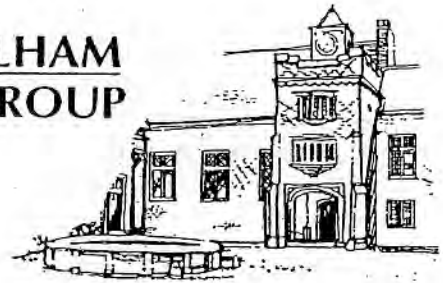




HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM HISTORIC BUILDINGS GROUP

Newsletter



No. 10 Spring 2004

Welcome to our latest newsletter. In a bumper issue 50% longer than normal, we have all the latest news concerning historic buildings and other features of the historic environment on whose behalf the Group campaigns, plus longer articles on subjects such as the former Hammersmith Creek and the borough's historic pubs. There are also full reports of recent events, including the cruise on the Grand Union canal and the Group's annual meeting, both held last September.

Lot's Road and Chelsea Creek

On 28 October last year Kensington and Chelsea Planning Committee refused the application for their part of the Lots Road development which contains a 25-storey tower. The previous June Hammersmith and Fulham had approved the part of the development in our borough which includes a 37-storey tower at the mouth of the Creek.

As previously reported, the Group, along with other amenity societies, had asked the Minister to call in the applications so that the two parts of the scheme could be considered together as one. The Minister is now considering whether to call in the part of the scheme which was approved (he cannot call in the part that was refused). Circadian have announced that they are considering their options, which include appealing against the refusal and/or submitting a revised plan.

Fulham Palace

Detailed proposals for the stage two bid of £2,480,000 for the restoration of Fulham Palace have been submitted to the Heritage Lottery Fund (HLF). If the bid is successful – we should learn in a few months – work will probably start next spring. This includes repairs to the roof, replacement of services and the restoration of Bishop Sherlock's room. The Palace would be closed for around 14 months though the grounds would stay open. We look forward to a grand re-opening in spring of 2006. The director is now working on a long-term strategy for the site in advance of applying to the HLF for funds towards the final phase of works.

The Mayor's London Plan

At the time of writing we are still awaiting the publication of the final plan. As previously reported we had major reservations about the draft. The Inspectors supported many of our arguments for improvements. We do not yet know whether the Mayor has adopted these recommendations.

Imperial Wharf and the Sands End Riverside Park

The chairman gave evidence on behalf of the Group at last year's public inquiry into St George's plans to increase the density of the Imperial Wharf scheme with alterations to the height and detailed design of buildings adjacent to the park. We were particularly concerned at the effect this would have on the new park and the Sands End Conservation Area. We have recently learnt that the appeal has been refused, for reasons including:

- *The proposals would... fail to preserve or enhance the character or appearance of the Sands End Conservation Area.*
- *The height and design of [a number of the] blocks... would not satisfactorily frame the public park when viewed from Townmead Road or from within the park itself. Because of this the park would have no special sense of place nor would it be inviting and welcoming to the existing population of Sands End.*

We are still awaiting the results of the public consultation on what the local residents would like in the new Sands End Riverside Park. The current applications for the park and the riverside walk, which have been much criticised, are for a formal urban approach which includes felling the only trees still on the site! A concern at the inquiry was that the riverside walk was being constructed to the proposed hard urban design which does not have planning approval. We sincerely hope that the borough will not allow this preemptive approach to force their hand on the design of the park and riverside walk.

Streetscape and Signage

The quality of the borough's streetscape featured again at the Group's Annual Meeting in September, which we report below on page 4. In particular, remarks were made about the disappointingly fussy detail of the work currently taking place in the North End Road market and the removal of the granite kerbstones with their historic incised marking and numbering of the stall positions. It became clear that despite much prior discussion with the market traders on practical issues, the borough's design and conservation team had not been consulted and were thus unable to advise on a more appropriate design.

There is already a heavy work load responding to consultations and we would not seek consultation on

highway schemes if we could be sure that the aspirations and principles of English Heritage's design guide *Streets for All* were being followed by the borough's Highways Department. This is why we continue to press for a revision of the borough's *Highway Materials and Street Furniture Guide* as soon as possible. We hope for a more detailed and sympathetic second edition following the lead of *Streets for All*.

Shepherd's Bush and the White City Development

An application has been submitted for redevelopment of the Shepherd's Bush underground station and buildings next to the listed Victorian cottages in Shepherd's Bush Place. The Group has for many years advocated the completion of the east side of this street by replacing the industrial building with matching cottages. This is also advocated in the profile for Shepherds Bush Conservation Area. Unfortunately the proposal does not do this.

Now the dominant 'sheds' of the old White City exhibition have been demolished, the charm of this small-scale street can be fully appreciated. Go and have a look! It will be a sad loss if the opportunity is not taken to restore this rare survivor of 'village Hammersmith' as part of the major White City scheme.

Now so much has been demolished on the White City site, the listed 'Dimco' building can be seen from a number of directions. This robust industrial building is the earliest known example of a London Underground electricity generating station. It was built for the Central London Railway, one of the earliest tube lines, whose western terminus was originally at Shepherds Bush. The Central was nicknamed the 'Twopenny Tube' because for its first few years it operated with a flat 2d fare. We look forward to the 'Dimco' building's restoration and reuse in the new development. We have asked for its significance to be recorded by a history plaque and we continue to hope that its landmark quality will be retained and that it will not be too crowded in with new buildings.



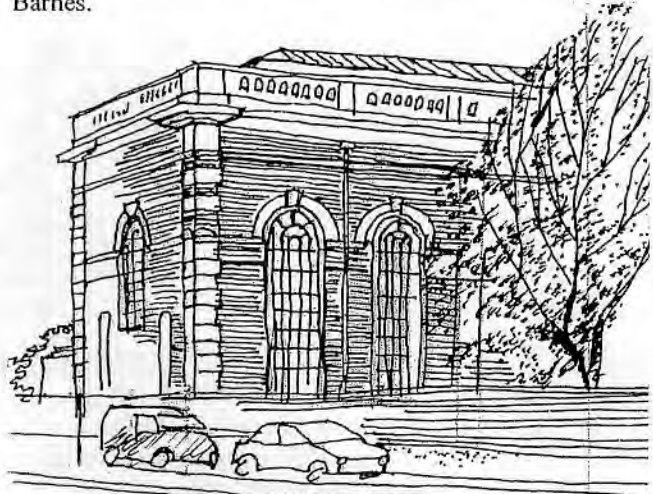
Dimco Building, Wood Lane – built 1898-9, the earliest known London Underground electricity power station

The Wood Lane station frontage, with its early London Transport sign, has been dismantled and removed for restoration. Rather than finish up in the in the London Transport museum, the Group has suggested that the frontage should be incorporated into the new station in

Wood Lane. This of course was done successfully at Hammersmith Broadway, where the old ceramic lettering was preserved and re-used adding to the interest of the new station concourse.

Hammersmith Pumping Station

The Group continues to be concerned about the proposals from the developer St James for this important landmark building along the riverside. Hammersmith Pumping Station is handsome large-scale classical building of red brick with stone dressings and a pedimented entrance. It was once part of the Barnes and Hammersmith works of the West Middlesex Waterworks Company and it was used to pump water from the reservoirs across the river in Barnes.



