



Issue No. 38 Spring 2018

Our current newsletter gives the readers a glimpse into buildings linked to the high life and low life during the early part of the twentieth century. There are also reports on proposed buildings which may soon be a part of the twenty-first century.

Whitehall, City Hall and Town Hall, the message is the same: more homes are needed. As a group, we acknowledge the need for more housing, whether for rent or sale, market price or affordable. Our remit remains to

strive to achieve a good standard of design, and ensure proposed buildings and renovations preserve or enhance their setting.

I am pleased to report that our membership remains steady; however it would be encouraging to see it gain momentum. In these current times when preservation issues seem to be on the increase, spreading the message of our cause is always a good start.

Nicolas Fernley, Chairman



The Lyric Theatre Hammersmith in 1943 by Ruskin Spear, reproduced by kind permission of Roger Spear.



LOST THEATRE: LYRIC THEATRE, HAMMERSMITH

Hammersmith and Fulham once had six theatres: the Shepherd's Bush Empire, featured in Newsletter 33, the Granville, featured in Newsletter 34, the Palace of Varieties, featured in Newsletter 35, the King's featured in Newsletter 36, the Fulham Grand featured in Newsletter 37 and the Lyric.



The Lyric Hammersmith. Nick Charlesworth has kindly supplied this drawing of the theatre c1960. His book 'Variety at Night is Good for You', features 92 theatres still standing in the 1930s and 1940s including five featured in previous newsletters.

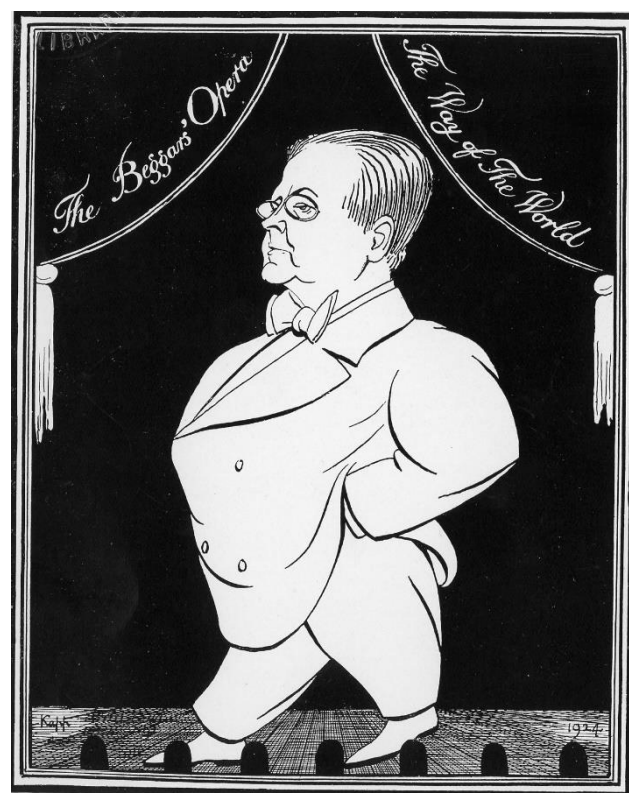
The Lyric Theatre, originally called the Lyric Hall, built in 1888 on Bradmore Grove, a side street crowded with the stalls of the Hammersmith street market, was built for Charles Cordingley, a long-established Hammersmith resident and proprietor of a local weekly paper, 'The West London Advertiser'. It opened with a marionette show.

Enlarged on the same site in 1890, it reopened as the Lyric Opera House, and was then described as holding 1,000 people. In 1891 it was taken over by Acton Philips,

a local publican who ran the successful Palace of Varieties in King Street.

In 1895 Frank Matcham, the most successful theatre architect of his time, was asked to rebuild and enlarge the interior. Another circle was added and the plasterwork installed. Matcham's 'first anxiety was to ensure that every member of the audience had a perfect view of the stage'. He also took great care over the decoration of the auditorium. The plasterwork was spectacular.

Since then the Lyric has had a chequered history with successful periods alternating with lean times, even closures. The Playfair era, which began in 1918 when actor Nigel Playfair leased the theatre, was one of the successful periods.



