay the foundation stone of their Galahad Rooms extension in 1930.

B.W.

heating. Half the school went in the morning and had lunch. The other half came for lunch then had afternoon lessons. That winter *was* cold.) But the summer days were wonderful, and the horse chestnut trees with their candles were glorious.

I, too, can remember the reception class, but feel that the picture painted in the article does not ring quite true to my own experience. I know full well that I caused my teachers many problems, and thoroughly deserved any punishments that were meted out. My school reports bear me out on this! But the overall impression that remains with me is of the kindness and the friendship of everyone connected with Merry Hill.

Miss Gray, the headmistress, once told us that with a name like 'Merry Hill', ours ought to be a happy school, and she urged us all to try and make it so — all of us, teachers, domestic staff and children alike. When I left Merry Hill in 1950 (the year that your contributor started school), my school friends, teachers and other staff signed my autograph book. The entries could be summarized under the title 'Advice to a Bushey School-girl'.

From Miss Gray, our headmistress, came this contribution:

Courage is 'catching' —
So if you TAKE courage
Others will take it
From you.

[Alan Blair]

A different Mrs Stride of the reception class is surely shown by this entry:

Do all the good you can,
To all the people you can,
Just as long as ever you can.

Miss Askew (later Mrs Carter) gave me the title for these memories:

Good Advice
Seldom 'can't',
Seldom 'don't',
Never 'shan't',
Never 'won't'.

Miss Rowe, to whom I gave many headaches, spoke deeply to me in

The Knight's Prayer

God be in my head, and in my understanding.
God be in my eyes and in my looking.
God be in my mouth and in my speaking.
God be in my heart, and in my thinking.
God be at my end, and at my departing.

Continued on Page 7

I shall never forget my first day in Miss Forsythe's class, and being greeted with 'I know who you are - you're Fesley Lisher!' An instance of the fun and the friendliness that existed at Merry Hill. Miss Forsythe's 'advice' was:

To thine own self be true
And it must follow as the night the day,
Thou canst not then be false to any man.
[Polonius to his son, from 'Hamlet']

Miss Green has probably forgotten about the apple that was left in my desk over the Christmas holidays, which extended into convalescence from an appendectomy. It was discovered when my class-mate complained of the smell! My return to school after a long absence was greeted with a (deserved) telling off about leaving food in desks. Miss Green helped open our eyes to the wonders of the world around us.

The world is so full of a number of
things,
I am sure we should all be as happy as
Kings.

[R.L. Stevenson]

Those of you who are familiar with Merry Hill will know that there is one teacher missing. From her there is no quotation, no 'advice' - just a plain signature - 'A M Judd'. In a sense there was no need for Miss Judd to add anything else. Her signature is enough. No-one will easily forget Miss Judd - her uprightness, her discipline, the way she made us all work - and underneath, her kindness and care for all the girls placed in her charge. I am glad still to see her from time to time, and to know that underneath the strict exterior there is a warm, kind and caring Christian heart.

My autograph book is something I still treasure. Maybe one day it will find its way into the hands of the Bushey Museum Trust, but I felt that I wanted to share it with you now, so that the warmth and care and friendship of Merry Hill may go on record as well as those other, unhappy, memories. As I look back I can remember more sunshine than rain, more warmth than cold, more friendship and care than reprimands.

Thank you, Merry Hill. Thank you, Bushey. I am glad I grew up where I did.
Lesley Fisher.

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SCHOOLDAYS IN THE 1930s

ALTHOUGH born and living in Watford, after attending a private school, Lonsdale School in Carey Place, run by Miss Kempton, I was sent at nine years old to Merry Hill School in Bushey.

How well I remember my first morning there. The Junior School seemed enormous after the two small classrooms in a house with a handful of children. Two of us from Watford started one September morning and as this was in the days before school

dinners we had to return home to Watford for dinner. The bus was due at 12 noon and as school did not finish until 12 we were allowed to leave at 11.55 to run down the passage by Bushey Police Station to catch the bus.

All went well for the first two days and then on the Wednesday we went to catch the 1.05 bus from Watford High Street station only to find a very large crowd of people and no hope of getting on. It was, of course, early closing day when the shops in Watford High Street shut for the rest of the day. Every Wednesday after this we made sure that we were at the bus stop by 12.55. To be late for school was a thing to be reprimanded for in no uncertain terms, firstly by the form mistress, Miss Green, and if repeated often, by Miss Gray the headmistress.

The bus fare from Watford High Street Station to Bushey Police Station was a penny but if we managed to catch a green 306 we had 'scholars tickets' which my parents bought in bulk at a discount.

The school had a large playground at the rear with a separate single storey building which was the Headmistress' office with the toilets behind. Beyond the playground was grass and trees, strictly out of bounds although part of the school grounds.

The classrooms were large, and in the Junior part of the school had rows of desks, each with its inkwell and lift-up lid, facing the teacher at her own large desk. Her authority was never questioned. The primary classes had small tables and were a little less spartan.

