This year’s Bushey Festival Exhibition (7—29 July) combines the art and local history of 50 years ago...

The Art of Miguel Mackinlay

Bushey in the ’30s & ’40s

THE Bushey Festival exhibition by the Bushey Museum Trust is traditionally an art exhibition, supplemented by local history relating to the artist’s life in Bushey, where possible, and also a display of important recent acquisitions in the second room including this year the recent purchases of Herkomer’s furniture.

In presenting the art of Miguel Mackinlay in July we will be branching out from the Herkomer School and showing the works of an artist who studied elsewhere and who did not come to Bushey until he was thirty-three and about to become famous.

He was born in Spain in 1895 and moved to Australia when he was fourteen and the sunny climates of Valencia and Perth had a lifelong influence on his art. At the age of about nineteen he came to Chelsea with two other Australian art students, Stan Cross and Frank Goulding. Miguel, usually known to his friends as Mike Mackinlay, married in 1916 a professional model at the Slade School of Art. Then after short stays in Battersea, Little Hallingbury (near Sawbridgeworth) and Fitzroy Street in London, they moved to 31 Bournehall Road Bushey. It was in Bournehall Road that his greatest (and largest) paintings were produced. Of these we will be showing:

‘Tête-à-Tête’ — two young ladies reclining on a rug in the garden after tennis, plus lovely dog.

‘The First Communion’ — his daughter Laurie dressed ready for the service sitting near the windows with the garden seen beyond, and

‘Summer’ — Bushey Open Air Swimming Pool in the King George Recreation Ground with local lads and ladies at play.

All three were shown prominently at the Royal Academy in the early 1930s. Some of his smaller works also show Bushey people and places. He took a lively interest in local life and we have a photo of him judging a school children’s poster competition at Merryhill Infants’ School along with Lucy Kemp-Welch R.I. and George Harcourt RA. This was in connection with Bushey War Weapons Week. Seldom can an infants’ school have had such an illustrious panel of artists to adjudicate!

Sadly his health declined in the late 1940s and he led an increasingly quiet life in the 1950s. He died in 1958.

Grant Longman

‘Summer’ — a view of Bushey Open Air Swimming Pool in King George Recreation Ground. Mackinlay exhibited the painting at the Royal Academy in 1932. Last open for the 1986 season, the Pool is now in a sad and dilapidated state. A strenuous campaign by local people has failed to persuade the local authority to modernise and re-open it. Certainly many Bushey people will recall happy childhood hours spent splashing about and having fun in the Open Air Pool.

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Margaret’s Landsberg Diary

Members of the Friends Margaret and Arthur Back joined a Bushey party on a long weekend visit to Landsberg last September. Margaret Back’s diary of the trip gives a real flavour both of the warmth of our German friends and of the many attractions Herkomer’s Bavarian ‘second home’ has to offer the visitor.

Thursday 14th September

Thursday at last. The Albanian coach picks us up on time at 10.40am and we make ourselves known to our fellow travellers – Anne Blissley who organised the whole trip, Arthur and Thelma Beddows and their neighbour Gulvie Tye (who live most appropriately in Herkomer Road), and Jim and Margaret Craig-Gray from the old Rectory, before driving round the corner to pick up Marion Cox and John McMillan. Then, shunning the M25, we go by the route I know best: Harrow, Northolt and Hayes to Terminal One, Heathrow.

Having got rid of the luggage we visit the Duty Free for that which cheers before taking off at 1.25pm on BA747, and a mere ten minutes late. A lovely flight, save for the last twenty minutes which are a bit bumpy, during which I practise deep breathing, check the wing I can see in case any of it is falling off, and tell myself that the pilot sounds very confident.

We land on time at 4pm, put our watches forward an hour, and, as we come through the barrier, we see the welcoming smile of Hartrfrid Neunzert*. Jim and Margaret are whisked away by car and the remaining eight of us, plus luggage, get into a very smart little minibus which Hartrfrid steers skilfully around Munich and out to Landsberg. We drive through lovely open countryside, over the northern tip of the Ammer See with a distant view of the Zugspitze and then Landsberg and the twin towers of the Holy Cross Church. We go first to the house of the Familie Stadler, just outside the town walls, where Arthur and Thelma, Gulvie, and Arthur and I are to stay. We are welcomed by Frau Stadler into spotlessly clean rooms, while Anne and Marion travel on to Frau Raber and John back to Hartrfrid’s house. We unpack and then have coffee and apple strudel, courtesy of Frau Stadler.

Maureen and Grant Longman had been in Landsberg since the previous Saturday, staying with Hartrfrid. We are never to be bored! Around 7pm we are picked up and taken off to the Musikschule, introduced to a bewildering number of people and then on to the concert hall, where Maureen is to play a superb programme of music for the piano. At the end we all collect coats and wander outside and somehow everyone disappears into thin air save Arthur, Thelma, Gulvie, my Arthur and me! It is dark, we have no idea where we are, and only Thelma speaks a little German.

With commendable common sense Thelma dashes after the retreating form of the elderly female caretaker – and disappears. This begins to seem like an Agatha Christie thriller; however, the caretaker opens up a back door of the music school, and phones Hartrfrid’s number. Within minutes we are once more on our way, this time back to Hartrfrid’s house where a party is in full swing with champagne corks popping all over the place. Sibylle, Hartrfrid’s attractive wife, is coping magnificently with this influx. The lack of German becomes much less important, and around midnight we signal that perhaps we should return to our lodgings. Once more we are whisked away, and after some giggling and difficulties with a front gate that also has to be unlocked as well as the front door, we creep in past the collection of steins, glasses and Russian dolls, and up to our rooms.