MR. NIGEL PLAYFAIR ; FROM THE CARICATURE BY KAPP

'Mr Nigel Playfair from the caricature by Kapp' featured in 'The Story of the Lyric Theatre Hammersmith' by Nigel Playfair published 1925.

It started with a children's show written by A A Milne and productions included *As You Like It* with Miles Malleon and Athene Seyler, *The Merry Wives of Windsor* with Edith Evans, *The Cherry Orchard* with John Gielgud and Capek's *Insect Play*. His most successful productions brought a 'fashionable West End audience out to a suburban theatre'. One production in particular – John Gay's *The Beggar's Opera*, designed by Lovat Fraser with music by Frederick Austin – was an

instant success, running for three years and inspiring Punch to produce the following rhyme:

No greater name than Nigel Playfair
Occurs in Thespian lore or myth
'Twas he who first revealed to Mayfair
The whereabouts of Hammersmith'.

In 1958, after a long period as the Lyric Theatre, the building reverted to its original name of Lyric Opera House. A series of distinguished shows followed, including new work such as John Mortimer's *The Dock Brief* and Harold Pinter's *The Birthday Party*. These weren't enough to save it, however: the old Lyric closed for the last time in 1966 and was demolished in 1972.

Post Script. To end the Lost Theatre series on a positive note, local people, having fought and failed to retain the old theatre, achieved a smaller rebuilt Lyric with the new theatre, essentially to Matcham's design incorporating a reconstruction of his splendid plasterwork by George Jackson & Son.



The HBG plaque, commemorating George Jackson & Sons, erected on Fulham Riverside.

Angela Dixon

THE PAINT DETECTIVE

My main interest is in the decorative treatment of historic buildings. In my talk to HBG members I explained the origins of my nickname 'The Paint Detective' and described a few projects in Hammersmith & Fulham. I did have to apologise for the small number that I had undertaken in the area. It's just the luck of the draw. In some parts of



Layers of paint on Culzean Castle Door.

London, I seem to walk past an earlier job every hundred yards.

The range and type of projects that I am faced with were outlined and illustrated with examples of the earliest buildings and also the most recently constructed. The former included the recreation of King Henry VIII's Tudor garden at Hampton Court Palace, where the heraldic beasts that represented his family and those of Queen Jane Seymour were identified, carved in wood and painted in their correct style and colours. Of the more modern jobs, the buildings on the 1960s Golden Lane housing estate were mentioned. My task was to establish how the exteriors – principally the front doors - had been painted when they were first erected, the idea being that these were to be repainted accordingly - one of the conditions of their Grade II listing. The challenges on these jobs are often surprisingly similar – it is just the timeframe and specific history of the building that varies.

A brief explanation of the process that I use for establishing the earlier decorative treatment of painted surfaces was given, with examples of the ideal cross section of paint layers (pictured above). In these, everything is clear and regular. However, the reality has layers missing or merged into others and often they look more like volcanic eruptions.

The external windows of St Peter's, Hammersmith (pictured below) have been investigated and this was



followed by providing advice on the internal decoration, which has recently been completed.

Hammersmith Bridge (pictured below) has been, perhaps, my biggest project in the borough. The identification of the original decorative scheme was carried out with a colleague. On that occasion a day spent in the Hammersmith & Fulham Archives proved invaluable and we had a very good idea what to expect before the sampling began.

I started work at Fulham Palace when the museum first opened in 1992 and have seen the building totally transformed. At the time, some of the first floor was semi-derelict and it is good that it has been given a new lease of life and now sees so much use.



Hammersmith Bridge - original decorative scheme.

Never for one minute have I regretted my earlier career as a soldier – so much of what I do relates to it, from the planning and preparation required for extensive sampling operations away from home to the enormous attention to detail when it comes to studying hundreds of tiny paint samples. All this is second nature, as is the knowledge that if I can parachute from a perfectly serviceable aircraft I can scale high buildings and structures without undue concern!

An illustration of the powers of paint analysis was given when I described work on the house owned by the painter James Whistler just over the border in Chelsea. Hearing

of a mural hidden under layers of paint in the entrance hall I was able to confirm its existence. However, I also showed how later repairs over many years had destroyed any chance of salvaging it. At the same time, I was able to establish in which room he had painted the famous portrait of his mother.