Hammersmith Pumping Station, 1909, remaining part of former West Middlesex Waterworks

It stands as a 'Temple to Water' between the historic strand developments of Hammersmith Terrace and Hammersmith Malls. Its scale, although greater than the residential development around it, is not overwhelming. It is a reminder of our industrial heritage and is an interesting feature in views along and across the river. It has a pleasing relationship to the listed St Peter's church which it faces across the Great West Road.

We welcome the retention of the historic landmark building. However, the current proposals still damage its silhouette in the views and propose an alien wall of new building facing St Peter's church. We, along with other local groups, hope to persuade the developers that improvements could be made to retain the architectural integrity of the building and relate sensitively to St Peter's church.

The Canal

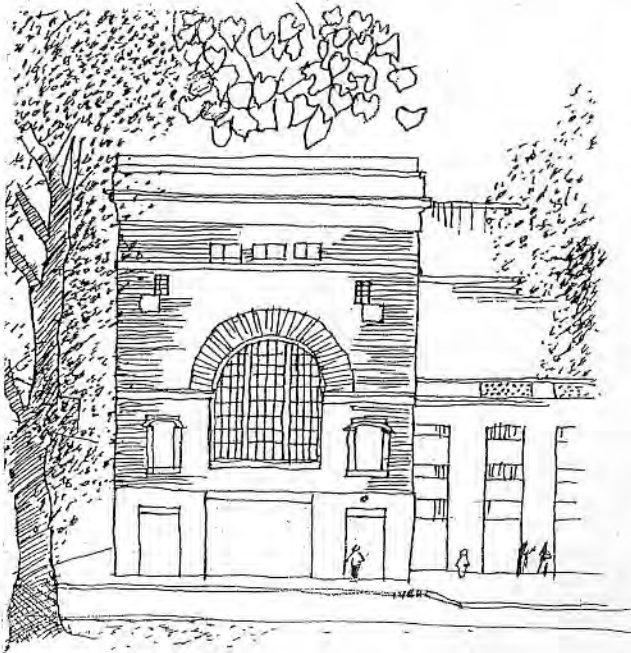
The boat trip along the Grand Junction canal from the Grand Junction pub at Harlesden to Camden Town on 28 September last year was a sell-out and a great success. A full report appears below on page 7.

The pocket park at Mitre Wharf was a sad sight, despite work by Groundwork earlier this year. This reinforces our view that improvements to open space are no use without arrangements for follow-up maintenance. The canal is now a conservation area and we hope that the conservation area

profile will be drafted soon and that this will lead to improvements to the landscaping and an attack on the pervasive graffiti.

Odeon, Shepherds Bush

At the time of writing no decision has been made on the application for change of use of this listed cinema to a hotel. As reported previously, the Group has been concerned to retain as much as possible of the monumental 'Roman' quality of the exterior, a landmark on the western side of Shepherds Bush Green, and to retain what detail is left of the internal plasterwork.



The Odeon Cinema, formerly the Pavilion Cinema, Shepherds Bush Green, designed by Frank Verity in 1923

Advertisements

There continues to be concern at the proliferation of large advertisement hoardings and signage which have a damaging effect on the townscape. This is particularly important in conservation areas and where they affect historic buildings, both those nationally and those locally listed. The value to a property owner of hosting large advertisements is high. This leads to applications such as those at the Lyric Theatre and LAMDA, (the old Royal Ballet School), to help fund building works. It also leads to hoardings being put up without consent, such as the extensive run of them along the Talgarth Road.

Advertisements placed on the gable ends of buildings are particularly intrusive especially if they are moving ones or have the cumbersome safety gantry under them. There are a whole series of them along the Fulham Palace Road. Advertisements along one side of a prominent corner building can be worse. There is a damaging one on the former Goose pub – a building on the local register – at the junction of Wandsworth Bridge Road and Carnwath Road. A similar one requested along the side of the Hand and Flower pub opposite Olympia was, we are glad to say, refused. Recently a particularly intrusive one has gone up

on a flank wall adjacent to the Finnegan's Wake in Fulham Palace Road, a pub on the local register and in a conservation area.

There is increasing pressure for dominant signs along the river. Upstream of Hammersmith Bridge the riverside is in an Area of Special Advertisement Control. The Group has argued that this should be extended to the whole of the borough's riverside, all of which is in a conservation area.

In the past the Group objected to the dominant signage at Rap Collins on Hammersmith Embankment. The building and its signage causes light pollution and dominates the view from the rural side of the river. It is cordially disliked on both sides of the river. A member recently reported that coming in to Luton airport Rap Collins signage was clearly visible! Now Chivas have an application for 72 Chancellor's Road with two large illuminated signs, one facing the river and one facing Hammersmith Bridge. The Group has objected along with other local groups. We hope the Council will not repeat the mistake at Rap Collins and will insist on discreet signage in future along the riverside particularly where it effects the setting of a listed building or one of the river views listed in the UDP.

Former Lloyd's Bank, Hammersmith Broadway, now Ladbrokes

This corner building on the Local Register of Buildings of Merit has a fine bronze shop front on two sides. The Group welcomes the sensitive adaptation of the shop front to its new use.



The former Lloyd's Bank in Hammersmith Broadway, designed by Ernest Franck in 1927

The Grampians, Shepherds Bush Road, Listed

We are delighted to report that this block of flats with shops at ground floor has recently been listed. We are pleased that the description of the building goes into more detail than used to be the case with listing descriptions. This can only help in the future in any assessment of proposed changes. We quote:

'the façade of the frontage block is in Art Deco/Moderne style with classical references...The Grampians was the

first part of a proposed string of blocks of flats along a disused railway line. Designed by Maurice Webb in conjunction with Colcutt and Hamp, it is a very good example of a 1930s' block of flats, combining the Art Deco character of the entrance forecourt with the starker Modernist character of the rest of the development. Built principally intended [sic] to provide affordable rented housing for lower middle class professionals, it is a highly characteristic interwar development and among the finest blocks of its kind. The design was exhibited at the 1935 Royal Academy.'



The Grampians, shops with flats, Shepherds Bush Road, designed in 1935-7 by Maurice Webb and Stanley Hemp

The Group's Annual Meeting

On 30 September 2003 the Group held its Annual Meeting at St John's Walham Green by kind permission of the vicar, the Reverend Mark Osborne. St John's was celebrating its 175th birthday as Father Osborne continued his efforts to transform his church into a lively and attractive community building at the heart of the renewed Fulham Broadway.

The theme of the meeting was 'Walham Green: Past, Present and Future'. The speakers were Keith Whitehouse, the Chairman of the Fulham and Hammersmith Historical Society and a Group committee member, and Piers Gough of CPZ Architects. Walham Green was the old name for the area we now call Fulham Broadway. Indeed, Fulham Broadway tube station was known as Walham Green until the 1950s.