Friday 15th September

7am. The weather is windy and rather wet. The national flag in the back garden is flapping rather dismally. We go for a short walk before 9am breakfast – cold meat, cheese, jam, various breads, coffee or tea. Then we all walk to a gate in the town wall and round to the Museum which is just by the Holy Cross Church. We are early for 10am so we take a look inside the church – it is also warmer inside. Then at 10am we all collect in the Museum and Hartrfrid introduces our guide, a girl who speaks excellent English and puts us non-German speakers to shame. She takes us back to the church, very Baroque with a painted cross on the roof of the chancel which always points towards the viewer in a rather disconcerting manner. This Heilig-Kreuz church is the dominating part of a Jesuit college, and walking through to the cloisters we find a very desirable retirement home for the elderly of Landsberg. Some of us feel that immediate application would be a good move.

Then round to the Bayertor, a lovely gateway and tower at the highest part of the town, 630 meters above sea level. Landsberg is built on a hillside above the river Lech, and the inhabitants seem very fit and strong in the legs. We have a good look at the Bayertor, with its one-handed clock and the depiction of a snake swallowing a child, before descending back into the town down the steep cobbled street, the Alte Bergstrasse, the old salt road.

This is a conservation area, the facades of the old houses have been restored but nothing can be altered. Turning left down more steps, we find an old chapel to the now demolished castle, and a girl amongst the men selling their small medieval church of “Maria Himmelfahrt”. It has onion towers, and inside it has recently undergone cleaning and restoration. It is a late Gothic
church, with baroque decoration, and in the middle of the central aisle there is a font containing warm water. At a side altar a life-sized wooden donkey carries the figure of Christ. Their great treasure is a 15th century Madonna and Child, with the child holding an apple. In another side chapel, behind glass, is a representation of fifteen Stations of the Cross, full of figures in the dress of the time.

From there it is a short step to the Johanniskirche, a church of Bavarian roccoco style, built by Dominicus Zimmermann in 1752. It is an oval shape, and the altar is almost in 3D of St John baptizing Jesus in the Jordan. Then we are taken to see the old Salt House, a long low building, now converted into highly desirable residences, being in the centre of town, close to the River Lech and yet having no passing traffic. Finally we go to the Caroline Bridge, by the Music School, from which we can see the Mutterturm, and here our Guide leaves us to search for food. We are pointed towards the Mohren Gasthaus in the town square, where we have an interesting meal — and were warmed up — for it had been quite chilly and wet at times. Then we split up and explore on our own, orientate ourselves, come back for more coffee and apple tart, and finally walk back up through the town to the Studler house.

Having cleaned up a little, we five order two taxis and head for Gerald and Angelika (Geli) Kellner, whose house is near the Caroline Bridge. We are ushered into a completely book-lined room nearly filled by a large table with seating all round, and the table covered with beautifully presented food. We are first to arrive but all the other members of our group appear, plus Maureen and Grant, Harfrid and Sibylle, friends Ulric and Rosie, and of course the little Schnauzer dog, "Kasawubu". We then start a prolonged meal, of all that was on the table plus hot meats, salad, wine and beer and lovely freshly pressed apple juice. For the next 3½ hours the conversation never lags, the food and wine never diminishes, and maybe it would still be going on, despite forays into taking stuff, except that eventually some of us indicate that we would like a few hours sleep before dawn! We are driven back under a clear sky and a full moon — Landsberg looking medieval and romantic.

Saturday 16th September

Sun and blue skies at 8am. After breakfast we have a free morning so we set off down to the town square, taking photos of 87 Herkomer Strasse and Gulvie. Then we cross the Lech and walk along the other side of the river, past the fast flowing weir and the fishermen, to the Mutterturm. Here are a bride and groom having their photos taken, and we in turn take many pictures of Herkomer's tower. Then on to the footbridge and back into the town for a quick look at the market and a snack meal of coffee and Vienna pastries — after a slight muddle which leads us first being served sausages and rolls.

A quick taxi trip back to our lodgings, for at 12.30 Sibylle calls for us and our party congregates at the Music School. Then on to Waal, Herkomer's birthplace, for the Passion Play at 1pm. We are welcomed there by the Bürgermeister of Waal, Herr Peter Pauli, who plays St James in the Passion Play. All the parts are taken by villagers and most professionally. A row had been reserved for us, and we are given a transcript of the play. After two hours there is a break and we are given tea or coffee and the most luscious cakes, before resuming our seats for the next two hours. The play is absorbing and although on a smaller scale, quite as moving as Oberammergau, a few miles away. It takes all our attention from the time Jesus comes on stage riding on a donkey to the final appearance to the Magdalene. Then we are invited backstage, where we meet many members of the cast, see the scenery and costumes, the intricate lighting and scene changing and the magnificent theatre (used for religious performances) from the other side of the footlights.

Next, with the Bürgermeister and Harfrid we go on a tour of Waal, a little place and we can imagine it as it was in the time of Herkomer's parents. There is a stream running through the centre of the village — reminiscent of Bourton-on-the-Water. First we walk to the church of St Anna with its bell tower with onion top. Inside, the altar and much of the carving had been done by Lorenz Herkomer, Hubert Herkomer's father. Then walking towards the Rathaus we see the war memorial, designed and executed by Hubert Herkomer — and are slow to

... a wedding celebration is taking place, music is being played and many of the men seem nearly legless.'

realise that of course this memorial was to men who fell in the Franco-German war. Further into the village a wedding celebration is taking place. The bride is in a procession through the village, music being played, and many of the men seem nearly legless. However they are all very happy. We walk on to the site of the house where Herkomer was born, which is commemorated by plaques on the present house. Finally we part from the Bürgermeister, and Harfrid drives us back to Landsberg where we have an excellent meal at the Gasthaus Mohren with Thelma and Arthur — and finally totter back around 10pm.

Sunday 17th September

Another warm sunny day with not a cloud in the sky at 7.30am — and all the church bells ringing. Extra to the usual breakfast is chocolate cake.

