



'Britain's Call to Arms', Frank Brangwyn's 1914 recruiting poster for the Underground.

BRANGWYN AT WAR

Regular readers of this newsletter will be familiar with the fact that Frank Brangwyn RA lived for many years at Temple Lodge in Queen Caroline Street, Hammersmith.



During the First World War many artists on both sides responded to the call to harness art to the cause. Brought up in Belgium, Brangwyn identified strongly with the need to fight back, not just because of his desire to support the war effort in general, but also because of the suffering of Belgium and its people, over-run and occupied by the German army and turned into a battle-ground. Never an official war artist, Brangwyn produced over 80 poster designs, many for charities without charge. In 1914 Frank Pick commissioned him and Gerald Spencer Pryse to create posters for the Underground. Brangwyn's unflinching 'Britain's Call to Arms' (see above) was a stark portrayal of death of civilians and destruction of their homes. A husband comforts his wife, but a soldier points to the

conflict suggesting he joins them in opposing the enemy. Equally, 'The Crimp', in which the recruiting sergeant lays his hand on the unwilling man in the street while a mass of volunteers march by, re-enforces the message that it was down to individuals to help. While 'The Call to Arms' was criticised for being bloodthirsty, it achieved its objective. Probably the best known of Brangwyn's posters was 'The Vow of Vengeance'. Issued by the *Daily Chronicle*, it depicts a puzzled soldier shaking his fist at a departing and seemingly immune Zeppelin after a bombing raid. Such images seem melodramatic today, but evidently struck a chord at the time. In complete contrast is the humanity expressed in his poster work for various fund-raising causes such as the Red Cross and an American charity supporting a French Army Orphanage, the Orphelinat des Armées, (see page 3).

Dr Christopher Jordan

TEMPLE LODGE RENEWED

Temple Lodge itself is a simple late Georgian house in Queen Caroline Street. Brangwyn's studio was an extension built between the house and street in the early 20th century. The site was bought in 1961 by the Christian Community who now run it as a guest house.

The layout of the house is much as it used to be, and the downstairs rooms still have fine plaster ceilings. The first priest to the community also ran a café at Temple Lodge – now let to the Gate vegetarian restaurant. The community's first church was Brangwyn's former studio next door. The church has recently been replaced by a brand new building, opened in September 2013 alongside a refurbished Gate restaurant.



Artist Frank Brangwyn painting in his studio at Temple Lodge, Hammersmith, c.1920.

Architect Nicholas Pople designed the new building, which presents a bold front to the street with an outer surface of wood and cork rendered in white cement. An entrance hall leads to an 80-seat chapel and a small, more intimate, space. Both the chapel floor and altar are made of concrete, cast on site and coloured with powdered basalt: the floor is a dark grey and the altar black. There is also a small vestry and the usual facilities. The new building and its fittings are full of symbols, which, as the priest said at the opening, have many meanings and speak to us whatever our beliefs. The church connects to Temple Lodge. Adjacent to the church is the refurbished home of the Gate restaurant, a light and pleasant place to eat, decorated with panels made of re-used timber. Repositioned gates, by artist Gertraud Goodwin on the theme of the cross, provide a better view of Temple Lodge from the street. The borough has certainly gained an interesting and important building.

John Goodier, chairman, Historic Buildings Group



Two more Brangwyn works from the First World War: above, 'The Crimp', in which the recruiting sergeant lays his hand on the unwilling man in the street while a mass of volunteers march by, and, above right, a poster for an American charity supporting a French army orphanage, the Orphelinat des Armées.

PRIVATE DWYER VC

This last piece in our brief First World War section is an account of one of our local VCs. We understand a project is in hand to identify and celebrate all the borough's VCs. More in future newsletters.

Edward Dwyer was born in Fulham on 25 November 1895. After an education at St Thomas of Canterbury school in Estcourt Road, he



joined the army in 1911 aged just sixteen, serving in the 1st Battalion, East Surrey Regiment. In 1914 he took part in the retreat from Mons. In April the following year he was involved in an action at Hill Sixty in Belgium, as a result of which he was awarded the Victoria Cross.

Private Dwyer's citation, published in the *London Gazette* on 21 May 1915 reads: 'For most conspicuous bravery and devotion to duty on "Hill Sixty" on 20th April 1915. When his trench was heavily attacked by German grenade throwers, he climbed on to the parapet and although subjected to a hail of bombs at close quarters, succeeded in dispersing the enemy by the effective use of his hand grenades. Private Dwyer displayed great gallantry earlier in this day, in leaving his trench under heavy shell fire to bandage his wounded comrade'.