Patrick Baty

ROWTON HOUSE HAMMERSMITH - A HOTEL FOR POOR MEN

Before the redevelopment of central Hammersmith Rowton House (pictured below) would have been a landmark building. Designed by Harry Bell Meadows, it was an imposing red brick building with white stone details, in an arts and crafts version of gothic. Lord Rowton, who had worked with the Guinness Trust (one of whose buildings is in Fulham Palace Road), realised there was a need to provide cheap but good accommodation for single working men. The builder was



Hammersmith Rowton House.

Richard Farrant, who was involved with the Artizans' and General Labourers Dwellings Company, which provided affordable housing for families. The nearest example of ALDGCo estate is at Harrow Road. The first Rowton House, paid for by Lord Rowton, was at Vauxhall, opened in 1892 and the last was in Camden Town in 1905. Hammersmith was the fourth, and there were six in all.

The Hammersmith house had 800 cubicles, each with a window, bed, chair, shelf and coat hooks. There were washing and laundry facilities, a library, a smoking room and the services of a resident barber, repairing tailor and bootmender. The house also provided cooked meals, and there were kitchens for the men to cook their own food and make tea. There was plenty of light in the public rooms, which were tiled for ease of cleaning. There were three stairwells in the internal layout. Each cubicle had access to two of these so that evacuation in the case of



Interior view of the dining hall.

fire was easy. There were also internal walls to slow the spread of a fire or to isolate areas in cases of infectious diseases.

No more Rowton Houses were built after 1905, but the company successfully ran the hotels (as they were classified) until 1982 when they handed the remaining five over to local authorities. Camden (now called Arlington House) still operates. Others have been converted to flats or hotels. Rowton House, known by then as Butterwick House, was closed in 1972, and has been replaced by glass office blocks.

John Goodier

NEWS OF OLD AND NEW AT OLD OAK COMMON

Crossrail has made available the recording reports, which can be downloaded from <https://learninglegacy.crossrail.co.uk/documents/archaeology-archive-old-oak-common-depot/>

Of particular interest are:

- The 'Archaeological Detailed Desk-based Assessment' by Pre-Construct Archaeology (2010, 161 pages): this includes 66 photographs of structures; 38 maps, plans and drawings; recommendations for elements to be salvaged; and some trial pit records. Principally though it provides a comprehensive account of the historical development of the Depot, and narrative descriptions of its buildings and structures.
- 'Non-listed Built Heritage Recording of 70' Turntable', again by Pre-Construct Archaeology (2010, 87 pages): this provides a historical account and a detailed description of the structure that was installed in 1953. Text is accompanied by 13 figures (Depot plans and both original and survey drawings) and 64 photographic plates.

- 'Non-listed Built Heritage Recording at Old Oak Common, Acton', by Oxford Archaeology in partnership with Ramboll formerly Gifford (2016, 231 pages): this details the findings from the recording of some 34 Depot buildings and, with text descriptions, plans, drawings and photographs.

Turning from the old to the new, a press release from the Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) reports the start of demolition of the former Old Oak Common British Railways Staff Hostel immediately west of the Loco Depot. The press release is at <https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/old-oak-and-park-royal-development-corporation-opdc/about-opdc/opd-15>. The site is to be redeveloped to provide 605 homes, 33% to be affordable, and some commercial space. Residential blocks will be up to 26 storeys high, and the visualisations of the scheme provided at public consultation sessions – available at <http://www.oaklandsregeneration.co.uk/links/Oaklands%20P2%20Boards%20x8.pdf> – give a foretaste of what the OPDC area might look like when the present ambitious regeneration scheme comes to fruition.

Michael Bussell

POSTCARD FROM THE PAST



A postcard of The Temple of Varieties, King Street c1920.

The Temple of Varieties had its origins in a pub, The Town Hall Tavern, having a music hall attached. In 1884 Acton Phillips Jnr acquired and extended it. Taken over by J C Coe in 1897 he rebuilt it the following year as the Palace of Varieties. Many famous music hall stars of the day appeared there including Arthur Lloyd and Albert Chevalier. In 1885 Phillips hired the unknown 15 year old Marie Lloyd. In his own copy of the performance programme he wrote "Very Good. Cheap". By 1886 she was earning £100 per week. In 1940 it closed and was damaged during WWII. Acquired by the adjoining store Froy's it was demolished

in 1950. It is now the site of Kings Mall Shopping Centre.