We all walk down through the town and find the Konditorei again for coffee and cakes. Then to the Caroline Bridge, where Arthur and Thelma take the further bank, while Arthur, Gulvic

Continued on Page 4
and I walk along the town side bank right along to the second road bridge and then circle back through the town and back down to the river by the salt barn. Here we meet Jim and Margaret Craig-Gray, plus Thelma and Arthur and we all sit in the hot sunshine and have toasted sandwiches and Johannisesewurst. Come 1.45 and we walk back to the other side of the river and the Mutterturm. Along come the Bürgermeister of Landsberg, and Hartfrid, Maureen and Grant, and we have many photos taken in front of the Mutterturm. Then we go inside and Hartfrid gives a fascinating talk on the life of Hubert von Herkomer. We see many of his lovely carvings and paintings and portraits, including a particularly fine one of his mother. We climb right to the top of the tower to see the views over Landsberg and the surrounding countryside.

When we reluctantly leave we walk up to the Museum and there meet a lady of 94 years, who had given the museum two portraits painted by her father, Georg Schuster-Woldan. We go all round the museum under Hartfrid’s expert guidance. Then he takes us off to a cafe — more tea and coffee, cakes and apple tart. Next a car convoy takes us across town to Herr Martin’s house where we sit in his garden drinking wine. Herr Martin is Hartfrid’s brother-in-law and an historian, employed in the museum. The car convoy then brings us back to the Familie Stadler, where we change, and then we return again by car back into town to the Goggi Restaurant where we as a group entertain our hosts — Hartfrid and Sibylle, Gerald and

— which necessitates lights out and burning brandy on sugar lumps as part of an ice cream extravaganza — is provided by the Bürgermeister, Herr Rössel. There are speeches and toasting of an exchange of gifts and we all part around 11.30pm.

Monday 18th September

Can it really be Monday? Still hot and sunny. We pack and breakfast and pay Frau Stadler 155DM — about £55 for B & B — for two for four nights!

At 9.30 Hartfrid brings John, Anne and Marion and by 9.45 a minibus appears and takes all ten of us to Munich. With difficulty we leave our luggage at the main railway station — the Oktober Fest is in full swing and Munich is crowded. We go with Arthur and Thelma for coffee, then on into the old city, via the Karls Tor Gate where oddly enough there is a Scottish piper playing and the skirl of bagpipes has brought quite a crowd of onlookers. Then through into the pedestrian precinct. We have a look at the shops — Woolworth’s — then to the Renaissance facade of St. Michael’s. We go inside, a lovely church. On to the Marienplatz, and the new City Hall. We sit and wait hopefully for the glöckenspiel, but nothing happens at 1pm. We cut back to the Cathedral — obviously badly damaged by bombing during the last war. When we come out I am delighted to see a shop selling carvings including a crib set that I had been looking for throughout the week.

I HAVE BEEN toy ing with the idea of dropping you a line ever since I read the article [Journal no. 2, Winter 88/9] from the lady who used to be a landgirl at Greens Farm back in the 40s. She asked ‘what happened to Willie Cusack?’

I played in a ‘7-a-side’ soccer tournament with Bill Cusack in a Kodak tournament early in the 60s. Many of your 500 members may be asking the question ‘what happened to so and so?’ How about a ‘what happened to so and so?’ column in your newsletter or journal? For example, ‘what happened to the Toms family who used to live in Glencoe Road from 1934 for almost 50 years?’

Mum and Dad have passed away and also elder brother Derek (aged 62) in October ’87 just 12 days after a trip [to the UK] to see Mum. He had been living in a Melbourne suburb since 1948. Second son Vernon is now living in Oteuing, a village between Wellingleigh and Kettering.

Third son (me) has been in Emerald, a Melbourne suburb, since 1963, visiting good old Bushy in 1977, 1984 and again in 1987. Sister Cynthia is living in a village near Sandwich, Kent, and younger brother Clive is in Liss, Hampshire.

Since being here I have met up with Michael Mapp, a cousin of the ‘Park Road Mapps’ and in fact was invited to his 50th birthday party on June 24th last year. I gave him a copy of ‘The Story of Bushy and Oxhey Pubs’, a book I found most absorbing and nostalgic! Mickey Mapp came to work at my factory as a sub-contract maintenance fitter. Small world!!

Some more snippets:

Three Langmead Drive residents are ‘down under’ as well. Vince Carter who migrated in 1948 with my elder brother Derek was in fact best man at Derek’s wedding. Peter Middelitch is a successful insurance representative living in an exclusive Melbourne suburb, and — last but not least — June Martin (married name Witherford) whom I met while on holiday in March. June and I were members of London Road Youth Club back in the early 50s, and we met up for the first time in 1934 years in Launceston, Tasmania, where she now lives. Her sisters Beryl and Pam live in Frinton near Colchester.

Now ... whatever happened to David (Bunny) Baker who used to reside at 95 Herkomer Road? His father was a carpet beater, window cleaner and chimney sweep during the war years. Also John (Chicken) Mainmair who lived in Clapgate Road at the same time.

Next trip back, I intend looking up a few old chums. — Tony Tomki

* Hartfrid Neunzert is Landsberg Museums Curator and a frequent visitor to Bushy. He is married to Sibylle who is a school teacher.

Sibylle Neunzert, wife of Hartfrid, curator of Landsberg museums.

Geli, Herr Peter Pauli and his wife, The Bürgermeister Rössel and his wife, Herr Martin and Frau Rahner. There are 22 of us and we have an excellent meal. The sweet

Marion Cox, left, a committee member of the Friends, with Gerald and Geli Kellner who were recently in Bushey with a party of children from the Dominicus Zimmermann School in Landsberg. The school has a twinning arrangement with Bushey Hall School.

Letter

A R M Y 

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* A R M Y publication titled ‘From the Wheathead to the Windmill’. Still available, price £2.50.
Meeting Matty’s son

Marion Cox, pictured on page 4, is a descendant of the famous Cox family of engravers and printers whose collaboration with Herkomer is well-known. Marion has just returned from a holiday in South Africa where she met Pat Matthews, son of the late A E Matthews (‘Matty’), and now in his seventies. She has brought back a collection of photographs and other memorabilia of Matty generously presented by Pat Matthews to the Bushey Museum Trust. This is her account of the trip. (See also article overleaf.)

IT WAS a chance remark by Jenny Just which led me to be invited to lunch at the Royal Hotel in Durban by Patrick Matthews, twin son of A.E. Matthews.