The Little Corporal

Private Dwyer received his medal from King George at Buckingham Palace on 15 June 1915. At just 18 and a half he was the youngest recipient of the VC in the First World War. Promoted to lance corporal, he went on to spend six months helping the national recruiting drive, becoming well-known as 'The Little Corporal'. In late 1915 he was recorded talking about the retreat from Mons and the day to day routine of trench life. This recording includes Dwyer singing a popular army song of the day and is available on the internet. Just search 'Edward Dwyer recording'.



Corporal Dwyer was killed in action at Guillemont on the Somme on 3 September 1916, aged 20. He is buried at Flatiron Copse military cemetery, four miles east of Albert, France (Plot III, Row J, Grave 3). On his last leave he left his medal in the care of Canon Browne of Holloway. It was eventually presented to the regimental museum in 1962. Today his VC is displayed at the Princess of Wales' Royal Regiment (Queens and Royal Hampshires) Museum located in Dover Castle, Kent. Dwyer was also awarded the Cross of St. George by Russia. There is a plaque in his honour in Fulham library.

Caroline MacMillan

FULHAM PEALING AWAY

RING OUT THE BELLS



Fiona Mylchreest reports that following extensive work on both tower and bells at All Saints, Fulham (see previous newsletters *passim*), the bells are once more 'up and ringing. They are sounding glorious as before, but I am told they are much, much easier to ring. We are still

finishing off improvements to the tower (including a loo and kitchenette for the ringers) and then we will start our project to train new ringers. Most of the peal boards have been restored and look fabulous. The bells rang for the civic Fulham Remembers service, remembering those from Fulham who died in the First World War. It was particularly poignant as the bells rang for the beginning and end of both world wars'.



The Eight Bells in Fulham High Street, first licensed in 1629 as The Bell and renamed a century later when the peal in All Saints church was increased from six bells to eight.

In his *Fulham Old and New*, volume one, Charles Feret quotes a story told by another author in which the Fulham bells are praised for their 'soft and sweet' tone: 'When the Thames was really the silvery stream it has been pictured as by the poet, and when the quiet little village of Fulham nestled in undisturbed peace upon its shore, the bells of All Saints had a reputation second to none along the river. M.J.T. Smith, in his interesting *Book for a Rainy Day*, tells a story of George Heath of Strand Lane, a famous waterman, who...had himself been a noted ringer. [Heath] fell into conversation with a 'fare' as he was rowing on the river one day. "You like bells, then," observed the gentleman. "Oh yes, sir," replied George, "I was a famous ringer in my youth at St Mary Overie's. They are beautiful bells, but of all the bells, give me those of Fulham, they are so soft and sweet. St Margaret's are fine bells, so are St Martin's, but, after all, Fulham for my money".'

READERS' LETTERS



I saw with sadness that the tiled mural of the rowers had been removed from the wall of the subway running under Putney Bridge. No one seems to have been

aware that this was going to occur. The underpass is considered part of the bridge so therefore part of a listed building and yet no listed building consent seems to have been obtained before its removal. I understand that there are damp issues that need to be rectified but do hope consideration is being given to the mural's return.

Yours faithfully
Fiona Fowler

(We welcome communications from readers, preferably by email. Please address to the editor, Dr Andrew Duncan: andy@andrewduncan.co.uk or 19 Boileau Road, London SW13 9BJ.)

THAMES PANORAMA

In 1829 Samuel Leigh published in book form a 60-foot long, hand-coloured aquatint panorama showing both banks of the Thames between Richmond and Westminster. The 185 years that have passed since then have not been kind to this remarkable work and it has gradually been lost to public view. Our project is restoring the book digitally and creating contemporary panoramas of the Thames between Hampton and Tower Bridge. The digital restoration has been completed and the panoramas are well underway.

Both old and new panoramas are gradually being uploaded to our website (www.panoramaofthethames.com) so that visitors can see them together in the same place, and find historical and other information about riverside buildings and features, current and lost. The

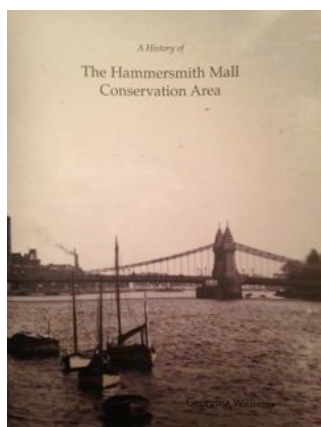
1829 panorama is fully online. The photographic panoramas are being published in phases, as they are completed.

By visiting our website, you can now go on a virtual cruise along the river, clicking on any features you see and finding relevant history and information. You will discover for yourself the changes – social, architectural and in the landscape – since the end of the Georgian era. By the way, the modern photographic panoramas also include the islands and London's 33 bridges.

