The Annual General Meeting 2002

The AGM was held at Freemasons’ Hall, Great Queen Street on 2 July – a veritable fortress on the exterior and monumental inside where we received a warm welcome. We had two talks which were very enlightening: there is nothing suspicious about the Freemasons who give enormous support to charitable foundations and are keen to dispel their secretive image.

The history of the site and the successive buildings thereon was of great interest and members had ample time to talk and browse. It was wonderful to hold an Annual General Meeting in a venue with so much space to explore and revel in.

AGM 2003 at the British Museum

Thanks to the good offices of our Council member Sheila O’Connell, we will be holding the 2003 AGM at the British Museum. The date is Thursday 31 July, which is rather later than usual, but we hope members can fit it into their summer schedules.

After the meeting members will be able to visit the exhibition which celebrates the 250th anniversary of the foundation of the Museum by Act of Parliament. Provisionally entitled ‘London, 1753: from Gin Lane to St James’s,’ it features Kip’s panorama which is, of course, also our publication for the year.

If you visit the British Museum DO NOT BE TEMPTED TO BUY THE KIP PANORAMA because if you are a paid-up member you will be given it at the AGM in July. If it is impossible for you to attend the AGM you may like to collect your copy of Kip from the Treasurer beforehand – this would reduce postage costs. Please telephone the Treasurer, Roger Cline, if you wish to arrange this (see the back page for his address and phone number).

That Tallis CD-ROM

Some members have been rather baffled by the CD-ROM which they received with their copy of this year’s publication, Tallis’s London Street Views. There are three potential problems.

First, some members would like to have a printed copy of the 500 page index which is on the CD-ROM, but lack the necessary computer set-up to print their own. We are therefore planning to provide copies for any member who would like one. Please be aware that this will be a cheap-and-cheerful reference document, not part of our proper publication programme. The cost will probably be between £30 and £50 including postage, depending on the number ordered. Please email the Secretary – patfrazer@yahoo.co.uk – if you would like to order a copy.

The next problem affects people who have a suitable computer but lack the Adobe Acrobat software to read the index file. Members with access to the internet can obtain a free copy of Acrobat. Go to www.adobe.com and select ‘Download Acrobat Reader’ from the Support section. On the next page click the yellow box marked ‘Get Acrobat Reader’ and then follow the simple instructions.

The most serious problem stems from our decision to provide the raw data so that members can manipulate it themselves. The index was compiled in the database package Access, which is expensive to buy and therefore not available to most members. Unfortunately, we compounded this problem by using a very recent version of Access, which cannot be read by older versions. We are working on this and hope to be able to supply the raw data in a more user-friendly form shortly. Please email the Secretary, as above, if you would like this sent to you when available.

- Patrick Frazer
Missing persons
Some members have failed to let the Hon Treasurer know their new address and yet continue to pay their subscriptions by standing order, so that we do not know where to send their correspondence. If any member reading this Newsletter knows of the whereabouts of the following limbo members, he or she is urged to let Roger Cline know.

Mr D. Stevenson, OBE, formerly of NW1, having worked for Camden Council
Mr P.D. Watkins of HM Diplomatic Service was our man in Germany after leaving Camberwell Grove
Mr D.J. Leal formerly of Lewisham
Miss S. White formerly of Chipping Ongar
Ms A. Jones formerly of Acton
Ms J.A. Allen formerly of Epsom
Mr P.R. Banbury formerly of New Caledonia Wharf, Rotherhithe

As a general rule please let the Hon Treasurer, Roger Cline, know, preferably in advance, of changes of address, including your office address in London if publications have been delivered there in the past. Paying Royal Mail to redirect letters does not work for parcels, so if you change address and fail to notify us, your LTS publication may spend most of the summer being bashed around the sorting office before being returned to give the Treasurer further headaches in tracing you.

Memo
The end of the year marks the time for paying your subscription. Unless you have paid for multiple years in advance or unless you pay by banker’s order, please send a cheque for £20 (£25 by cheque drawn on a British bank or the equivalent of $37 in foreign currency for overseas members) now, before it is forgotten. If you are not sure whether you need to pay or not, do pay now and the Treasurer will simply bin redundant cheques.