Jenny had said that Pat Matthews had various papers, photographs and tapes relating to ‘Matty’ which he would like to give to the Bushey Museum Trust. The question was, how could he send them? The postage by air would be very expensive.

As my South African holiday plans included a coach tour along the Garden Route from Cape Town to Durban, I thought it possible that I might pass Port Edward where Pat Matthews lives.

Unfortunately the coach did not go to Port Edward so he drove 100 miles to Durban and arranged to collect me from the Elangeni* Hotel and to take me to the Royal, where he had spent the night.

I was amused by his description of himself: “I shall be wearing a sports jacket”. However, I need not have worried, there was no mistaking the tall, upright, well-built figure of Matty’s son.

Pat Matthews assured me that the Royal was not only the best hotel in Durban but the best in South Africa. He had been going there regularly since 1942. He certainly seemed to be a much respected patron. He was warmly welcomed by the maître d’hôtel and presented with a bottle of wine for our lunch. The hotel had just been refurbished and is rather splendid.

We exchanged packages over a pre-lunch drink. I had taken some tapes of Matty’s radio interviews in London and New York; a book from Jenny and a Bushey Museum Trust tea towel. I am glad to say that he recognised many of the buildings on the cloth.

We were later escorted into a very grand restaurant — rather similar to the Waldorf in London — sparkling silver and crystal chandeliers, banks of flowers, many dishes of hors d’oeuvres and delicious looking sweets.

We exchanged packages over a pre-lunch drink.

We ate an excellent five course meal served by several very attentive and handsome Asiatic waiters wearing black trousers, colourful striped tunics and little round embroidered caps. In one corner, a man was playing a grand piano in another, stood a harp — not in use.

Pat Matthews regaled me with stories of Matty; of his own youth in Bushey and of the exploits of himself and his twin brother, John, while in the RAF.

Both Pat and John married South African girls and stayed on to live and work in South Africa. Unfortunately, both Pat’s wife and his brother died some years ago. His sister-in-law lives in Johannesburg where he has been on a recent visit. He has now retired to Banners Rest, a retirement village near Port Edward where he appears to be comfortably settled. He did not mention any personal connection with the stage and I am afraid I forgot to ask. He has a daughter who lives in London.

Pat Matthews told me several tales of the mischief he and John got up to when young. Here is one of them:

When they were about seventeen years old, Pat and John decided to borrow their father’s car and go on a joy-ride to visit friends in London. When they came to return home, the car had disappeared. Shamefaced, they telephoned their father to say the car had been stolen. In fact, Matty had guessed what had happened to his car and had arranged with the police for it to be brought home to Bushey. He forestalled any further “borrowing” by removing a wheel and hiding it under his bed!

After lunch we talked for a while until my cousins came to take me to their home near the Valley of a Thousand Hills on the road to Pietermaritzburg.

I took a photograph of Pat Matthews outside the Royal Hotel and then we had to say goodbye.

I am left with the memory of a courteous and generous gentleman — a worthy son of Matty!

*Zulu for ‘place in the sun’

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GARDEN PARTY

In aid of
BUSHEY MUSEUM TRUST

to be held at
REVELEY LODGE, 88 Eltreet Road
on
Saturday 1st September 1990 at 2pm

Attractions to include:
Live music and singers
Teas, refreshments and ice cream
Children’s games
Arts and Crafts demonstrations
Plant stalls
Books and records stalls
etc., etc...

Admission £1
(Concessions to Friends of BMT, OAPs and children)

Free car park

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A CAUTIONARY TALE

The newly appointed Bishop of Hereford, who is known to be a keen motor cyclist, is reported as describing himself as a “midde of the road cleric”. This news item serves as a useful reminder to a certain BMT trustee not to allow this and the example set by a fellow BMT trustee (also known to be a two-wheeler) to unduly influence his choice both of personal transport and metaphor in the event of possible promotion.
I RECENTLY called upon Mr. A.E. Matthews, who celebrated his eighty-fifth birthday last November, to ask him about his plans for the future. This grand young man of the theatre has starred in innumerable West End plays, appeared in many films, and is at present on tour with a play called The Manor of Northstead. He shows every sign of having a great career ahead of him. I visited him at the London suburban theatre where he began the tour, and upon entering his dressing room I discovered him on his hands and knees under the dressing table. He was looking, he said, for a missing hat.

I waited until he settled down, and then asked him what he was going to do when the tour was over.

"I'm going," he said, "to the crematorium. I told my doctor I was going to have it done when I was sixty-five, but he said I was too young to be getting old."

"Supposing you don't go to the crematorium, what then?"

"Do you eat mussels?"

"No."

"You ought to, they're better than all the ruddy oysters in the world."

"Obviously your digestion is still pretty sound."

"Nothing wrong with my digestion, the point is what can I get to digest?"

"When are you going to make another film?"

"I don't know. At my age I cause the producers of any film I'm in such a lot of worry; they're afraid I'll go on before I can finish the wretched thing. In the last two films I've made they've reduced the risk by having me play characters who die in the first act, but even then they took out an insurance on me. Now that's what's so good about the crematorium, there you don't need any insurance, they even prefer you to be dead."

He fumbled around in his pocket and produced a battered cigarette packet.

"Care for a cigarette?"

"Thanks... oh, what about you?"

"Yes, let's try one of yours."

He took one of mine.

"You've been much in the news of late," I said, "How do you account for this sudden surge of popularity?"

"Easy. People realise they're seeing the last of me, and if they don't make the most of me now they won't get another chance. No, I suppose I'm a bit out of the ordinary when you come to think about it. I've been on the stage for nearly seventy years. My recollection of the theatre goes back seventy-five years, and I can't remember anyone else who was playing star parts at my age. Ellen Terry, Marion Terry, Charles Wyndham, I've played with 'em, you know — all gave up long before."

At this point in our conversation one of the back-stage staff looked in on us.

"Mr. Matthews, your wife is on the phone for you."

Matty registered surprise. "Oh, is she still alive?"