Particular challenges

Hammersmith is seen at three periods: 1829, 1958 and now (*see illustrations on page 1 of this newsletter*). Fulham in 1829 is online, but the photographic panorama is awaiting funding. Photographing the Hammersmith riverside has been an interesting exercise with its own particular challenges. Obviously we had to shoot it from the Surrey side. However, we were unable to photograph from the towpath because in many places the scrub was too dense, even in winter. Instead we had to go down on the foreshore. Of course, you can only do this at low tide but additionally we could only do it when the light was right on the Hammersmith side. As you can imagine, getting these two things together was not easy. In all we had to make five attempts before we got the shots we needed. We finally managed it early one sunny morning in late March this year. The willows were just coming into leaf, so it was a close run thing!

If you go on the website, you will see that the 1829 panorama of Hammersmith riverside is still, in places, familiar, although we have lost the small industry, wharves and workers' cottages along the old Hammersmith creek (where Furnivall Gardens is now). But if the artist who did the original drawings returned today, he would find Fulham's riverside utterly altered. In 1829 it was fringed by meadows and market gardens, with some fine villas and country cottages. Now of course only Fulham palace and the 18th century Hurlingham Club remain.



Georgina Williams has published an illustrated history of the Hammersmith Mall conservation area. 54 pp. Price £5. Available from the Skittle Alley, South Black Lion Lane, W6. Open: 8am-12noon.

The panorama project is produced by a small team led by ourselves, and has received support from many local groups and individuals, both on the

history and information side and financially. Local Hammersmith information was provided by Georgina Williams (*see picture above*) and Jane Bane, though we have done a little extra research ourselves. With the history of Fulham's riverbank we would really welcome

some help from locals. And of course, as we mentioned above, we are desperately in need of funding for Fulham, so any further donations to our work would be gratefully received. Here is our contact email for more info: jill@panoramaofthethames.com.

John Inglis and Jill Sanders

Chairman's Report

This has been a busy year for the Group. Most planning matters are dealt with by the planning sub-committee, which has made responses on planning and other proposals considerably easier. The change of administration at the Council has meant that there has been unevenness in the timing of planning applications.



This blue plaque in the Group's livery now adorns the former nurses' home at the ex-Royal Masonic Hospital in Ravenscourt Park. It is one of several such plaques installed around the borough during 2014. Shepherds Bush library and Hammersmith Palais plaques can be seen below.

Major Sites The Group keeps a watching brief on major sites such as **White City** and **Olympia**. Our principal concern with these two sites is the maintenance of the historic fabric. On the whole what is proposed for these sites is broadly acceptable. With **White City** and **Old Oak Common** our concern is the quality of the buildings and the layout of open space between the buildings. Our involvement in these sites may increase as the details of design are revealed. A particular problem with the Old Oak master plan is the effect this huge redevelopment will have on the canal and Wormwood Scrubs. So far we have been supporting the very well organised and effective actions of the Friends of Wormwood Scrubs. We will take a particular interest in any matters that affect the **Canal**, as the Group played a major role in getting it declared a conservation area.

The **Imperial Gas site** is of particular concern to the Group (see page 8 below). Part of the site is a conservation area. Two buildings, plus a war memorial and Gas Holder 2, are listed. It is proposed to retain these but move Gas Holder 2. We would like to see Gas Holder 7, which is on the Local Register as a Building of Merit, also preserved. We were unsuccessful in getting it listed some years ago but it is of considerable historical interest.



The Walkabout on Shepherds Bush Green was originally Pyke's Cinematograph Theatre. Opened in 1911, Pyke's was the earliest cinema in Shepherds Bush and the building is now locally listed. We have objected to a pre-application proposal to demolish and replace it with a 16-storey block of flats as an extension to the neighbouring Dorsett Hotel. The Group is totally opposed both to the loss of the cinema building and the height of the proposed replacement between the listed theatre and the listed former Odeon cinema. Unfortunately the interior has been gutted by fire and there is nothing of interest left there. The exterior lettering on the side recording ticket prices, however, is of particular interest (see above) and there may be an early façade under the present one.

The group has been involved in the pre-application proposals for the **Thames Wharf** site which contains the Duckham's building, locally listed as a building of merit. The retention of the part of the building adjacent to Rainville Road is welcomed, but the proposed loss of the two wings which extend to the Riverside Walk is of concern. The scheme as presented retains an enlarged central landscaped garden around the River Café, with new residential blocks at each end. The proposed height of 11 storeys at one end is controversial, not least for its effect on views along the river.

Smaller Developments We take an interest in all proposed redevelopments in the conservation areas as well as smaller scale projects involving listed buildings. We look at sites from the point of view of quality of design and streetscape. New buildings should fit well with what is already there. This does not mean that they should be mere copies of what is there, but that they should enhance the built environment. Ideally they should be buildings that in 30 years' time the Group would be proposing for listing.