Institutional members will receive an invoice. Librarians who receive them are asked to approve them for payment and pass them to their accounts departments as soon as possible. Librarians are reminded that the publication for 2003 will be No. 161, Kp’s ‘View of London, Westminster and St James’s Park’. Volume xxviii of The London Topographical Record was published in 2001 and the next volume is not expected until at least 2005.

The Corporation of London Cemetery
by Anthony and Jennifer Moss

Every time there is a death there is a problem – what to do with the body? Until the late nineteenth century when cremation began to be generally accepted, disposal invariably meant burial. While people lived in small, low-density communities there was plenty of space for burials in churchyards (in addition to interment within the churches), but once cities developed there were difficulties.

Over the centuries many thousands were buried in churchyards in the City – over 60,000 in 1665, the year of the Great Plague. Samuel Pepys was most concerned at the 326 burials in the churchyard of St Olave Hart Street between July and December 1665. He hoped that lime would be spread all over the churchyard to reduce the risk of infection and he was relieved when snow in February hid the newly disturbed earth!

The situation over burials in London deteriorated further in the eighteenth century. The tiny churchyard of Trinity-in-the-Minories had to be cleared of remains in both 1689 and 1763, although it is not known what happened to the bones.

In 1853 there was an inspection of the churchyard at St Andrew’s Holborn, where human bones were found protruding from the earth, together with decaying wood. The soil was saturated with decaying organic matter, and the ground level had risen several feet as a result of the thousands of burials, some coffins being only 3 or 4 feet down. The Secretary of State ordered closure, but burials continued at a rate of more than twenty each week – and there was a school in the middle of the churchyard!

Clearly there was a problem that had to be addressed.

The establishment of the Cemetery
Responsibility for dealing with burials in the City lay with the Commissioners of Sewers. For many years they had used the powers contained in various Acts of Parliament to try and tackle the problems in the City graveyards. In 1853 William Haywood, Surveyor to the Commissioners, stated in a report that there was unanimity on the need to abolish burials in the centres of crowded cities. His report, and one in the same year from the Medical Officer of Health, Dr Lethaby, specified the basis on which to proceed.

A site for a cemetery should be on gravelly soil (to assist decomposition) some miles beyond the built-up area. This was because London was expected to grow. If the rate of growth of 2% per annum (experienced between 1841 and 1851) continued this could result in the population of the whole metropolis doubling by 1889 to nearly 5 million. By 1853 the built-up area surrounded nearly all the other major cemeteries.
It was recognized that buildings would be needed for homes for resident staff, for visitor services and so on. There should be planting to divide burial areas and make the whole cemetery attractive environmentally (as we would now say). A total site area of 100 acres would be sufficient.

In the event, Common Council agreed to purchase about 200 acres of land from Lord Wellesley at Little Ilford. This large area was intended to accommodate City burials and those from parishes east of the City which were also short of burial space. It was the site of the old manor of Aldersbrook and the total cost, including buying out the leaseholder and tenant, came to £30,271. The site was bounded on three sides by Wanstead Park and open country, and on the fourth side by the Eastern Counties Railway, near today's Manor Park station.

William Haywood was responsible for designing the layout of the cemetery. In July 1854 contracts were agreed for enclosing the first 98 acres and building the main outlet drains, and in the following December for the Episcopal and Dissenters’ chapels, the entrance archways, the porter’s lodge, superintendent’s house, drainage system and preparatory work on the roads. The contracts for the catacomb (on the site of the drained lake) and the roads were finalized in April 1855. In the autumn of that year planting started. In addition the mortuary chambers and waiting rooms had to be planned, together with the railway sidings, arrival platform and entrance, and possibly stables as well as hearse sheds, gardeners’ sheds, carpenters’ sheds (the proposed railway station did not materialize).

The construction work was completed on schedule but there were ecclesiastical complications. The consecration of the burial areas could not proceed without a financial arrangement with the clergy and vestries of the 108 parishes of the City on their claims under the Metropolitan Burials Act 1852. The Bishop would not perform the consecration until the matter was resolved. As a result of this impasse (worthy of Anthony Trollope!) the first burials took place in June 1856 on unconsecrated land. When the dispute was finally resolved the consecration ceremony took place on 16 November 1857, with the first Church of England burial three days later.