Keith Whitehouse

CONSERVATION UPDATE - HERITAGE ITEMS

Conservation Area extensions and character profiles The Council has carried out a consultation on extensions and boundary amendments to 11 of the Borough's conservation areas, as well as draft character profiles for Colehill Gardens, King Street (East) and Old Oak & Wormholt conservation areas. In conjunction with the work on the draft conservation area character profiles, officers have been working with residents in Fulham on the designation of a new Purser's Cross Conservation Area incorporating the Victorian streets north and south of Fulham Road in the vicinity of Fulham Library.

Statutory Listing news

Gasholder No. 2, Fulham Gas Works As an update to the previous newsletter (No. 37, page 6) Historic England have upgraded the status of Gasholder No. 2 from Grade II to Grade II* and have confirmed that it is the oldest surviving gasholder in the world and a unique survival from the early pioneering days of the gas industry during the Georgian period.

Olympia Exhibition Centre Historic England are undertaking a review of the statutory list entry for Olympia Exhibition Centre, currently listed at Grade II. It is hoped that the review will provide a full assessment of the significance of the wide range of buildings on the site from different architectural periods. The HBG will be sending comments.

War Memorials Historic England have continued to add the Borough's war memorials to the statutory list as part of their project to commemorate the First World War. The latest additions include the Marshall War Memorial at St Peter's Church, St Peter's Terrace, Fulham and the war memorial in the churchyard at St Thomas of Canterbury RC Church, Rylston Road, Fulham.

Buildings at Risk news

Hope and Anchor Public House, Macbeth Street, W6 As an update to the previous newsletter (No. 37, page 7), the Planning Inspectorate dismissed the appeal in relation to a Certificate of Lawful Use for the use of the whole building as a dwelling. Planning permission will be required for the conversion of the ground floor bar areas to any other usage.

St Mary's Cemetery Mausolea, NW10 The massive restoration project to the Grade II* listed Campbell Mausoleum, grant funded by Historic England (No. 36, page 4), has now been completed. The works have saved the interior of the building from a perilous condition and the transformation is truly remarkable. Restoration works are now well under way to restore the adjacent Grade II listed Conde de Bayona Marques de Misa Mausoleum, funded in part by the HBG. When the works are complete it is hoped that a tour can be arranged with HBG members to view the interiors to both of the restored mausolea.



Former Hammersmith & West London Synagogue at 70 Brook Green, now the Chinese Church in London.

Historic synagogues The Borough's three historic synagogues have been recorded as part of a major campaign by the Foundation for Jewish Heritage to record and protect historic synagogues across Europe, launched by historian Simon Schama at the Houses of Parliament. None of the three buildings are currently in use for their original purpose but are an important reminder of the Borough's rich social history and be found at 70 Brook Green, 259 Lillie Road and 1a Poplar Grove. The inventory of historic synagogues can be viewed at: <http://www.foundationforjewishheritage.com>.

Adam O'Neill,

Principal Urban Design and Conservation Officer

We hope to present more information about these historic synagogues in a future edition - *Editor*

PLANNING MATTERS

Set out below is a précis of the planning applications the group has commented upon, since our last publication.

Fulham Cross Girls' School and Boys' School, Munster Road 2018/00136/FUL A pre-application consultation on the proposals which involved the demolition of existing stand-alone buildings and their replacement with new facilities. The proposals were very sympathetic to the listed buildings and the designs of the buildings were calm and we considered them to be very acceptable.



Dimco Building Westfield The building (pictured above) is a small brick structure on the edge of the Westfield Centre Wood Lane which once housed the first generating station for the London Underground.

Together with the Hammersmith Society, committee members attended a presentation given by Westfield. Their proposal is to bring the building back into use as an entertainment venue. The owners intend to retain the original internal and external features; any interventions would be removable. We welcome the proposal and concept. We have written in this vein, though expressing our concern regarding the practicability of fitting out the space whilst maintaining its openness, and also our worries about crowd dispersal after performances.