The original focus of the hamlet of Walham Green was a village green and a pond where a natural spring rose and flowed through Eel Brook Common down to the Thames. Market gardening and the Swan brewery were the principal industrial activities of the area. By the early 19th century the population was large enough to justify building a church which would spare local people from the muddy walk to the parish church of All Saints. The village pond was drained and St John's church, designed by J. H. Taylor, was built on the site in 1828. A large part of the

cost was borne by the church building commissioners and the yellow brick church, which is statutorily listed Grade II, is an example of what is known as commissioners' lancet style. It consists of a tower, an aisled nave of six bays and a small chancel. St John's was remodelled in the 1893 and then again in the 1980s.

Keith Whitehouse reviewed the more recent past with images taken over the last three decades as various old buildings were removed from the townscape. Probably the greatest loss was the Granville Theatre, built by Dan Leno and associates in 1898. Keith's pictures of the demolition in 1971, many years before the Group was founded, reminded the audience of the theatre's remarkable interior, which was glazed throughout at Dan Leno's insistence because, with all-smoking audiences, it was easier to clean. Keith also had poignant photographs of some of the old shops on the Fulham Island site, some dating from the 17th century, and of the mid-19th century police station, which formerly stood opposite the present station in Heckfield Place and which was demolished as part of the Safeways development. He concluded his presentation with a picture of the Gaumont cinema. This was built in 1913 in Vanston Place with a figure of Eros on the cupola over the entrance. Later it was converted into the Rank bingo hall, a building of indefensible ugliness.

Piers Gough talked about his design philosophy for the new buildings on the Fulham Island development. The site was bought by the Manhattan Loft Corporation, initially with a view to residential development with commercial use on the ground floor. This scheme was modified over a period of two and a half years' negotiations with the Council, and emerged the better for it – more mixed-use, and with the retention of more buildings in both Jerdan Place and Vanston Place.

Piers Gough pointed out that the island has different frontages all the way round, thus avoiding the danger all too common in this type of scheme where one side becomes all loading bays. Facing the church, the residential part of the scheme has a curved frontage, so allowing more sunshine into the flats than a straight front. Albion House, a retained part of the development on Vanston Place, had originally had an asymmetrical frontage because the builder had been unable to purchase one of the old shops that stood alongside. Now that was gone, Gough had been able to give Albion House the balanced frontage the original architect had intended, using the extra bay as the staircase for their new offices.

The presentations were followed by an open discussion. Father Osborne spoke of his hopes of improving the churchyard. The south side has already been made a 'child-friendly' space. Once there were fifty different trees in the churchyard. Father Osborne hopes this variety can be recreated. He would like to see the north side of the churchyard turned into a public space with full disabled access. The listed railings, were in a sorry state but the cost of restoration was beyond the church's means. In discussion, it seemed that Section 106 money from the new development could contribute to refurbishment and restoration of the churchyard and railings.

Questions were raised about North End Road Market. Several speakers expressed concern that the historic kerbstones, incised with the numbers of each stall position, were being removed. It was pointed out that similarly marked kerbstones survive intact in Munster Road, the only reminder that there was ever a street market there.

North End Road Market

Discussions concerning North End Road market at the Group's Annual Meeting reported above followed the announcement in July last year that the market would be regenerated as part of the North Fulham New Deal for Communities scheme in conjunction with the Council. Improvements proposed included measures such as renewing uneven paving, and installing CCTV and street furniture such as bike stands. We now hope that the improvement works will include retention or, failing that, restoration of the historic incised kerbstones.

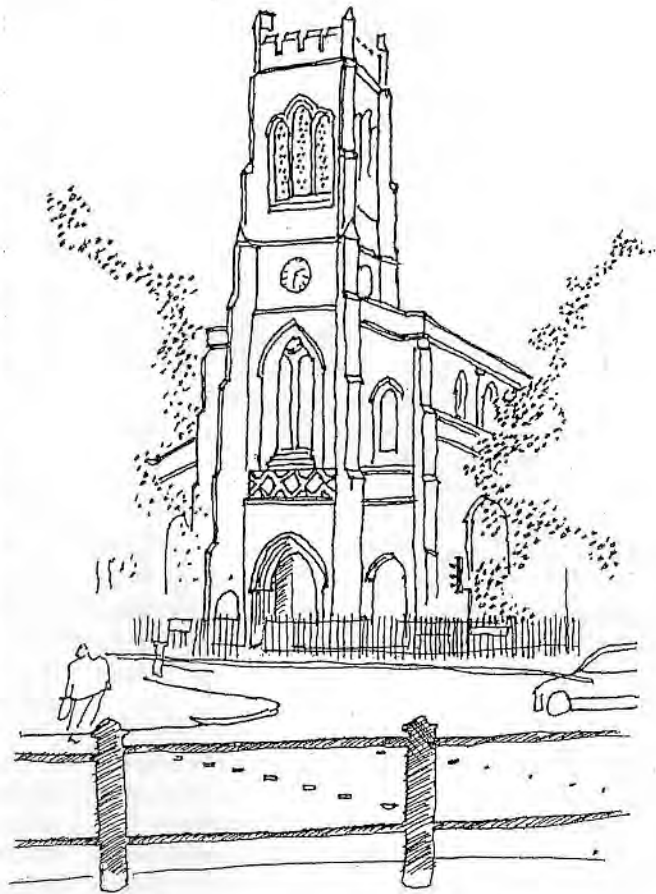
The origins of the market go back to the 19th century. North End Road itself is an ancient thoroughfare connecting the southern part of the parish with settlements at North End. The exact date at which the street market started is uncertain. Jerdan Place was called Market Place until 1877, and it is likely that a market located there spread up the North End Road in the 1880s. At the same time, costers moved to North End Road from the west end of King's Road, at the request of the King's Road shopkeepers. By the late 1880s references to the market were appearing in local newspapers and Vestry documents.

The market specialised in fruit and vegetables, as it was a convenient outlet for surplus produce from the local market gardens. By the end of the 19th century the market gardens were mostly gone, but the population of Fulham had risen rapidly and there was a continuing demand for the street market. Walham Green was then a working-class area, and the low prices of the goods on the stalls were attractive to its inhabitants. The market was particularly busy on Saturday nights, when it remained open until midnight, and in the period before Christmas.

From the time the market developed there were periodic complaints that it was causing congestion in the road. Early street markets were subject to little regulation, but an Act of 1927 empowered the Metropolitan Boroughs to issue licences to street traders and to make appropriate bye-laws. Threats to the market's existence included a proposal in 1927 to turn North End Road into a main arterial highway, and concerns in the 1930s about the obstruction caused by the stalls. In 1948 the police complained about the high rate of accidents in the road.

The shopkeepers of the King's Road probably regretted their original decision to ask the costers to leave, for the presence of market stalls outside stores tends to attract more customers. By the late 19th century North End Road was an established shopping street. However some of the best-known shops in the road, such as Marks and Spencer, Sainsburys and Woolworths, have departed in recent years. Barbers, the department store at 417 - 429 North End Road, which opened in 1891 and grew to a large size, eventually closed about a century later. Other distinctive businesses in

North End Road included Crowther's architectural antiques, and Scala's ice cream parlour.