He toddled out. When he came back he asked me what it was I wanted to see him about.

"I'm putting a few questions to you," I said, "For instance: when was the happiest time of your life?"

He put his hand to his head and assumed an air of deep concentration.

"Umm... right now. I'm very happy right now. You see, a couple of days ago I broke two of my front teeth, which was rather a nuisance because we opened at this theatre last night and I had to go on without them. Dashed tricky. Anyway, at twelve o'clock today they arrived, so this is the happiest time of my life."

He tapped his two new front teeth. They protruded slightly, giving him the appearance of a rabbit. Or perhaps I should say a March hare — he acts a bit like one. He kept me in fits of laughter at his nonsensical answers to my questions. "Well, dammit," he said, "there's nothing in taking this potty business seriously. Gotta be funny, and I'm pretty good at that." He certainly is, I could listen to him for hours. His mind's as sharp as a razor. You'd never take him for eighty-five.

I asked him if he'd satisfied all the ambitions he ever had.

"I've done just about all I want to do," he replied. "I've travelled; played in many of the great cities of the world; I've made twenty-five trips to America; I played in Africa when it was worth going to — when wild animals ran between your legs, and all that sort of thing. Mind you, I wouldn't say no to another trip to New

As Lord Lister in the film version of The Chiltern Hundreds, the stage play by William Douglas Home, Matty made this part inimitably his own and is probably best remembered as the irascible old earl.

Bushby's internationally famous comedy actor A E Matthews was universally known as 'Matty' and was among the last of a line of great English eccentrics. Noel Coward, in his introduction to Matty's autobiography, wrote that he embodied the very essence of nonchalance and casualness, of 'not giving a damn' and 'to hell with it'. The French have a word for it, said Coward, 'désinvolture' — not easily translatable into English. This was implicit not only in Matty's acting but in his character as well, wrote Coward. It was the secret of Matty's stubborn and ageless charm. He 'genially refused to take life, art, poverty, riches, love, morals or himself seriously'.

Norman Taylor, a member of the Friends, was for many years editor of the movie magazine Film Review. He has kindly provided a copy of an interview with Matty by R Quilter Vincent published to mark the actor's 85th birthday in November 1954. It is reprinted here, illustrated by pictures from the Trust's collection.
At home learning a part by the fireside at Prospect Cottage, Little Bushey Lane. Matty lived in the cottage for over 50 years until his death in 1960. His son Patrick, one of twins, was born there in 1916 during an air raid. (See Marion Cox's article on page 5 about her recent meeting in South Africa with Pat Matthews.)

York. Tell you why: cause it always gives me the greatest pleasure to come home again.

He got up while he was saying this and began to dress for the show which was to start in another ten minutes or so. In the process he got his tie caught in his braces.

"Hell," he said, and left it as it was.

Presently he sat down again and looked hard at me. "There's one question I've been waiting for you to ask me."

"Oh?"

"People usually want to know how I manage to be so natural on the stage."

"I'll buy it; how do you?"

"Right, I'll tell you—it's not a line. I have never asked for a line. I've always been a rotten student, never had any lines—right? I've forgotten your lines the audience got very restless and fired their revolvers off through the roof. By the time the noise and the smoke had died away you'd remembered your next line. Under conditions like that you quickly learn how to be natural."

He suddenly recalled that when he entered the dressing room he was looking for a hat. He now resumed the search.

"What about regrets—got any of those?", I enquired as he rummaged around.

"No, I'm not the man to regret anything. Yes, wait a minute, I've got one regret. About forty years ago I took out two or three life-insurance policies. I've never been one to save, you know, and all my life I've been overdrawn at the bank, always been afraid of death duties. Like a silly ass I didn't take out the sort of policies you don't have to pay on after a certain time—I forget what the blessed things are—and the consequence is I'm still paying on 'em. I can tell you, I bitterly regret that! I've worked it out and I reckon I'll have paid about three times as much as will ever be collected."

"Will you go on working much longer?"

"At least another ten weeks. I'm bound to stay alive that long because that's how long this tour lasts."

"You're not thinking of retiring?"

"No... unless..."

"Yes?"

"Unless there's another war—that'll do, won't it? I'm eighty-five now, I haven't any time left to retire."

Your age was in question just recently. You were quoted as saying you were seventy-five."

"Oh, that was a dashed silly business. Of course I'm eighty-five. The trouble is, some people just can't understand how you can be my age and still be alive."

"I think probably they have difficulty understanding how you can be eighty-five and still be so active."

"Well, it's just a bit of luck, that's all. I've always been pretty fit. I put it down to the fact that I've always been a small eater, I'm the same weight now as I was at eighteen; as a matter of fact, I'm still wearing the same clothes. Look at this."

He took up a brown velvet jacket and showed me the tailor's label in the inside breast pocket. "See the date?"

"Nineteen hundred and six," I said.

"No, that's wrong, it's nineteen hundred and four. Look at the jacket, though—it's as good as new. Don't make clothes like that now."

There was a knock at the dressing room door, and someone called: "Beginners, please."

"About you being so active," I said, "perhaps having a young wife has something to do with it."

(Matty told me his wife's age is "something around thirty-eight to forty.")

"Yes, more than likely. It's a good thing to have a young wife about the place, keeps your mind active. Women are forever asking..."

Continued on Page 9
Memories of Old Bushey

Another extract, selected by Jenny Just, from letters to the then Rector written in the early 1960s by local historian T.W. Hedges, late father of Norman Hedges who is a member of the Friends. In this extract, the demolition of the old ‘Bell’ Inn prompts a few random recollections of a Bushey childhood at the turn of the last century.

If you were living in Bushey at the beginning of the 1960s, you will remember the old Bell Inn. The present sub-post office and adjacent shops now occupy the site of the inn and next door builder’s yard.

Auction Day

A small group of Friends of Bushey Museum Trust: Anne Blessley, Marion Cox and myself decided to attend the auction of illustrations by Lucy-Kemp Welch for the book ‘Black Beauty’. The auction took place at Philips in London on 12th June following the one-day exhibition of the works at the Gallery in Church House, Bushey, in May. We were going merely as spectators—not as bidders. Nick Browne, one of the Trustees, was to undertake the task of bidding.