Small-Scale Historic Sites A few planning applications in recent years have raised our awareness of some of the smaller historic buildings in the borough. A good

example is 45-47 Goldhawk Road, which was built around 1840 as a single dwelling called 'Gold Hawk Villa'. It is currently divided into four retail units. It would be difficult to argue for its protection as it has been so altered.

Conservation Areas We are delighted that, after a long period of resisting making any change, the Council has enlarged the Bradmore Park conservation area. We look forward to the review of other conservation areas.

Advertising Hoardings We continue to take action over hoardings and advertisements. Where necessary, we draw the Council's attention to advertisements blighting the public realm in conservation areas and adjacent to listed buildings. We give evidence before the inspector when cases are examined. We were very pleased to see the removal of advertising hoardings from the front of the Hammersmith Apollo (Eventim Apollo) and many high-level hoardings on flank walls in conservation areas.

Height and Density There is a general trend towards higher building and higher densities. This is visible across London. Hammersmith and Fulham sits on the edge of the border between urban and suburban. Central Hammersmith is becoming more glass and steel, and higher. It started with the Hammersmith (Broadway) station site after the earlier more exciting proposals for that site were rejected. Shepherds Bush and Fulham Broadway luckily still retain their 19th and early 20th century look and feel. Retaining the character of these two commercial hubs will be a major task for the Group and for other amenity groups.

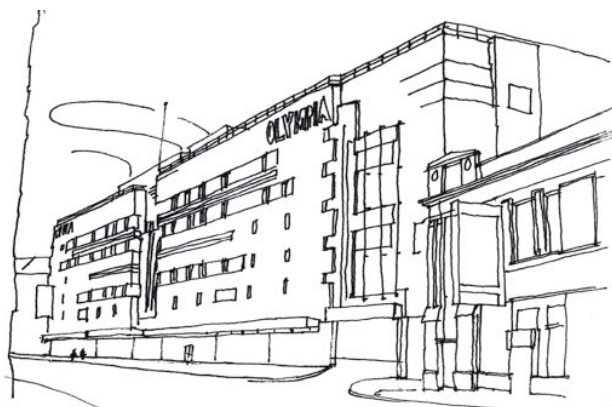
Plaques The Group's commemorative plaques scheme (our 'local blue plaques') is gathering momentum. Four more plaques have been erected this year and more are in the planning stage. These commemorate aspects of the history of the borough, and previous uses of the buildings (see immediately below, page 5 above and page 9 below).



The Group's blue plaque on the former Shepherd's Bush library, now a new home for the Bush Theatre.

Local Lists Our expert committee member Tony Boys has succeeded in extracting the data for our *Local List* out of its original, now outdated, computer format. We are looking at ways of making the data available initially to the Group committee for updating and then eventually to the wider public.

The Council also has a Local Register which is more selective than the Group's list. Some recent cases indicate the Council should be more precise on its policies regarding protection of buildings or features on their Register when they are threatened by development.



Olympia Two's Empire Hall, designed by Joseph Emberton in 1929. The Group's planning sub-committee has recently responded to planning applications connected with renovations at Olympia and the Olympia Hotel.

Hail and Farewell Anthony Williams joined the Group's planning sub-committee to strengthen the Fulham input. Annabel Clarke has taken up the role of planning secretary. I am grateful for all the sub-committee's work, which makes a positive input into the design quality and historical structure of the borough (*see right for an insight into the working of the planning sub-committee*). Angela Dixon continues to help the Group especially with the technical side of planning applications and her magnificent commemorative plaque scheme. Jo Brock is standing down as treasurer, a role she has filled for many years. In recent years her health has not been good. In earlier years she was also surveyor of two of the areas covered by our *Local List*. We say many thanks to Jo and farewell as a Group committee member.

We are now looking for both a new treasurer and a new membership secretary, and we always welcome new committee members. If you are interested, please contact us (contact details on back page).



John Goodier, chair, Historic Buildings Group

THE ENGINE ROOM

The planning sub-committee is the engine room of the HBG. Members attend planning forums, pre-application meetings, public exhibitions and appear at planning appeals. They also regularly send written representations to the Council on planning applications. Whilst the HBG as a whole cannot claim to have single-handedly changed planning policy or changed the outcome of an application decision, we would like to feel that, along with other amenity groups, we have exerted some influence for the good in respect of historic buildings, buildings of merit and conservation areas in the borough. This is consistent with our brief to 'promote, preserve and enhance the borough's historic environment'.

Following are some notes on recent work of the planning sub-committee. The notes amplify, and in some cases update, the chairman's report above, which was delivered to the Group's annual meeting on Monday 24 November 2014, held in Fulham town hall.