St John's Walham Green, designed by John Henry Taylor in 1827-8 and remodeled by E P Warren in 1893

Like many street markets, the North End Road market was a lively place with some long-standing characters, and in the 1970s it was a favourite location for Esther Rantzen to do vox pop interviews for her television show 'That's Life'. An article about the market in the *Gazette* of 13 December 2002 featured fruit and veg trader Tilly Seaby, aged 91. Mrs Seaby had been trading in the market for more than 70 years, and was still thriving on the life. It is common for stall licences to remain within a family for several generations. In 2002 there were about 55 stalls in the market, half of them selling fruit and vegetables and the rest mainly household goods and clothes. This is a reduction in number from the 90 or so stalls of the early 1980s, but some of the stalls are bigger than they used to be.

Olympia

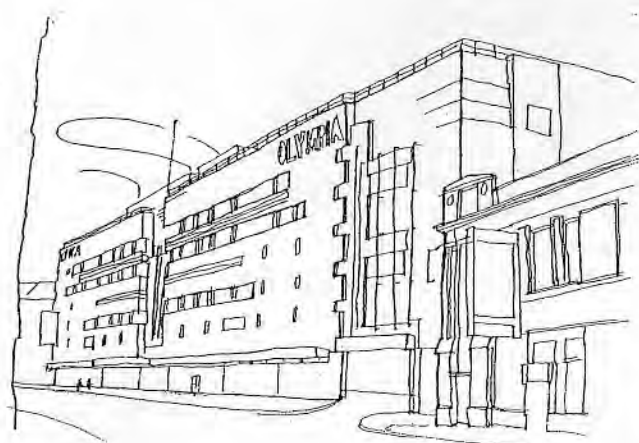
The chairman gave evidence for the Group at the recent appeal into St George's application for a very dense housing development on the Olympia car park site. This, like the Lots Road development, is partly in Kensington and Chelsea and partly in Hammersmith and Fulham. The developers argued that it was a previously developed 'brownfield' site. The local group, the Sinclair Road

Residents' Association, gave detailed evidence that much of the site had never been built on and argued strongly for the retention of the woodland, which is a Nature Conservation Area. Our evidence concentrated on the value of Olympia as a listed building which was still being used for the use for which it was designed, and on its contribution to the conservation areas where it is a major landmark. If permission for the car park site is granted, we have asked for retention of the historic boundary stones and an archaeological investigation to identify the line of Counter's Creek. This is the spring that rises on Little Wormwood Scrubs and originally flowed into the Thames at Chelsea Creek. The Inspector's report is due in the spring.

In conjunction with the Hammersmith Society, the Group has organised a tour for members to Olympia on Saturday 3 April starting at 2 pm. This will be an opportunity to see the listed buildings and hear something of their history. Further details under 'Dates for your Diary' on the back page.

Meanwhile we are pleased to report that in February last year the Olympia exhibition halls were statutorily listed Grade II by the Department for Culture, Media and Sport. Following are further details of the listing, and some interesting historical background for those who cannot make the tour in April.

The Grand Hall and the associated minor hall, now known as the Pillar Hall, were designed by Henry Edward Coe in 1885. The National Hall is an annex of 1923. Olympia Two was built as the Empire Hall in 1929, to designs by Joseph Emberton. Their architectural style varies from Henry Coe's original 1885 red brick and stone building in traditional 'civic' style facing Olympia Way to the 1929 'modernist' frontage onto Hammersmith Road with its Art Deco lettering of 'Olympia'. The listing includes all the halls and notes that 'Olympia has played an important role in the history of exhibitions and has been the venue for many important exhibitions and events, notably equestrian shows'.



Olympia Two's Empire Hall, designed by Joseph Emberton in 1929

Olympia's story began in May 1884 when the National Agricultural Hall Company – chaired by the Earl of Lathom, the Lord Chamberlain – was formed with the aim of building and operating the country's largest covered show centre. Having found a prime site in Hammersmith – the original Vineyard Nursery, covering over six acres – the company bought the freehold for £31,000 cash and 1,000 £10 shares. Henry Coe's hall had an ambitious 170-foot clear span, 40 feet more than its rival at Islington. With seating for 9,000, the arena of nearly one acre was far larger than any other roofed arena in England and probably Europe. Lord Zetland, the president of the company, laid the foundation stone of the Grand Hall on 21 July 1885.

As its name suggested, the National Agricultural Hall was to be used for 'cattle, horse, poultry, dairy, dog and implement shows and other agricultural displays'. But from the beginning it was also intended for 'national and international exhibitions, military tournaments, sports and theatricals, and regular sales of livestock and carriages etc.' Later it was renamed Olympia to reflect its ideals and objectives, which were 'to provide healthy amusement and reinvigorate by brilliant demonstrations the national love of athletic exercises and contests of skill; to raise the tone of popular taste by entertainments and displays which shall be of the purest and highest character; to educate the masses, aye, and even the 'classes' by exhibitions of art, science and industry.'

Olympia's first event, the gigantic Paris Hippodrome Circus, opened after Christmas in 1886. Its performances culminated in hair-raising Roman chariot races, the thundering four-horse teams becoming barely visible through a rising pall of sawdust as the hat-waving audience stood and wildly cheered them on. Buffalo Bill Cody's huge Wild West Show opened at Olympia on Boxing Day 1902. The famous Deadwood stagecoach was ambushed and rescued, buffalo were stalked, bucking broncos bested, and audiences were transfixed with the brilliance of Cody's sharpshooters. King Edward VII and Queen Alexandra attended, later presenting the Colonel with a pin in the form of a crown set with diamonds and rubies. Many more famous shows and events followed in subsequent years.

Fulham Football Club to return to Craven Cottage

On 16 December 2003 the Council's Planning Applications Committee granted permission for alterations to the existing stadium.

Essentially these are intended to satisfy the requirements of current legislation and bring the ground to Premier League status. The work includes replacement of the terraces at the Putney, or Bishops Park, end with a new covered stand to seat 6,000; the extension of the roof of the Hammersmith Stand; the installation of seating in the Hammersmith end stand and in the enclosure in front of the listed Stevenage Road stand, to bring ground capacity to a total of 22,000; the erection of 27 hospitality boxes in three groups of nine, one group at each end of the Hammersmith Stand, and the third at the river end of the new Putney end stand; the replacement of the flood-lighting towers with lower pole-mounted lighting; and the refurbishment of facilities within the Riverside and Stevenage Road stands. Demolition and

clearance work started in November. There will be some pre-season games in July, and the season starts in August.

We are relieved both that the new proposal retains the important listed buildings, 'rare survivors of early football ground buildings', and that it is on a smaller scale than the previous scheme. The listed Stevenage Road Stand has only internal additions which do not affect the listed structure and there is a condition that the club remove the steel bracing to the Putney end turnstiles and repair the damaged brickwork. We continue to hope that the listed turnstiles, will be restored to the high standard of the rest of the façade of the Stevenage Road Stand.

However, we have a number of concerns. We have consistently pointed out the opportunity to enhance the Conservation Areas by improving the ground's relationship with the two adjacent parks and the riverside. Unfortunately, the alterations to the Hammersmith stand, the hospitality boxes (Portakabins piled three high and three across), and the new stand at the Putney end consist of utilitarian industrial components and materials rather than a high quality architectural design. Although the club describes its plans as temporary – before it builds a new stadium elsewhere in the borough – 'temporary' often seems to last for a very long time!