At Stanmore station we met local artist Marle Dry, who is also a Friend, and we travelled to Bond Street together.GVie Tye, another Friend, joined us in the saleroom at Philips. It was the first time I had attended an auction and I found it quite exciting to note the speed of the bidding and the intense concentration of the auctioneer. I certainly didn’t have to worry about scratching my nose or twitching my eye at the wrong moment—he knew very well who was bidding and who had come just to watch! His was a familiar face since he had come to Bushey to value visitors’ pictures during the ‘preview’ of this auction in May.

Amid all this excitement I must admit to a few pangs of sorrow to think of Lucy’s pictures being reduced to mere merchandise. On the other hand, I suppose we should feel a certain pride that they sold so successfully. They were certainly very ‘sold-after’ (and that’s a bit of jargon I picked up) and mostly far exceeded the modest amounts that could have been afforded by the Trust, even with the offered help from Hertsmere.

I’m sure the new owners of these pictures, whoever they are, will enjoy and care for them; and perhaps they may one day allow Bushey Museum Trust to borrow them for another exhibition at a later date.

Jenny Just

Dates

7-29 July 1990 FESTIVAL ART EXHIBITION To be shown in the Gallery at Church House; see elsewhere in this issue for full details.

Saturday 1 Sept 1990 at 2pm GARDEN PARTY


Tuesday 18 Sept 1990 at 8pm SLIDE SHOW OF BUSHEY Friends’ Chairman and local photographer Gawan Vesty shows another selection from his latest work. Don’t miss it.

Tuesday 16 October at 8pm COLLECTING DOLLS An entertaining talk by Rae Barnett with some fascinating stories about his collection.

Tuesday 20 Nov 1990 at 8pm ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING AND ORAL HISTORY EVENING After the official business Jenny Just will play another selection of recent recordings. A must.

Dear Sir,

I am forwarding a photograph of this old inn which was demolished a few weeks ago, together with a red brick building on the right, not shown.

In my very youthful days the “Bell” Inn was in the hands of an old couple named Harvey, the lady died there in the early 1980s and I witnessed her burial in Watford Cemetery, a most distressing scene as the husband broke down completely and shrieked out “you darling angel, why did you go?” Public funerals were taboo for me after that.

The red brick building referred to, was, in my days, the Bushey Coffee Tavern, and was managed by the wife of Rumbold the head gardener of Squire (‘Georgey’) Lake of Bushey House [now, or very lately, Godfrey Davis’s offices].

A member of the Rumbold family was resident in Bushey until recently [i.e. 1960s].

I remember the Coffee Tavern because it was possible to obtain a large square slice of fruit cake for a penny and in spite of pinnies being scarce in those early days I must have spent several shillings on that luxury.

On one occasion in Watford High Street, outside Benskins Brewery, an impatient rider dismounted from his horse, threw the reins to me, and with a “hold my horse boy”, hurried inside. I was very nervous of the animal, but he was docile, and we got on quite well. When he returned, the rider threw me a sixpence, and dashed away without a word.

This sum was indeed manna from heaven and was eventually invested with Mrs Rumbold.

I recall an adventure at Bushey House which wasn’t as pleasant. Squire Lake had a soup kitchen for the benefit of the old folk of the village. One day when I was about ten years in 1894, a companion and myself went along to collect Granny Davis’ soup and blundered into the magnificent dining room to meet the astonished gaze of Mrs Lake. She asked our errand, I held out a very grubby hand holding a battered quart can and said we had come for Granny Davis’ soup. “This is not the place for soup,” she said in crushing tones, “go round to the kitchen”.

A pair of crestfallen youngsters then crawled round to the servants’ quarters. I was so humiliated by this experience that I never went souping again.

Yours faithfully

Journal of The Friends of Bushey Museum Trust, Summer 1990
Lotts Bricks Ltd: scope for a monograph?

MANY of us remember playing with Lotts Bricks or another of the toys produced by this Bushey firm. Mr Arthur Lott wrote to me in 1985 telling me that papers relating to his firm had been deposited with the Hertfordshire County Record Office. These are indexed and available at Hertford (ref D/E/Lo) and, together with the several examples of the firm’s products in the possession of the Bushey Museum Trust, now make it possible for a small project or monograph to be written if someone is so inspired. I should add that we do not have a complete range of the firm’s products in the Trust collection and that further gifts of Lotts toys would be very welcome.

Very briefly, the firm was first registered as the Homeland Toy Co., 26 Vale Road, Bushey, in 1913, but renamed as Lotts Bricks Ltd., in 1917, when it was found that there was another ‘Homeland Toy Co.’ in Liverpool. Lotts Bricks Ltd., began by producing ‘Educational Toy Stone Building Bricks’ but later manufactured a more varied range of toys, mostly constructional, until it closed c.1951.

Besides the constructional bricks for which it was well known, other toys included:
- Lotts Doll’s Hospital Outfit for Girls
- Lotts Model Lighting Set for Boys and Girls
- Lotts Electricity Sets
- Lottomo — for Model Railway buildings etc.
- An ‘ABC Set’
- Tudor Blocks etc.

Most of these came in a range of boxes starting with a simple inexpensive box and increasing in complexity and cost. The designs for Lotts bricks (model houses etc.) were by Arnold Mitchell (1863-1944) a well known architect — some of whose designs for houses near London were published in The Studio magazine. One could seek for similarities. Equally the ‘educational’ element in the toys — particularly the Chemistry and Electricity Sets — might be instructive. A minor point of interest is the ‘Wendy’s House’ in Lotts Bricks. (The Peter Pan story begat the ‘Wendy House’ which looks fair to being a permanent feature of childhood.)