Planning applications responded to by the committee include renovations and additions to the listed **Olympia** exhibition halls (*see left*) and the **Olympia Hotel**, the redevelopment of the listed **BBC Television Centre** and the proposal to demolish the gasholders at the former **Imperial Gasworks** in Fulham (*see chairman's report above*).

The current proposals for the **Triangle site at the junction of Hammersmith Grove and Beadon Road** are set far more forward along Hammersmith Grove than any of the other buildings. The Group and others have strongly objected at a planning forum. We hope that the developer will heed objectors' comments. Demolition has finally started at **Queen's Wharf and the Riverside Studios**. At the time of going to press we have just heard that work will start on the **King Street regeneration scheme**, aka the town hall scheme, following a long battle by this Group and many others to achieve an acceptable outcome.

Major discovery in Adelaide Grove

Elsewhere in the newsletter (page 9) is an account of research carried out into a small and at first sight apparently unimportant brick chimney at 1A **Adelaide Grove**. Members have unearthed a particularly interesting find here. The **Carpet Right** site on Goldhawk Road, located in the Ravenscourt & Starch Green conservation area, is finally being constructed after much input over many years from both this Group and local residents to ensure that whatever is built is as sympathetic as possible to its surroundings.

This is only a small sample of the activities of the planning sub-committee. We continue to welcome input from any members who have local knowledge concerning planning proposals in conservation areas which could strengthen our case when we submit comments to the Council.

Nicolas Fernley, chairman, HBG planning sub-committee

FULHAM GASWORKS

On 16 September 2014 the Institution of Gas Engineers and Managers held a conference at the British Library on the subject of 'Gasholders – Recording the End of an Era'. The conference summarised the two-century history of the coal gas industry. It dealt with the need for gasholders, their design and construction, and the changes that have led to their demise. It set out the challenges and opportunities for their decommissioning, demolition and site remediation. It showed how gasholders have been reused or replaced in this country and elsewhere. It called for the proper recording of their history, and it illustrated examples of how communities should be consulted when these landmark structures go.



No. 7 gasholder at Fulham gasworks. The gasholder is not listed, but the Group hopes that the elegant cast iron guide frame at least will be preserved, and perhaps reused in some way. There are plenty of precedents.

Gasholders are fast disappearing. Soon they will be all gone, bar the few that are protected in some way, including the one listed gasholder at Fulham gasworks in Sands End. For the most part gasworks and gasholders are on classic brownfield sites. Closure involves particular clean up challenges, but the sites are nevertheless attractive because they often provide unusually large and centrally located areas for urban regeneration and new housing. Gasholders are also structures of historic and community significance. Along with church and chapel, pub and cinema, and railway station, they help create a sense of place and identity.

First street lighting

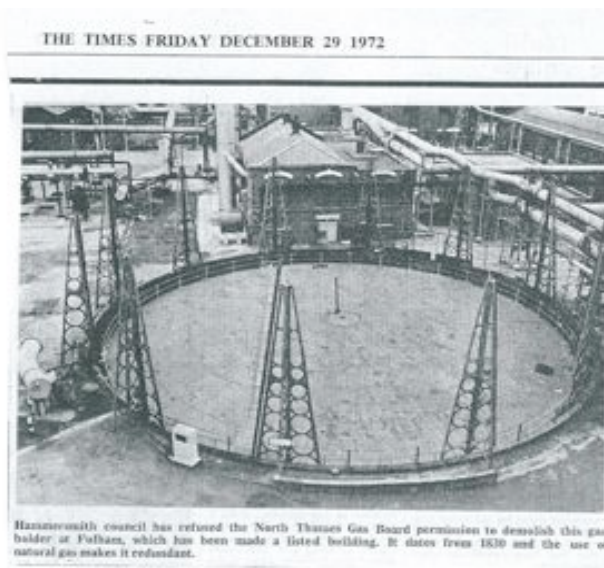
The destructive distillation of coal to produce coal gas or town gas, and coke, was developed in the 18th century. William Murdock developed gas lighting in 1792. Frederick Winsor installed the first street lighting in Peter Street, Westminster, in 1807. Gas production needed a retort to make the gas, and a storage system to hold the product at low pressure until needed – the gasholder. The industrial revolution of the 19th century saw not only its use for lighting, but also for domestic heating and many industrial heating processes. And gasholders grew in size

to meet demand and provide consistent flow rates. The first gasholders consisted of an iron bell structure, with a water seal at its base, which would rise up as it filled with gas. External columns or other frameworks guided the container vertically as it rose and fell. Holder capacity was increased by making bells in telescopic sections. Spiral guided gasholders needed no frame, and later designs had a fixed tank with moving bellows inside. The early (c.1830) listed gasholder at Sands End is just 30 feet high, and has a capacity of 234,000 cu ft. By the 20th century there were gasholders 160 feet high, with capacities of 7.5 million cu ft.