The new stand will be similar in height to the Riverside stand, much higher than the terraces it replaces. The permission does call for 'soft landscaping', a planting programme in the park to provide some form of screen. While the replacement of the floodlighting towers by lower pole structures will be a benefit, this large stand will have a significant impact on the views from Bishop's Park.

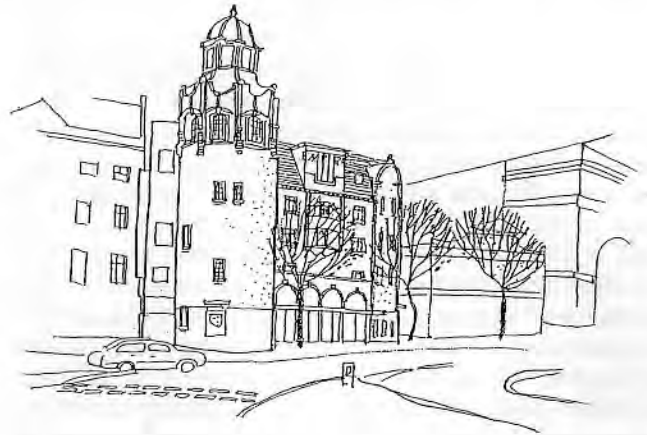
In addition the club's boundary wall with the park has been neglected over the years and has had to be stabilised by props and stanchions on the park side. As a result the changing rooms in the park became derelict and an eyesore, and the pitches are now underused and in bad condition. We look forward to the Council now taking action to remedy this in a park rated Grade II* on English Heritage's Register of Historic Parks and Gardens.

One of the valued characteristics of our riverside conservation areas is the traditional uses of the water: in this stretch rowing and sailing particularly. Many sailors fear that the partial filling in of the gaps between the existing buildings could so alter the wind flow that recreational sailing ceases on this stretch of the river. If this happens we shall all be the losers.

Shepherds Bush Empire centenary

Last year was the centenary year of the Shepherds Bush Empire, which opened its doors to the public on Tuesday, 18 August 1903. The Grade II listed music hall theatre was designed by the great theatre architect Frank Matcham for the impresario Oswald Stoll. With its round tower and exterior combining roughcast and terracotta with brick, the building (rather unusually for Matcham) showed Arts and Crafts influence. The auditorium, the rich plaster decoration of which survives, held 1,600 people and the whole building was admirably designed for stage shows.

The Shepherds Bush Empire maintained a reputation for first-class variety acts. Topping the bill on the opening night was Fred Karno's Company, including the Amazonian Beauties, in a musical extravaganza entitled 'The Dandy Thieves'. Other acts included singers, musicians, dancers, comedians, acrobats and Fred H Leslie's Leaping Dogs. For the next fifty years top music hall stars performed twice nightly at the Empire, attracted by the large stage, magnificent interior and appreciative audiences. The *Fulham Chronicle* of 1915 noted how the Empire had 'altered the neighbourhood from torpidity to vivacity and progress.'



The Empire Theatre on Shepherd's Bush Green, designed by Frank Matcham in 1903

In 1953 the Shepherds Bush Empire was sold to the BBC for use as a TV studio-theatre. This was a fortunate development, for although Matcham was a prolific architect, many of his theatres have since disappeared because they did not find a use adapted to more modern times. Favourite programmes transmitted from the venue included 'Crackerjack', 'What's My Line?', 'Wogan' and 'That's Life'. Visiting artists occasionally caused pandemonium in the streets. Young fans besieged Shepherds Bush Green each day when The Osmonds performed in August 1974.

The BBC sold the theatre in 1990. Four years later, after a major refit and restoration programme, it opened as a live music venue with an audience capacity of 2,000. Since then the Empire has maintained its impressive reputation, gathering many industry awards along the way.

Cruise on the Canal

On a sunny Sunday in late September 2003 some 40 members of the Hammersmith Society and the Historic Buildings Group, together with borough councillors and officers involved with planning in the borough, cruised along the 1801 Paddington arm of the Grand Union canal from Harlesden to Little Venice and then along the 1820 Regent's Canal from Little Venice to Camden Town. A highlight of the trip was the short but interesting section running through Hammersmith and Fulham, which has recently been designated a conservation area.

Starting at the Grand Junction Arms, a canal-side pub full of memories of canal people, the electric powered boat

Beauchamp set off silently past the huge electricity sub-station, once a coal-fired power station. Power stations and many other industries were sited near canals, just as modern factories and offices cluster round motorway slip roads today. Canals are quiet and calm now, but much of their industrial heritage remains. Just after the Old Oak Lane bridge marking the borough boundary are some double stop gates. These were designed to be closed in the event of a canal breach. A rare feature, they are in urgent need of restoration to prevent them rotting away. Canal breaches are still a threat: a few weeks before our September cruise in London, the Leeds and Liverpool Canal burst its banks, spilling a hundred million gallons of water over the surrounding area.

East of Old Oak Lane, the canal runs past acres of railway tracks and marshalling yards, separating it from Wormwood Scrubs to the south. The Scrubs is visible from the waterway. Beyond Mitre Bridge, which carries Scrubs Lane over the canal, the waterway passes the adjoining cemeteries of St Mary's and Kensal Green. These are conservation areas and designated as metropolitan open land. Between Little Wormwood Scrubs to the south and Kensal Green cemetery to the north the canal crosses the eastern boundary of Hammersmith and Fulham and enters Kensington and Chelsea. Here there is a splendid view of the gas holders of the old Imperial Gas Company – the same company which built the gasworks at Sands End.

Beyond Ladbroke Grove the landscape is dominated by social housing, ranging from the 19th-century Harrow Road Estate to more recent low-rise blocks. There is a splendid view of the landmark Trellick Tower of 1972 beyond Halfpenny Bridge. Emerging from the shadow of the Westway and crossing the culverted Westbourne river, the canal continues on past rows of moored boats and a variety of houseboat structures. East of the toll house, the canal broadens out into Brownings Pool at Little Venice. The Pool is surrounded by fine 19th-century houses. Away to the right, the Paddington arm comes to an end in a large basin, once surrounded by wharves and warehouses and now the central feature of one of London's newest concrete and glass mega-developments. It's wonderful that the basin has been preserved, but it is a pity that it is so cluttered with jetties, pontoons and mock boats.