Grant Longman

Walter Percival Starmer was born in Teignmouth, himself the son of a clergyman. He studied at Norwich and Birmingham art schools and later became best known for religious murals and stained glass work. He was elected to the Royal Drawing Society in 1906 and to the British Watercolour Society in 1912. He was commissioned to work in churches in London and Birmingham particularly and also contributed to the 1930s restorative work in St. Lawrence, Whitchurch — which the Firm visited on 25 June last year. He exhibited intermittently at the RA and the Paris Salon until 1940.

One curious aspect of Starmer’s work can be seen in a little book I have, called ‘The Romance of the Red Triangle’ by Sir Arthur Yapp (Hodder & Stoughton, 1918). This is the story of the YMCA service to the Armed Forces in World War I and Starmer provided many of the illustrations often showing conditions at or near the Front — so he must have acted as a war artist at that time.

As I said in the previous issue of the Journal, we should like to have much more information about the triptych — who the models were, what organizations or aspects of life they represented and more about Starmer himself.

Bryan Wood

Continued from Page 7

‘MATTY’
you for a bit on account, and it keeps you alert thinking up ways and means of fobbing ‘em off.’

Another knock at the door.

A young lady looked in.

‘We’re waiting on you, Mr. Matthews.’

‘All right, I’m coming.’

He began sorting through a pile of clothes. ‘Where’s that confounded hat? I’m supposed to wear a hat.’

‘What sort of hat?’ I asked, getting up to help with the search.

‘Just a hat. I’ve only got one hat. Had it for years.’

The young lady looked in again.

‘They’re playing the ‘curtain-up,’ Mr. Matthews.’

‘All right, all right, young woman,’ he said, heeadily, ‘I’m coming. Now go, will you? — there’s a good sort.’

She got in a parting shot.

‘You’ll have to hurry, they can’t start without you.’

‘Well,’ he exploded, ‘if they can’t start without me, what the hell have I got to hurry for?’
Illustrations for Alice in Wonderland

GENEROUS GRANTS from the Friends of the Bushey Museum Trust and Hertsmere Borough Council enabled the Trust to purchase six illustrations for Alice in Wonderland by Alice B. Woodward. These are colourful and original watercolours and excellent examples of the work of this Bushey artist as well as being entertaining for young and old alike.

Alice Bolingbroke Woodward, (1862-1951), was a well known illustrator of children’s books. She was the middle child amongst the seven children of Dr Henry Woodward FRS, Keeper of Geology at the British Museum, and one of her talents was to provide ‘reconstruction drawings’ of prehistoric animals firstly for her father and later for the Illustrated London News. She studied at South Kensington, Westminster and Julian’s, Paris, and shared studios with her sisters – who were also artists. They lived for a while at Chelsea and then in Notting Hill, but about 1920, probably by stages, all five sisters moved to Lawn Cottages on Clay Hill, Bushey. These are the delightful Regency Gothic houses on the West side. Besides Alice, there was Ellen (silversmith), Gertrude, Kate, and Mary (artist). Alice also used No 17 Meadow Studios and eventually it transferred to a position half way up Clay Hill where it still stands, having been converted to a small house.

During her thirty years in Bushey she continued to illustrate children’s books and her Alice in Wonderland, first published in 1913, was reissued again in 1927. It is one of her best works.

Alice Woodward died in 1951 and her surviving sister, Katherine, died in 1952. However, in spite of their long residence in Bushey, we know very little about them and have no photographs of Alice or her sisters. Any anecdotes or information would be most welcome.

Grant Longman

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Newsletter Editor

THANKS FOR YOUR GIFTS!

I WOULD like to take this opportunity – albeit somewhat out of season (but this is the first Journal since Christmas) – to record our sincere thanks to the following local shops who so generously, and with much goodwill, donated raffle prizes for our 1989 Christmas Social:—

BUSHEY PICTURE SHOP

ELSUMS

BROWNS

SHEPHERD’S WINE STORE

COWLINGS

MAVIS

THE PHONE SHOP

CLOTHES CARE

BUSHEY GLASS

BUSHEY PHARMACY

BUSHEY POST OFFICE

R & R STORES (Supermarket)

SUSAN HAIR DESIGN

BUSHEY FLOWER SHOP

A.F. BUSINESS SERVICES

TWEENS

Our thanks also to Molley Brain, Anne Blessley, Jim Craig-Gray, Ron and Joan Gunton, Alice Stanton and Pat Woollard who all donated gifts.

As you can imagine, the raffle table was quite a festive sight and in addition to raising a useful sum for the Bushey Museum Trust, this strong evidence of support contributed much to a warm feeling of community spirit.

In addition, I would like to express my gratitude to all those local traders who allow us window space to display our posters throughout the year. Many thanks.

Jenny Jutt

MATTY TAPES

I HAVE listened briefly to the tapes of Matty which, you will have read elsewhere in this issue, were brought back recently by Marion Cox from Pat Matthews in South Africa. As you will appreciate, it takes normally three or four listening sessions before one has absorbed enough material to find suitable items for inclusion in the edited tape to be used in November at the AGM. However, on initial listening to these tapes I can tell you that they are rich in content.

I hope Mr Matthews will give me permission to play highlights from these, and from the tapes we successfully transferred from 78 rpm discs of Matty acquired by the Trust last year.

I shall also include items from other tapes from the archive which are recorded throughout the year. This will be our third public ‘Hearing’, and if you have missed the previous two, I urge you not to miss the next one. I have a feeling it will be enhanced by Matty’s wit in addition to the first-hand knowledge, anecdotes and opinions we already have in our collection.

Jenny Jutt

BEARDLESS AT DINNER

“The difference which the beard makes is well seen in the altered appearance of Mr. Herkomer, R.A. Mr. Herkomer’s bearded face was not a difficult one to draw, but as he was seen at the Graphic dinner, with every vestige of hair removed, we should fancy that most artists would like to have time to study the new lines thus presented, before attempting his portrait.”

— from The Photographic News of January 2nd, 1891 (extract supplied by Michael Pritchard).