**Developments**

The Cemetery proved popular immediately. By 1866 the annual total of burials had reached 7,604, of which well over half must have come from outside the City (since this figure was more than twice the expected City death rate). However, by the end of the nineteenth century burials at the Cemetery had fallen to something over 4,000 each year; today the total is about 1,000 in addition to some 4,000 cremations. Of the burials today almost half involve re-opening existing graves and over 500 new grave spaces are needed each year. Since the Cemetery opened there have been just short of half a million burials in 147,200 graves and some 230,000 cremations.

Originally graves were either ‘traditional’ and purchased, or ‘pauper’. In 1954, following experience with war cemeteries, a new category of ‘lawn’ graves was introduced, with headstones only. These have proved very popular, the headstone being less costly than a traditional grave and maintenance simpler. Many areas of pauper graves have now been cleared for reuse.

In 1902 an Act was passed allowing Burial Boards to provide and maintain crematoria, and the City’s Burial Board immediately proceeded with the construction of a crematorium at the Cemetery. The foundation stone was laid by the Chairman of the Sanitary Committee on 14 October 1903. The crematorium furnace was tested thoroughly before the opening on 24 October 1904 and the first cremation took place on 18 March 1905. The practice took time to be accepted and there were only sixty-nine cremations over the period 1905-1908. This was the first municipal crematorium in London, although the private crematorium at Golders Green preceded it.

By 1950 a second cremation chamber had been added to the crematorium and there

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The entrance gateway to the Corporation of London Cemetery, Aldersbrook Road, Manor Park, London E12.
were plans for a further two. As demand increased the second crematorium was built in 1973 (opened by the Lord Mayor and dedicated by the Bishop of Barking). This includes two multi-denominational chapels and six cremators.

We all remember that Karl Marx was buried in Highgate Cemetery. The City of London Cemetery does not, on the whole, accommodate such well-known people. It is, however, the last resting place of Mrs Everest, Winston Churchill’s beloved nanny, two policemen killed in the Sidney Street siege of 1910, the scientist Robert Hooke (re-interred from the City), and Dame Anna Neagle and her husband Sir Herbert Wilcox.

**Re-interments from City churchyards**

Along the central avenue of the Cemetery and nearby, large monuments mark where bodies were re-interred from City churchyards which were cleared in the late nineteenth century. The inscription on the memorial relating to St Antholin’s church explains: ‘The changes in the population in the City parishes during two centuries, rendering it impossible to provide congregations to worship in the church, it was taken down AD 1875 under the Act of Parliament for uniting City benefices and removing churches where not needed’.

A series of Acts (1855-88) finally ended burials in City churchyards and by the time of the 1875 Ordnance Survey map many, such as St Helen’s Bishopsgate and St Botolph’s Aldgate, were used as public gardens. The garden of Postman’s Park, at nearly half an acre, is the largest, and brought together the obsolete graveyards of St Botolph without Aldersgate, Christ Church and St Leonard Foster.

The largest monument at the Cemetery relates to St Andrew’s, Holborn and St Sepulchre’s. The construction of Holborn Viaduct necessitated the demolition of St Andrew’s Rectory and the parish court house. 2,736 coffins and 774 cases of some 10,000 human remains were re-interred at the Cemetery between 1866 and 1876. This had to be carried out to the satisfaction of the Bishop of London, and the cost to the Corporation was £12,547.

Recently it was necessary to clear the crypt of St Andrew’s. Over a period of eight months exhumation specialists and archaeologists from the Museum of London were involved in removing coffins from the crypt, which have been transferred to the Cemetery and reburied near the St Andrew’s Memorial. It was expected that 600-900 coffins would be found but the final total was 3,007 - two-thirds of which were transferred to the Cemetery in coffins, the rest in bags. An extremely rare example of an anthropoid lead coffin was found, believed to date from the seventeenth century. It is seven feet long, and displays the facial features of the deceased, but there are few other clues as to his or her identity.