66 Hammersmith Road 2017/04752/FUL (adj to G Gate Olympia) We attended an early presentation of drawings and a model in isolation. At this stage the building looked interesting and quite well designed.

Now that the application has been submitted, the siting and context has become apparent. The new building would be taller than its neighbours and the line brought forward to the back of kerb line. The view from neighbouring streets is one of overpowering dominance. We have written a strong letter of objection.

Fulham Football Club New Stadium 2017/04662/FUL

The club has submitted a new application for the Riverside stand. The previous application was approved.

The current scheme is still cantilevered over the river and now has a flying roof, covering rooftop activities. The owners are proposing to hold additional functions in the undercroft which faces the Surrey bank.

We have objected in writing, citing our concern over the increased footfall on the landscape of Bishops Park, light pollution, a possible problem for sailors, and the harm to the conservation area.

Olympia Buildings The new owners are keen to make greater use of the Olympia Halls and attract a younger visitor demographic. They wish to increase the usable area by up to 50%. Their proposals include inserting a mezzanine floor in the main hall, building along Olympia Way to provide retail outlets, and to provide bars at roof level. Michael Bussell has again been invaluable in making an application to Heritage England seeking an upgrade to Grade II*.

Hammersmith Town Hall I would imagine that most members, particularly those living in Hammersmith, will have seen the current set of proposals. The main features include the addition of a two storey glass extension on the top of the old listed town hall, with a large public space in front. The modern extension on King Street would be demolished, and replaced by housing. More housing and some office space is proposed on the now vacant cinema site. A new cinema is promised on King Street. The Group, whilst generally supporting the proposals, still has concerns over some aspects of the design and has accordingly written to the Council.

Conservation Areas The Council are consulting on 15 draft revised Conservation Areas and the boundary adjustment of others. Members of the group have been actively visiting these prior to responding to the consultation.

The Mayor has issued a draft London Plan for 2018. As a group we have made comments on what is a very detailed document. We have commented on heritage aspects, design and canals, and biodiversity.

We have also written to the Fulham Palace Trust supporting their application for funding to carry out further restoration work. We are pleased to report that work on their 'Discovering the Bishops of London's Palace at Fulham' project has commenced. We look forward to seeing parts of the Palace not previously seen by the public.



'London Olympia SKY, 2016' by Darren Azgard.

Architecture awards We are delighted to learn that over the past three years five projects within the Borough have won prestigious architectural awards. The Architects' Journal Retrofit Award for the Dorsett Hotel, The RIBA London Award for the House of the Year 2015 for the Vaulted House, the Brick Development Association award for Ravenscourt House, The Architects' Journal House of the Year for 2017 for the Tin House and the Architects' Journal award for Housing Project of the Year for Paradise Gardens.

This is a great award achievement and congratulations must go to the Council's Urban Design and Conservation Team for steering these projects through the planning process; together with the developers' teams. A very high standard of design has been achieved. We welcome the emphasis given in the awards to sensitivity and respect for the buildings' locations.

Nicolas Fernley chairman



STOP PRESS

The Lyric has announced plans to refurbish their two performance spaces this summer. The 550 seat main auditorium has not been fully refurbished since the 1979 rebuild on the present site based on the original plans of Frank Matcham. The work will include plasterwork and ceiling repairs and redecoration, replacement of seats,

carpets and book rails, and the installation of new and upgraded lighting positions, new access doors and general redecoration. The main house will be closed from 23/6/18 to 5/10/18. The HBG look forward to hearing further details of the proposals.

NEWSLETTER

Lost Theatre: Lyric Theatre Hammersmith	2
The Paint Detective	3
Rowton House Hammersmith – A hotel for poor men	4
News of old and new at Old Oak Common	5
Postcard from the past	5
Conservation Update – Heritage Items	6
Planning Matters	7
Stop Press	8

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MEMBERSHIP Membership costs £10 for individuals, £15 for organisations. To join, contact the membership secretary (sheenabarbour@hotmail.co.uk) or download an application form from our website (www.hfbbg.org.uk).

The Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group works to promote, preserve, record and enhance the historic environment of the Borough.