See portrait of Herkomer, minus beard, painted in 1892, by Ernest Borough Johnson and reproduced on opposite page.
IN Newsletter No 7 (June last year) Grant Longman wrote of the small exhibition the Trust organized in May on the history of Bushey Baptist Church. We borrowed much of the material displayed but we are delighted to say that through the generosity and assistance of Hilda and Leslie Smith, the Trust has now been given most of it. We show here two of the earliest photographs. The one of the church dates from between its building in 1881 and 1893 when the present steps to the front doors were built. The notice board refers to Bushey South Baptist Church which is a little odd as it is actually north-west of Bushey!

There was an earlier church building c.1871-1881 in Lower Paddock Road on the site now occupied by the Keyser Hall. The group photograph must date from around the 1870s judging by the clothes and it is believed to include some of the early church members. Can anyone help with identifications? — B.W.

Herkomer spotted in North Wales!

Well, almost. The National Portrait Gallery has an outpostion at Bodelwyddan Castle near Rhyl which, besides its extensive collection of portraits of eminent Victorians, is currently holding a William Morris exhibition which is well worth visiting. However, for Bushey residents, the most striking exhibit is a portrait of Herkomer by Ernest Borough Johnson painted in 1892. The work captures well Herkomer’s often portrayed penetrating gaze. The principal picture over the fireplace in the drawing room is an imposing three-quarter length portrait by Herkomer of ‘Emilia Frances, Lady Duke (1840-1904), Art Historian and Feminist’. This work is depicted in the current guide to the house. Also in the same room is a rather dark three-quarter length painting of ‘Spencer Compton Cavendish, 8th Duke of Devonshire KG (1833-1908), Eminent Statesman’. For me, the most attractive work is a delightful picture of Florence Nightingale with her sister Frances Parthenope painted about 1836 by William White.

Opening times: daily 10am-5pm, except Friday. Charge £2.75. Allow 2 hours to tour house and gardens which have extensive views to the sea.
Festival Exhibition

THE Exhibition of the paintings of Miguel Mackinlay at the Church House Gallery will be open daily from 11am to 6pm from Saturday 7 July until Sunday 29 July inclusive. The highlight of the exhibition for many Bushey people will be his large painting of youngsters enjoying themselves at the Bushey Open Air Swimming Pool in King George’s Recreation Ground. The picture was hung on the line at the Royal Academy in 1933, but has not been exhibited in the last fifty years. Two other large ‘Academy pictures’ are of Bushey scenes and several smaller works also. Miguel Mackinlay (1895-1958) came to Bushey in 1928 and was a local resident until his death. The exhibition will include a display of local history items relating to the thirties and World War II in Bushey, when he was an active member of the community. Entrance fee 50p, 25p to OAPs, children free. Catalogue extra. Grant Longman

EXHIBITION

The Art of Miguel Mackinlay

Born in Spain in 1895, Mackinlay came to Bushey via Australia in 1928 and stayed until his death in 1958. His painting of Bushey Open Air Pool was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1933 and is on show in the Exhibition.

7-29 JULY 1990

The Gallery, Church House (by the Pond) High Street, Bushey

Open 11am-6pm every day

Admission 50p • OAPs 25p • Children free

Bushey in the 30s and 40s

The years when Mackinlay was an active member of the Bushey community. Also on display for the first time, from an earlier period, are recent purchases of Herkomer’s furniture including the magnificent carved dresser.

A Leisure Centre for the mind

balance between the two. The old adage, ‘healthy body - healthy mind’, is true as far as it goes but it does imply a concentration on the body as if the second is a natural consequence of the first. Since it is also natural that the body gets less amenable to physical activity with the passing years, so we should help to maintain a healthy population by providing ‘leisure centres for the mind’ based on local museums.

All animals, man included, need to relate to the land. We need a sense of belonging to a place as we need the security of good personal relationships. We need to know intimately the place where we live. It is said that on average people move house once every seven years or so. That implies that many never stay in one place long enough to become rooted there. The very term ‘rootless’ suggests a deprivation of something valuable. Perhaps one of the purposes of a local museum should be to help newcomers as well as others to relate as fully as possible to their locality. An understanding of its history (the story up to yesterday) is a vital part of that process. The link between past, present and future is the thread of continuity providing a sense of belonging and of security, both aspects of a healthy society.

In the absence of a permanent local museum for Bushey, the public library does an excellent job in maintaining a local history collection and display. However, our own local museum, dedicated to explaining and interpreting the local history and art heritage will be a powerful force for good in developing interest in and awareness of ‘place’ and all that that means in the maintenance of a good community spirit.

The essential difference between the public library and the local museum is that the library has to do with this idea of ‘place’. Paradoxical though it sounds, it is not enough to be ‘citizens of the world’. At heart we are part of our own ‘village’ even if, in reality, it has long since outgrown that description. The more we are enabled to enjoy an attachment to the land on which our ‘village’ stands, the happier we shall surely be. Everything that has happened on that land has led, in an unbroken line, to where we all are today.

It is the challenge of the local museum to communicate that story with imagination, clarity and Have you noticed?

From this issue the Journal has changed from a three-column to a four-column layout. We can now get more words on a page but the main advantage is in the greater flexibility of picture sizes. The size of type is slightly smaller but the text face has been changed to make the smaller type easy to read. We hope you approve.

A CHANCE TO SERVE

THIS YEAR’S AGM of the Friends of Bushey Museum Trust will mark the 5th anniversary of our foundation. The primary objective of the Friends was to promote and support the establishment of a permanent museum and local studies centre for Bushey. That aim has still to be fully realised, but plans for the conversion of the old Council Offices in Rudolph Road are well advanced.

Would you like to contribute to the success of the Friends over the next few years? If so, you are invited to nominate yourself for election to the Committee of Management. At November’s Annual General Meeting one-third of the present members of the Committee will retire in rotation. Those wishing to continue to serve will offer themselves for re-election.

The majority of the present Committee (see Page 10) have served since the foundation of the Friends in 1983. A healthy organisation needs an injection of new blood from time to time. So now’s your chance!

Forms for self-nomination are available from Margaret Sibley, our Secretary. Completed forms should be returned to her by the end of September, please.

Alec Just