Targets for bombers

While the use of gas in the home and factory led to danger and accidents, its storage in bulk was remarkably safe. In two world wars gasholders were often the targets for bombers. But gas escaping from punctured gasholders did not explode. Instead it would burn in a relatively harmless flame and the gasholder would slowly empty. In 1973 a terrorist was rather disappointed when his attempt to cause what he thought would be a massive explosion at a gasworks in Newcastle just lit a rather large flame.

The discovery of North Sea oil and gas in the 1960s and '70s meant the end of coal gas production. The retorts went and pipelines were installed to bring the gas from the North Sea to the place of use, and to import liquefied gas. These pipes also provide storage, particularly as gas can be stored in liquid form or at high pressure. So the gasholders have become redundant. Some have since been converted for other uses: their size lends them to large leisure or entertainment spaces – an underwater diving tower, for example, at Duisberg in Germany – and from Dublin to Dunedin there are cylindrical blocks of flats. However, many gasholders have disappeared. The remainder will now go unless they can be converted to some new use.



Gasholder No. 2 at Fulham, built c.1830 and reputed to be the oldest structure of its kind in the world. Its listing in 1970 saved it from demolition by the North Thames Gas Board, as recorded in this 1972 cutting from The Times.

Of particular interest to us is the future of what is left of the old Imperial Gas Company site in Sands End. Originally established here in 1823, it is one of the oldest in the world. So far, the parts closest to the river have been redeveloped, with housing at Imperial Wharf and the eponymous new station. A scheme for the area to the north, including the c.1862 dock adjacent to Chelsea Creek, has received planning permission. The dock, which provided access for coal barges from Chelsea Creek, will be retained and enlarged as part of the scheme.



This smart new Historic Buildings Group plaque has recently been installed on the student accommodation building which has replaced the famous Hammersmith Palais dance hall in Shepherds Bush Road.

What remains now is the most northerly part of the site, south of Harwood Terrace and Michael Road. This includes six gasholders of various sizes and associated buildings, some of interest and merit. National Grid owns the site and has submitted a planning application which, if approved, would allow them to demolish the five unlisted gasholders and associated structures and buildings, clear the site, and carry out the necessary work to clean it up. They would then, presumably, sell it for development. In August this year several Group members visited the site, accompanied by Malcolm Tucker, an authority on gasholder history and archaeology. Written comments on the National Grid planning application were subsequently submitted.

World's oldest gasholder

The Group is very concerned to see the preservation of the listed Gasholder No. 2, reputedly the oldest in the world, and, in some form or other, the preservation of at least the elegant cast iron guide frame of No. 7 (unfortunately not listed), together with the listed laboratory building and office building, and a listed gasworkers' war memorial. No. 2 is 100 feet in diameter and stands in a brick-lined pit about 30 feet deep. When it

is empty the top of the tank is flush with the ground; only the twelve distinctive triangular cast iron support stanchions of its guide frame show above. If it can be preserved with the tank in the 'full' position, there would be a space 60ft high and 100ft in diameter, big enough perhaps for a gym, a swimming pool or a community room.

No. 7 is much bigger and therefore a different challenge. However, there are lots of examples in this country, and around the world, of what can be done. At Kings Cross the guide frames of four gasholders have been retained. The iron framework of No. 8, which is about the same size as No. 7 at Fulham, has been dismantled, stripped of its 32 layers of paint and re-erected to form the surround for a public open space. The ironwork frames of three others (known as 'the Siamese Triplets' as they were clustered together and shared several support columns) have been dismantled for cleaning and will be re-erected in due course to provide the massing and external detailing of three cylindrical apartment blocks. We hope the architect who has the task of redeveloping the Sands End site will be able to do something along similar lines.

For nearly two hundred years Fulham Gasworks has been a significant site of industry, engineering and employment. Redevelopment should incorporate significant tangible records of that heritage to endow the gasworks' successor with a real sense of place.

Roger Weston, with thanks to Michael Bussell

WAS EROS CAST HERE?

Two years ago the Group published an article (*Newsletter* 27, p. 4) about the recently-restored memorial to George Broad in Margravine Cemetery, noting that Broad established a statue foundry in the Adelaide Works, Uxbridge Road, in 1891. At this foundry Broad cast the famous statue of Eros – and indeed the entire Shaftesbury Memorial – standing in Piccadilly Circus.

Now known as 1A Adelaide Grove, the foundry building has survived, on the north side of the Uxbridge Road behind the Queen Adelaide pub. The pub was rebuilt c.1900 in a 'Jacobethan' style and is listed Grade II. The former foundry building is unlisted. The foundry was in operation for only a short period, 1891-1898. Its subsequent history is not entirely clear, although it is believed to have been used as a warehouse during the Second World War, then as a garage. It is currently occupied by H Poulter, antique marble restorers.