The first year was uneventful as far as I can remember although there was one occasion when I was called to the front of the school during Assembly for yawning!

In the following September I entered the top class of the school and was taught by Miss Judd. There was the regular chanting of tables and spelling, I shall never forget how to spell 'W-double O-double L-E-N'.

The morning milk, in third-of-a-pint bottles, with cardboard tops with a hole in the middle for a straw, was ranged along the radiator in winter to take the chill off. I have often wondered since what it did to the freshness of the milk!

* * *

During my third and last year at Merry Hill School I was promoted to be one of the two prefects. Besides being the proud owner of a blue badge I was given certain privileges and jobs. One of the jobs was to ring the school bell with a rope in Miss Green's classroom for five minutes at 8.45 and 8.55 and again at 1.15 and 1.25. (I must go back sometime to see if the bell is still there.) Another duty was to stand at the gate and take the names of children who were late for school and then pass them on to the headmistress.

One of the highlights of the school year was Empire Day, 24th May. We all assembled in the playground with a Union Jack and proudly marched around it before having the rest of the day off.

1935 was the Silver Jubilee Year of King George V and Queen Mary and how hard we rehearsed our country dancing ready for the great day when we would perform in the grounds of Bushey House. 1937 was a similar occasion when King George VI and Queen Elizabeth were crowned on 12th May. Once again there were celebrations at Bushey House and this time we were dressed up for the country dancing. Afterwards we were all presented with a memento of the day, a Coronation Book of the life of the King and Queen.

1937 was also for me the year of the 'scholarship' exams. First came the preliminary examination which all pupils took, those that passed then sat two further examinations for Watford Grammar School with the successful ones having the option of starting at Watford Grammar in the September or sitting a further examination for Watford Central School.

In July 1937 I said farewell to Merry Hill School after three happy years and in September was one of 36 girls and 36 boys who began their secondary education at Watford Central School in Derby Road, almost opposite where I first started, at Lonsdale School!

Joan Gunton (née Mounter)
20c Belmont Rd
Bushey

VILLAGE SCHOOLS AND OTHER MEMORIES

I THOUGHT I would comment on one or two aspects of the article on Merry Hill School in the Fifties which appeared in Newsletter No 5 of March 1987. I would voice an interest as I was a pupil from 1922 to 1927 (?) when I moved to the 'big boys' at Ashfield and the tender mercies of the then Headmaster - Mr Atkins. I subsequently became a Manager (Governor) until we moved to Kent in 1980. My sons also attended as did my nephews (1950s).

My memories are of lofty class rooms with windows above eye level, but I must say that slates went out of use many years before the fifties, as did the use of dunces' caps. The reception class in the late 40s and 50s was taught by a young lady who married whilst teaching at the school and her friend who also taught at the school and was of the same age. There were also older teachers wholly considerate for the school and pupils.

Your correspondent's recollection of the staff room is quite correct, and I recall that during the war years it was used as a centre for the firewatchers who patrolled the Merry Hill area for firebombs - happily few and far between. What Merry Hill had, which Ashfield lacked, was a fine modern hall where the Bushey Community Association staged several plays, and the two young teachers mentioned above participated in these amateur dramatics.

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Dates for your Diary

All meetings and exhibitions take place in Church House, St James, High Street, Bushey, unless otherwise stated

Wednesday 6 July 1988 at 7.30pm WALL HALL COLLEGE – A GUIDED TOUR

Meet at Wall Hall College for a guided tour of the mansion and grounds. The mansion, which was formerly owned by Pierpoint Morgan and now houses a college, is a romantic early 19th century building with a big Gothic conservatory. Features in the grounds include some artificial ruins and an ice house.

9-24 July 1988 FESTIVAL ART EXHIBITION

'Kate Cowderoy and her Circle' is the title of Bushey Museum Trust's contribution to the 1988 Bushey Festival. To be shown in the Gallery at Church House; see elsewhere in this issue for full details.

Tuesday 20 September 1988 at 8pm FILMS OF BUSHEY & OXHEY

Show by Ted Parrish who makes environmental films. His work has been used at public enquiries such as the M1 Link Road to show the effects of the proposed road on Oxhey. He will show several films with soundtrack including one of the restoration of the pond in Attenborough's Fields.

1-30 October 1988 INTERNATIONAL HERKOMER EXHIBITION

Following the showing in Landsberg, Bavaria, in July and August, this largest assembly of Herkomer's work made this century transfers to Bushey and Watford. The BMT and Watford Museum are jointly presenting the exhibition which celebrates the centenary of the Mutterthurm in Landsberg (see Newsletter no 6, page 4).

The exhibition combines for the first time a selection of Herkomer's Bushey and Bavarian works in one display. More details later.