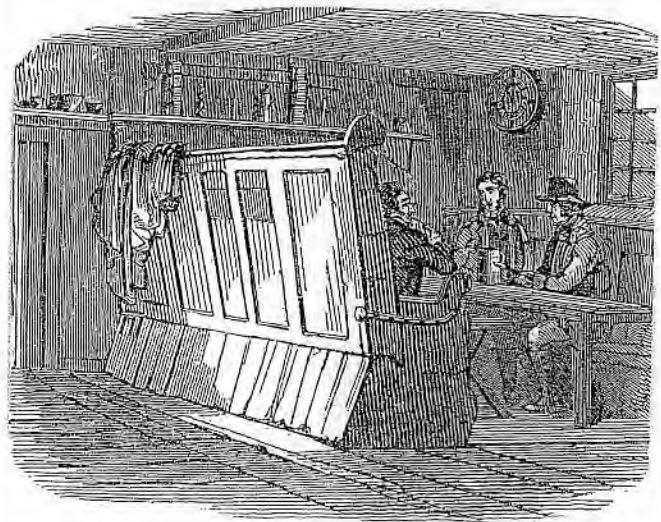
After Little Venice the canal becomes the Regent's Canal, built in 1820 as a link to the Thames at Limehouse near Canary Wharf. A long tunnel carries the canal beneath Maida Hill into Regent's Park. Here, some new Regency-style villas have been built alongside the canal. The canal then passes underneath Macclesfield Bridge. This is popularly called Blow-Up Bridge, after an accident in 1874 when a gunpowder barge exploded underneath it, destroying the original bridge, killing the three crew, shattering windows for miles around and frightening the animals in London Zoo. The bridge was later reconstructed using the original columns and materials. However, the columns were restored the wrong way round so the scars from the towlines are on the outside.

Beyond London Zoo a stunted canal arm leads to the right. This originally continued round Regent's Park to

Cumberland Market near the Euston Road, but was filled in after the war. The main canal now turns sharp left at Cumberland Turn towards Camden Town. Just by the second horse ramp seen on the journey (horses which accidentally fell into the water used horse ramps to get out again), the canal passes the Pirate Youth Club (in a building looking like a pirate castle) and then the former Gilbey's Gin warehouse, converted into luxury flats. The *Beauchamp's* journey ended just above Hampstead Road lock, the first of the 12 locks taking the Regent's Canal 86 feet down to the Thames. Most of the passengers disembarked here after a delightful and instructive day, but a small group remained aboard as the skipper returned the boat to its mooring at Paddington Basin.

Hammersmith and Fulham pubs

There are 144 pubs in the London Borough of Hammersmith and Fulham. The definition is not hard-and-fast; if you said a pub is a place that sells real ale, you might bring the number down, but you would inadvertently lose some establishments that belong on the list. From an architectural viewpoint, and from that of studying the urban fabric, there are several interesting examples, some very old such as the Dove (a 17th-century building, recorded as the 'Dove Coffee House' in 1796), the White Hart in Walham Green (also 17th-century), the Queen's Head (in Brook Green, dating from at least 1722). As with most



The Queen's Head in Brook Green, from Faulkner's History of Hammersmith of 1839

building in this borough, a lot of them date from the late 19th century, the coming of the railways and the change from rural villages to urban outliers of London. This, the era of the Victorian gin palace – the equivalent of the gastropub of today, which many of them have become – left not so many examples in this borough as it has elsewhere, though the Duke of Cumberland in New Kings Road boasts a Fulham Potteries tiled wall and an abundance of decoration. Built in 1892, the site was formerly occupied by the Pond Head, notorious for violent misbehaviour, including the death of four gardeners in a brawl. The Black Lion in Black Lion Lane also has a grisly past; it was here that the body of Thomas Millwood was

taken in 1804 when he was shot dead, being mistaken for the Hammersmith Ghost. The Rising Sun in Cardross Street was the scene of a murder in the 19th century, but this pub has long since been a private house.

Strangely, the more venerable establishments do seem to work better as public houses, though this isn't always the case as there are newer pubs that work and older ones that have been let to go to ruin. There are gems such as the Colton Arms in Greyhound Road, on the south side of Queen's Club; and lonely survivals such as the Queen Elizabeth in Bagley's Lane, which is ignored by most maps, and if it is a Young's pub, as a sign on it proclaims, the brewery itself has forgotten about it: it doesn't appear in the brewery's list of its licensed premises. Old names resurface: Wetherspoon's new Plough and Harrow, built into the refurbished hotel in King Street, resurrects a 15th-century name from that site. After the mania for giving pubs whimsical names in the 1990s, original names have often been brought back: the Frigate and Firkin in Beaconsfield Terrace is now the Beaconsfield once more, and on North End Road, the erstwhile Via Fossa, which was once a music pub called the Nashville Rooms, is now the Three Kings again. And during the building of the William Morris in King Street in the late 1990s, evidence was found of a much earlier pub, probably the house which appears on the 1875 street directory as 'G Philpott, Licensed Victualler' at No. 6 King Street and persists on local maps in 1894 and 1913.

The entirety of pubs in the borough has very rarely been researched. From the early 18th century, annual lists of victuallers were produced, the first appearing in 1722. The 1722 list includes the Blue Anchor in Lower Mall; the George on Hammersmith Broadway; the Hog (now the Hampshire) in King Street; the Maidenhead, now the Queen's Head, in Brook Green; the Red Cow (now Latymer's) in Hammersmith Road; the Royal Oak (probably either the one in Glenthorne Road, now a tabledancing club, or the one in Milson Road, now the Priory), the Ship (now the Old Ship) in Upper Mall; the Sun, in Askew Road; and the White Hart (now the Hart) in King Street. Unfortunately some survive in name only: for example the Sun, rebuilt in the 20th century, as was the old Norman Arms, now an estate pub.

For the Hammersmith Local History Group's *History of Hammersmith*, originally published in 1965, William Marriott compiled an historical overview of the pubs of Hammersmith; there were 139 in 1873 (for Hammersmith alone, a similar number to the borough's total today) serving a population of 43,000 (a quarter of the present borough's population). Marriott didn't, however, attempt a systematic listing, but confined himself to houses of historical interest, and compared the 1722 list with what was still in existence in his day.

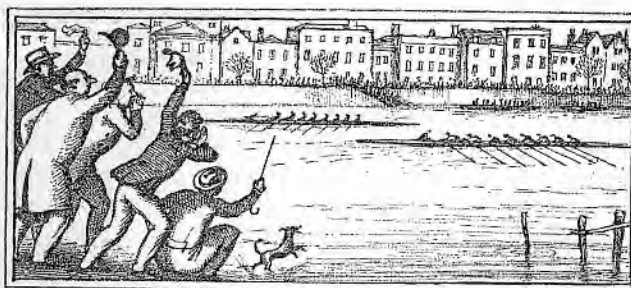
In 2002 Chris Amies audited every public house he could find in the borough, a total of 149 when he made the survey, and published his results on a website at www.fh-pubs.org.uk, with pictures in each case (though one is actually a drawing of the interior; as this particular case, Wetherspoon's Oyster Rooms, is inside the new

development by Fulham Broadway station, an exterior photograph is not so straightforward). Chris also listed former pubs when he had some evidence of them. Since he made the audit, the Mailcoach (Shepherds Bush Green) has gone. At some point, the Duke of York (Atwood Road), and the former Eagle Arms (Glenthorne Road) may also be lost if permission to demolish is given.

Editor's note: Chris is now working on a book on pubs in the borough, to be completed by April 2004. It will be published by Tempus as *Images of England: Pubs of Hammersmith and Fulham* and be in the shops by Christmas 2004. The book is intended as a social history with around 200 illustrations, of pubs and the people who worked in them and drank in them. Chris would be very grateful for any material readers might have which could help with this work; photographs or other illustrations, or realia such as beer tokens, would be very much appreciated. He can be contacted by email at chris@fhhs.org.uk, or by phone on 020 7460 0328.