The building was the subject of a recent planning application for its demolition and replacement by a block of eight flats on three floors. The application has been refused, although it is possible that a revised application may be made.

According to the National Portrait Gallery website, George Broad & Son became known for its work for the

sculptor Alfred Gilbert during the firm's short tenure of the Adelaide Grove site. (The company had originally started in central London and, after moving from Adelaide Grove, continued operations elsewhere under various names until it was dissolved in 1939.)



The Shaftesbury Memorial – incorporating the statue of Eros – in Piccadilly Circus. The bronze memorial to the great philanthropist was cast by George Broad at a still extant foundry in Adelaide Grove, Shepherd's Bush. Broad himself was later buried in Margravine Cemetery. His memorial in the cemetery was restored in 2012.

A lengthy entry in the *Survey of London* (vols. 31-32: St James Westminster, Part 2) discusses Gilbert's development of his Shaftesbury Memorial design. It describes him as 'a superb technician who fully appreciated the different natures of metals, the opportunities they offered and the limitations they imposed. For the fountain he used bronze, but for the aerial figure, aluminium – probably its first use for permanent, free-standing sculpture; the supporting leg is solid, the rest of the body hollow'. As to its manufacture, we are told simply that 'by the summer of 1893 the memorial was at last ready to be unveiled, the castings having been made at the foundry of George Broad and Son'.

The NPG website lists a number of other statues and memorials cast for Gilbert by the company at the Adelaide Works, although none is as well-known as Eros.

Group committee members Annabel Clarke and Keith Whitehouse have recently made initial visits to the building. Understandably given the passage of more than a century, it retains little evidence of its foundry use other than in the building fabric. The main building is a brick workshop with timber roof bracing and later corrugated sheet covering. At one end is the furnace chimney, still standing though it would seem that the flue opening has been bricked in. Adjoining is a smaller brick building with a tiled roof and hayloft, perhaps originally stables for the adjacent pub. The 1869 Ordnance Survey map suggests that the brick building, yard and buildings behind the pub were once in single ownership. The main openings into both buildings would have been enlarged when it was used as a garage. Both buildings appear to date from the second half of the 19th century. It is probable that the foundry building was purpose-built.

The Group has now informed the Council's conservation officer of the building's interesting past. There is certainly an argument for it to be recorded. From previous experience of the long-disused Burton's statue foundry in Thames Ditton, visited when empty shortly before demolition, it is likely that evidence will remain of casting pits and other features pointing to its former use.

*Michael Bussell and Keith Whitehouse
(with acknowledgements to Annabel Clarke)*

BLYTHE HOUSE REVISITED

On 13 March 2014 members of the Group enjoyed a guided tour of Blythe House, that gigantic building in Blythe Road, next door to Olympia. Blythe House was built 1899-1903 for the Post Office Savings Bank (POSB), a government institution established in 1861 to encourage ordinary wage earners to 'provide for themselves against adversity and ill health'. The architect was Henry, later Sir Henry, Tanner (1849-1935).



Clerks hard at work in the Post Office Savings Bank, now the museum store known as Blythe House. The photograph date must be after 1936 because that is when male and female staff were first permitted to work together.

The POSB had proved extremely successful. By the time it took up full occupation of its new headquarters in May

1903, it had around 9 million customers. By 1927 that number had risen to twelve million – roughly one quarter of the then UK population. Servicing this huge customer base in the pre-digital age required a massive workforce – some 4,000 people. This in turn necessitated a very large building. In fact the original did not prove large enough: it had to be extended soon after the First World War.

Chicken run

Of the POSB's 4,000 employees, at least one third were female, all unmarried according to the rules of the day. The male and female staff had their own entrances to the building and strict single gender working areas within it. The male staff entered through the neo-Baroque facade with its Renaissance enrichments on the north side of the site. The female staff made do with the simpler entrance to the south. Around 1905 a covered walkway was constructed across the south end of the central courtyard, partly to protect the women workers from the elements, but also to shield them from the gaze of the many thousands of men working in the building at the north end of the courtyard. This covered walkway became known as 'the chicken run', even on official drawings! Stories abound of illicit meetings between the staff, a risky business as you could be sacked if caught canoodling! Some staff, known as 'safe workers', were trusted to pass from one gender's area to another. Gender segregation of the workforce finally ceased in 1936, on a day called at the time 'the day of aggregation'!

The POSB began to vacate the site in the 1960s, slowly moving its operations to Glasgow. After formal closure in 1977, the building was leased to Euston Films, part of Thames Television, and used as a location for such TV classics as *The New Avengers* and *Minder*. In recent years Blythe House has again become popular with film and TV companies. For example, it featured in *Tinker Tailor Solider Spy* (2011) and *Dancing on the Edge* (2013).