Thursday 20 October 1988 at 8pm HERKOMER – ARTIST OF BUSHEY AND BAVARIA

A public lecture at Bushey Hall School (formerly Grange Park), given by Grant Longman who will discuss some of the English and Bavarian exhibits at the Herkomer Exhibition being staged at the Gallery in Church House and at Watford Museum. Please note the venue for this meeting. There will be an admission charge of £1 for Friends and £2 for non-Friends.

Wednesday 26 October 1988 at 8pm MUSIC BY HERKOMER AND HIS CONTEMPORARIES

A recital in St James' Church by Maureen Longman (piano) and Christina Jackson (violin) of six pieces composed by Herkomer. The concert will also include works by Richard Strauss, Wagner, Brahms, York Bowen and Walton, the first two of whom had their portraits painted by Herkomer.

Admission by programme £2.50 (concessions £1.50)

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VILLAGE SCHOOLS AND OTHER MEMORIES

On the same page of the March '87 Newsletter as the Merry Hill article is a photograph of Avenue Rise School (not St Andrews) which I attended after leaving Ashfield but I had moved to Watford Boys Grammar School. My brother Norman appears in the photograph – back row third from the right. The school was owned by a Mrs Collins who always wore an overall over her dress – as can be noted – two of the teachers appear on her left, and one on the far left a Miss Roberts (?). The teacher ratio was very good – 4 to 23 pupils.

Mention of Avenue Rise school brings me to the reference to Miss Dack on page 5 of the December '87 Newsletter. She had a small stationer's shop in the High Street. It was the front room of her cottage fourth from the right in the photograph on page 2 which illustrates the article by my father on the Twychell Cottages. I can remember calling at Miss Dack's on my way to or from Avenue Rise School to purchase pencils etc.

You used to open the front door (which rang a bell to announce your entrance) and as you stepped down Miss Dack would appear from behind the curtain which separated the shop portion from the living space. She was a small bird-like person dressed in black with white hair. She only stocked the very best articles – Venus and Royal Sovereign pencils, art paper, drawing books, camel hair brushes and Basildon Bond stationery – even today the perfume of cedar wood pencils reminds me of that little shop and lady.

I also recall Mrs Middleton's sweet shop at the corner of Falconer Road, and in this road still stands the Parish Hall where in

Tuesday 15 November 1988 at 8pm AGM and MEMBERS' EVENING

After the formalities, a presentation to Bushey Museum Trustees of an item purchased by the Friends followed by two short talks:

Jenny Just on the Oral History Group with examples of recordings made.

Alan Pritchard revealing more from early Bushey census returns.

Saturday 10 December 1988 at 8pm CHRISTMAS SOCIAL

The evening highlight will at this informal gathering be an Entertainment by Dennis Hubbard and his old-fashioned Magic Lantern with all its dramatic effects.

A light buffet and a glass of wine or fruit juice are included in the admission price of £2.50.

Meetings for 1989 are in course of arrangement. One of them will be a talk by a speaker from the Churches' Television Centre in Merry Hill Road to be followed at a later date by a visit to their studios there.

the late 20s the Bushey Lecture Society met monthly on Mondays. As children we looked forward to these winter entertainments particularly those illustrated by lantern slides. A local noteworthy always took the chair at each lecture when he introduced the speaker. The Parish Hall in those days was a centre for many activities – the Parish Christmas Fair and local dances, particularly the New Year's Eve Dance which enjoyed an extension to 12.30am except when New Year's Day fell on a Sunday.

In those days the present Bushey Print Shop was Dadson's, one of the local grocery stores which had the benefit of a delivery service. My mother took advantage of this facility and when she went to the shop to pay the bill it was rarely more than £1. At this store the assistants used to cut the cheese, bacon, butter etc in your presence and behind the mahogany counter stood the ranks of drawers containing many loose items. There were several bentwood chairs for the customers and when Lady Peat (who lived in Merry Hill Road) arrived in her chauffeur-driven Rolls the manager left whoever he was serving to attend to her, conducting her to one of the chairs and dealing with her purchases which were carried to the Rolls by the chauffeur.

In previous newsletter articles the Bushey Grove Apple is mentioned and it is interesting to note that the Bushey Horticultural Society has a cup for the best apple exhibit called the Bushey Grove Apple Cup.

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Louie Burrell

review for 'Focus' and the exhibition catalogue but have refrained from saying too much about her life and work as I understand Bushey can expect to see more of the artistry of Louie Burrell. However, the Barbican is to be congratulated for putting on this promising glimpse of the fine work that can be expected to be seen in future exhibitions.

Chris Jordan

Continued from Page 1
An eventful year in prospect

The Journal is to be a forum for ideas, suggestions, articles and opinions. The editor welcomes all contributions which should be sent to: Alec Just, 22 King George Avenue, Bushey WD2 3NT.

Another sign of the increasing momentum of activity is the setting up of 'Bushey Museum Services Limited'. This move is to facilitate the marketing of the 'Bushey Museum Collection' of fine art greeting cards and other BMT publications. Any member of the Friends who has any marketing expertise or would be willing to help in any way please contact any member of the Committee (listed in the newsletter).