The University Boat Race

2004 will see the 175th anniversary of the first Boat Race, and the 150th race. The first race was rowed in 1829 at Henley, but the second race did not take place until 1836, this time on the tideway from Westminster to Putney. It came to its traditional course, Putney to Mortlake, in 1845. Since 1856 it has been held every year except during the First and Second World Wars.



The Boat Race, a drawing by Rex Whistler reproduced from a two-year diary for 1930-1

To commemorate these historic anniversaries, replicas of the boats used for the first race have been built by Richmond Bridge Boat Builders. They were launched on 13 December 2003. The replicas will be raced by former Blues just before this year's race, which starts at 6pm on Sunday 28 March. If you miss them then, you can see them again at Henley Royal Regatta in early July.

For the technically-minded, the replica craft are 45 ft 3 ins (13.80m) long and 4 ft 3 ins (1.29m) wide. They are clinker-built, of pine construction and have staggered seating, fixed seats, and 'fixed pin' rowlocks in the gunwales in contrast to the moulded, heat-cured, carbon and glass fibre composite construction, in-line seating, outriggers with swivels, and sliding seats, of present-day craft. Each replica weighs 400 lbs (180 kg). A modern eight would be about 17m long, 0.62m wide, and weigh less than 100 kg.

The Macbeth Memorial Tablet

On 1 May 2003 the original 19th-century memorial tablet to Hammersmith Congregational minister Robert Macbeth was unveiled in a new home in the Macbeth Adult Education Centre in Macbeth Street, off King Street. A native of Caithness, Macbeth was minister of Hammersmith Congregational church from 1853 till 1891. He died in 1899 aged 83.

The tablet was originally erected in the Congregational church Macbeth built on the west side of Shepherds Bush Road, just south of the recently vacated fire station. When that church was replaced by a new one on the other side of the road in 1923, the tablet was re-erected in the new church. When the new church was in turn demolished in the 1970s, the tablet was taken down yet again and put into store.

The Macbeth Centre faces the site of Macbeth's former home at the western end of Macbeth Street. In his day the street was called Waterloo Street; it was renamed Macbeth Street in his honour in the 1920s.

Hammersmith Creek

The Group is in discussions with the Council about installing heritage boards at various points in the borough, including along the riverside. We hope that the first board to be erected will be a replacement for the vandalised one in Furnival Gardens marking the position of the former Hammersmith Creek and the adjacent dockland area known as Little Wapping.

Little Wapping originally stretched all the way back from the Thames to King Street, filling both Furnival Gardens and the town hall site. Its main feature was Hammersmith Creek, a tidal inlet rather like the ones you can still see at Brentford and Chelsea. At high tide the creek was navigable by barges all the way up to King Street. The creek was actually the mouth of the Stamford Brook, which rose near Ealing and entered the creek via a culvert beginning beneath No. 180 King Street, today Bushells estate agents.

Roughly where the passage behind the Dove pub enters Furnival Gardens, the creek was crossed by a footbridge called Highbridge, first recorded as early as 1541 and the reason for the division in the mall between the upper and lower parts. Near this point four streets or passages converged. Suppose you were walking along Upper Mall towards the bridge. Just before you reached it, Bridge Street branched off left into a walled passage called Hampshire Hog Lane, which in turn led north to King Street, emerging on the west side of the Hampshire Hog pub. Though the lane disappeared years ago, you can still see the entrance to it next to the modern Hampshire.

If you crossed over the bridge and carried straight on into what was Aspen Place, you would eventually end up at St Paul's Church. In fact the route was sometimes called Church Path and obviously originated as a footpath from Upper Mall to the church. If, after crossing the bridge, you turned right, you would enter Lower Mall, which then, having passed a boatyard, continued along the riverbank in

the same way that it does now. Between Aspen Place and Lower Mall were Hammersmith's 18th century Quaker meeting-house and burial ground, and the Phoenix lead mills factory, whose tall chimney dominated the Little Wapping riverside into the 1940s.

Hammersmith Creek originally served as a little port for local fishermen. But from the late 18th century it became increasingly industrialised. The first major enterprise in the area was the Cromwell Brewery, which from about 1780 occupied most of the west bank of the creek at the King Street end. The east side of the creek was a wharf area, known from 1881 as Sankey's Wharf after the builders' merchants that took it over in that year. Behind Sankey's Wharf was the residential area of Little Wapping, a network of alleys and courts which, as the population of Hammersmith expanded during the 19th century, became ever more crowded and unhealthy.



Hammersmith Creek, drawn from a photograph, probably late Victorian

Even in the early 19th century when the fishermen were still there, Little Wapping was regarded as a blot on the otherwise genteel Hammersmith landscape. A century later the first steps were taken to clean it up. First of all some of the worst slums were razed and replaced by new housing. Then in 1936 the old creek, picturesque enough with its swans at high tide but an eyesore at low tide, was filled in. The river end was made into a little park and the north end provided a site for Hammersmith's new town hall.

After the war there were more clearances, partly caused by the long-planned extension of the Cromwell Road, and partly by damage inflicted by a flying bomb on 24 July 1944, which virtually destroyed the old meeting-house and the lead mill. The riverside park was expanded and in 1951 officially opened as Furnival Gardens.

Today, only a couple of clues remain to Little Wapping's existence. One is the old Quaker burial ground, preserved in a walled enclosure in Furnival Gardens. The other is the entrance to the old creek, visible at low tide from Hammersmith Pier.

Inventory of Open Spaces

The London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust (LHPGT) launched its Inventory of Open Spaces at the Guildhall in April last year. The Trust started work in the mid '90s and

published a listing of 1,250 of the more important sites in 1995. Sally Williams was appointed researcher to the Trust and worked for several years to produce a more extensive set of data with good photographic records of 2,250 sites. Voluntary work by Group member John Goodier resulted in 70 sites being listed in our borough (not including Queen's Club and a number of open spaces round housing estates).

The full inventory contains historic information about the site, including its use before it became a municipal park. Such information is often lost from the 'official' records of a park, especially when its management is put out to contractors. The inventory includes parks, space round houses, hospitals and churches, road sides and roundabouts, and private open space with permitted or charged public access, as well as public parks. As a result it is a more comprehensive list of open spaces than that maintained by most local councils, including our own. The Trust is examining ways of making its information more widely available, including involvement in national data projects.

Of their nature, open spaces change. Since John Goodier's work in Hammersmith and Fulham, Hammersmith Park has been restored, Hurlingham has new sports facilities, skating is now encouraged rather than discouraged on the theatre site in Bishop's Park, and Mitre Park has become the Mary Seacole Park. Similar stories could be told of other boroughs and the Trust is setting up a working party to decide how to continue its work.