Since 1984 – so for 30 years this year – Blythe House's main use has been as a study, research and conservation centre for three national museums: the V&A, the Science Museum and the British Museum. Each museum has a third of the 2.2 ha site. Anybody can access the collections stored in the building, provided they make an appointment first. Last year some 5,000 members of the public took up the opportunity.

We are always keen to hear about life and times at Blythe House in the POSB days. If you have any recollections or 'insider knowledge', do please get in touch via email to g.benson@vam.ac.uk. We would love to hear your stories!

Glenn Benson, manager, Blythe House

EXHIBITING ST PETER'S

In June 2014 we presented our local history exhibition covering the St Peter's Square conservation area in Hammersmith. We assembled this new exhibition (our first having been 23 years ago) using modern presentation methods so the material can be stored digitally for

posterity. Both the original and latest exhibitions had set out to be a social history of the area, but – this time as well as the first time – research in the borough archives and in the London Metropolitan Archives revealed no 'social' photographs. Even the school could produce only one photograph pre-1900. Parish magazines were a valuable source of information, as were several unpublished local histories.

The main focus of the exhibition was on how the area has changed physically over the last 150 years. We have lost many fine buildings and terraces such as Beavor Lodge and Theresa Terrace; sadly few photographic records remain of these buildings. The biggest single impact on our neighbourhood has been the post-war Great West Road extension which drove a wedge through our community. Included in the exhibition were 19th century photographs of the area and a few personal photographs of the families who lived here in the 20th century (one of the most popular panels).



A gardener in St Peter's Square, Hammersmith, around 1920 when the landscaping was newly completed. He appears to be sweeping a rather patchy lawn, patchy because so new perhaps.

Maps dating from 1830 to the present day were an essential component in the display. Many people found the bomb damage map particularly informative as it showed that our conservation area had been quite badly hit and explained why some large new interventions had been made, obviously on bomb sites.

The exhibition took about six months to research and was timed to coincide with the Artists at Home and St Peter's Festival weekends. We had around 400 visitors and talked to many of them about their times living here and their memories. We hope in due course to produce the exhibition in a paper format of some kind and our plan is to include some of the history we were unable to use in the exhibition for lack of space.

Brian and Jilly Paver

ARCHIVES MOVE

The local history collection has successfully moved to its new premises in Hammersmith library in Shepherd's Bush Road and is open to the public every day. However the valuable Hammersmith & Fulham archives have not

been so fortunate. The previous Council administration had announced the archives would also move to the library, but the project was never worked out in sufficient detail, and works on the necessary secure storage in the basement at the library have now stalled because of funding and engineering difficulties, with no firm date for their transfer. The archive collection remains at the Lilla Huset, but the public can only access material at the library. Requests for archive material must be made in advance to the archivist, who then needs to retrieve the items from the Lilla Huset strongroom and supervise transfer to the library – an inefficient and time-consuming process.

The lease on the purpose-built Lilla Huset archive store expires in June 2016, by which time it was hoped the new archives premises would be ready. However, it increasingly looks as if the council will have to explore temporary arrangements beyond that date. The archives consultative group, on which the HBG and the Hammersmith Society are represented, continue to press for a clear, reliable plan for a permanent home for the archives.

Melanie Whitlock, chair, Archives Consultative Group



THE RED COW

On 21 September 1896 *the Daily Graphic* announced the imminent demise of the Red Cow Inn at 157 Hammersmith Road, on the corner with Colet Gardens (then Cow Lane): ‘Another interesting relic of the old coaching days in London is

about to disappear’, the *Graphic* said, ‘the picturesque Red Cow Inn at Hammersmith having been doomed to demolition in order to make way for a more up-to-date building. The Red Cow is more than 200 years old and in the coaching days, when the thoroughfare was the mail road between Bath and London, it was the destination of one of the daily stages from the Tobits Dog, St. Paul’s. Here too the Crown coach changed its elegant horses from the Belle Sauvage for the sturdier animals for Bath and Bristol, proceeding thence to Exeter by way of Wells



Cecil Aldin's drawing of the Red Cow in Hammersmith Road, published in his book The Romance of the Road, 1933.

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and Bridgewater. The Red Cow used to be a favourite haunt of numerous well-known men of art and letters in their rambles about Chiswick and Turnham Green, and it was in one of its parlours that E. L. Blanchard wrote his “Memoirs of a Malacca Cane”. The famous old inn was pulled down in December 1897.

WANTED

We are in urgent need of a new hon. treasurer and a new hon. membership secretary. Neither requires any special expertise. Please, if you are interested in the Group's work and have a few hours to spare occasionally, do get in touch with any officer listed below. We are also always open to newsletter contributions. Speak to the editor in the first instance. Contact details below.

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