Wormwood Scrubs Local Nature Reserve

One of the open spaces listed in the London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust inventory is Wormwood Scrubs. This historic park lies across the northern part of the borough. In the eighteenth century it was more extensive and heavily wooded than today. The eastern end was cut off by the railway years ago and managed as a park called Little Wormwood Scrubs. One of Little Wormwood Scrubs' features was a remnant of Counter's Creek, the old boundary between Hammersmith and Kensington. As this stream ceased to flow it was turned into a water feature: its course can still be discerned as a dip in the ground. All of the Scrubs is common land – including the small part that used to be in Kensington, and Old Oak Common, historically part of Acton – and is preserved as open space under the Metropolitan Commons Act. The military uses it for exercise under a separate Act of Parliament.

Activities during two world wars left the Scrubs almost devoid of trees and scrub. A mixture of formal and informal planting since then has produced a wooded perimeter, and a large central clump of scrub. Recently the latter has become rather dense, and therefore less attractive to wildlife, and somewhat threatening to people. Following a recommendation by the GLA Biodiversity Group, the wooded areas were made a Statutory Local Nature Reserve in October 2002, and officially opened in April 2003. Already some of the Scrub behind the Old Oak Estate has been thinned, allowing a greater variety of ground plants to develop, and also making the Scrubs seem more open and welcoming to people. A part-time guardian has been appointed to deal with management and interpretation.

Because the Scrubs is common land, access cannot be restricted, and it must be managed alongside its use by people. Possibly some of the grassed areas near the designated nature reserve areas could be subject to a less rigorous mowing programme to encourage more diversity of plant life. The Scrubs is designated Metropolitan Open Space because of its size, and its new status and management should increase its value for biodiversity. The presence of main railway lines and the Central tube line makes it easy for wildlife to move on to and away from the Scrubs using the cover of the track-side vegetation. However, Crossrail's present plans, recently revealed to the Council's Environment Scrutiny Panel, present a serious threat to the future of the nature reserve and the landscape of the common. If you have never visited the Scrubs, now is the time to go.

Views

The view east from Wormwood Scrubs towards the Trellick Tower is one of the finest in Hammersmith and Fulham. The borough also has some fine views along and across the river, particularly towards the wooded tow path in Barnes. That the semi-rural quality given by this 'green edge' is a fragile asset becomes only too clear as trees fall and are not replaced. There is an urgent need for a management plan for the tow path, as highlighted by the Thames Strategy Kew to Chelsea. Richmond Council is organising a special tow path consultation open day on Saturday 6 March, when an audit of the tow path will be on show and views will be sought on what should be included in the management plan. All are welcome to attend. See back page for full details.

A ghost in Parson's Green?

Lady Margaret School, overlooking Parson's Green, is an example of buildings having group value. The core of the school is three houses: Henniker House of about 1840 and Elm House and Belfield House, both of about 1800. All have been joined up in a sensitive way and additions have been made to the whole. The school has been known to be haunted for many years by a ghost named 'Aggie'. As part



Lady Margaret School, Parson's Green, a series of 18th and 19th century buildings, possibly haunted?

of her history research, a pupil recently discovered something unusual about a young housemaid named Agnes Sauton who lived at Henniker House in the mid 19th century. In the census of 1851 there is a black scrawl against her name. Does any reader know more about this local mystery?

Membership Drive and Funds

As our treasurer reported at the AGM, our running costs are exceeding our regular income from membership subscriptions. We have been generously supported by grants from sponsors for specific projects such as the photographic survey, the *Local List* and the Bradmore House booklet, but we must cover our running costs from members' contributions. A great deal of effort goes into arranging an enjoyable annual meeting and putting together our newsletters with their wide range of articles and illustrations. The newsletter is sent to a large mailing list and responses show it is much enjoyed. However, many on the mailing list are not paid-up members. If you are one of these and wish to support our work, please join our Group. Although the annual membership fee is modest, it makes a real contribution to the expenses of the newsletter and other

running costs. A recruitment leaflet is enclosed with this newsletter. We hope many of you will respond. If you do, may we ask you to pay by standing order? This also makes a significant difference to our expenses. May we also remind any existing members who do not currently pay by standing order to pay their annual subscriptions as soon as possible? Please send payment details to the treasurer – contact details below.

Now we have almost completed the research details for the buildings on our *Local List*, we are about to recast it into alphabetical street order for easier use. We will be seeking sponsorship to help pay for this. We are also considering applying for a grant to put up history plaques in the borough. However, we cannot ask for grants for running costs and it is much easier to justify a grant for a specific project if we can show we are self-supporting in our everyday work. We have been operating without an 'hon sec' and would welcome any volunteers to share this job. All skills are welcome but at the moment we should be very grateful for help with minutes, administration, research and desktop publishing. Please contact the chairman (details below) if you could help.

INFORMATION FOR MEMBERS

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

- **First Sat of every month:** Friends of Ravenscourt Park Walled Garden working party. 10 am for two hours. Details from Angela Clarke on 020 8748 0284.
- **Saturday 6 March:** Public consultation day on future management of wooded tow path. Drop in and share your ideas between 12 noon and 4.0 pm at the Power Station Youth Club, Mortlake High Street. For further details ring the chairman.
- **Sunday 28 March:** University Boat Race, starts 6 pm. Preceded by the replica boats race.
- **Saturday 3 April:** Olympia tour for members of the Hammersmith Society and the Historic Buildings Group, 2 pm. Prior booking essential. Details from Angela Clarke, Hon Sec, Hammersmith Society, 92 Hammersmith Grove, London W6 7HB. Tel: 020 8748 0284.
- **Friday 7 May:** Deadline for nominations for Hammersmith Society Environment Award and Wooden Spoon; send to Angela Clarke, Hon Sec, Hammersmith Society, 92 Hammersmith Grove, London W6 7HB. Tel: 020 8748 0284.
- **15-23 May:** Celebrating Fulham: the Fulham Society week of concerts, open artists' studios, local historical walks, open gardens and other local events. Leaflet and further information from the Hon Sec (020 7736 0717) from April onwards.
- **Thursday 27 May:** Hammersmith Society AGM and presentation of 2004 Environment Awards, 7 pm, Grove Neighbourhood Centre, 7 Bradmore Park Road W6 (corner of Atwood Road).
- **12-13 June:** London Open Squares weekend.
- **18-19 September:** London Open House weekend and the Mayor's Thames Festival.

OFFICERS OF THE GROUP

- **Chairman:** Angela Dixon, 31 St Peter's Square W6 9NW. 020 8748 7416. dixon.angela@talk21.com
- **Treasurer:** Jo Brock, Flat 12, 43 Peterborough Road SW6 3BT. 020 7731 0363.
- **Planning Secretary:** Roger Warry, 4 Ravenscourt Road W6 0UC. 020 8748 1030.

PUBLICATIONS FOR SALE

- **Local List:** Historical and descriptive information on hundreds of buildings throughout the borough. Researched, written and published by the Group.
- **Bradmore House:** The history of one of the most beautiful houses in the borough, now incorporated into the Broadway Centre opposite St Paul's Church. Fully illustrated. For prices and ordering information, please contact the chairman – details above.

EMAIL ADDRESSES

We are compiling a list of members' email addresses so that we can communicate with members more cheaply and easily. Please register your email address with the chairman – details above.

SUBSCRIPTION RATES

£5.00 for individuals; £15 for groups

NEWSLETTER CREDITS

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