The Corporation waived the fees for re-interring the coffins and the Church is funding a refurbishment of the Memorial. The start of the work in November 2001 was marked by the Bishop of London taking part in a Requiem Mass and the Bishop of Stepney conducted a memorial service at the site of the re-interment in July 2002.

Some of the coffins date from the fourteenth century and they include the more important members of the St Andrew’s congregation such as Sir Edward Coke, Attorney General to Elizabeth I, and his estranged, and somewhat notorious wife, Lady Elizabeth Hatton; Daniel Purcell, the church organist and younger brother of Henry Purcell; and Henry Sacheverell, a Rector who in 1709 had been put on trial in Westminster Hall for seditious preaching.

**The Cemetery today**

At 200 acres it is by far the largest cemetery in London and one of the largest municipal cemeteries in Europe. It serves more than one and a half million people living in the City, seven London boroughs and Epping Forest district. It caters for about 35% of all deaths in these areas. About 300 a year come from further afield (anyone who wishes can be buried or cremated here). There are seven miles of road, two chapels in the Gothic style, a crescent-shaped catacomb and two crematoria.

The lawns, garden and woodland areas are maintained to a high standard. The species used in the tree planting are sufficiently interesting for there to be a number of designated ‘tree trails’ around the Cemetery, and local people regard it as a valued recreational area. The Cemetery functions as a nature reserve, a haven for wildlife, and a bird
migration route. Over the past twenty-five years a wildlife group has recorded some 190 species of fungus.

Graves can be of various types: unmarked in woodland, in lawns with headstones only, in ‘traditional’ graves, and in vaults. Coffins may be placed in cells in the catacomb, and identified by memorial tablets. 40% of cremated remains are removed, mostly by relatives; 30% are placed in the 32 acres of memorial gardens established on the site of earlier public graves. The first of these was laid out in the 1930s and plants or seats can be dedicated and the deceased commemorated with a plaque. Some of the other remains are strewn and not marked, and others are placed in niches in a columbarium. The first columbarium was created in the 1930s in the west wing of the catacomb, and it proved so popular that a second was created in the 1990s in the east wing, with a new chapel which houses books of remembrance.

The high standard of landscaping and maintenance of the Cemetery is such that it was named ‘Cemetery of the Year’ in 2001. In that year it also became the first cemetery to receive the prestigious Green Flag Award for its value as an open space.

Acknowledgements
We are most grateful to Dr Hussein, Director of the Cemetery, to Xa Naylor, and to James Sewell, the City Archivist, for their help in the preparation of this article. Photographs are reproduced by permission of the City of London Cemetery.
News and Notes

Looking down on the City

Hopefully this Newsletter will reach you in time for you to see ‘Looking down on the City of London’ at the Guildhall Art Gallery, Guildhall Yard, EC2. The artist Michael Heindorff is showing thirty-nine views of the City, drawn from the tops of churches such as St Mary-le-Bow and St Lawrence Jewry. These beautifully executed pencil drawings have strong, sharp lines and are full of action. In addition to their artistic merit they comprise a historical record of the City in 2002, showing the apparently chaotic developments at Paternoster Square next to St Paul’s, and in Gresham Street near Guildhall. There are also a few views from high windows, again looking down on the City streets, and others of the river. The drawings can be purchased.

The Guildhall Art Gallery is also showing prints and paintings of panoramic views of London lent by the Guildhall Library, and from the Gallery’s own collection there is a special selection for the Queen’s jubilee showing paintings of some of her many appearances at Guildhall over the years. The Art Gallery is open 10am-5pm Monday to Saturday, 12-4pm on Sunday. Entrance is free all day Friday and after 3.30pm on other days. The Heindorff exhibition runs until 17 November.

Shopping

The Local History Conference organized by LAMAS takes place at the Museum of London on 16 November and the theme is – broadly – shopping in London. John Schofield will kick off with his lecture on ‘Shops and Trading Buildings in London 1200-1700’ and other speakers will talk about ‘Shopping for Luxuries in eighteenth century London and the development of the West End’, ‘Knightsbridge Neighbours’ (Harrods and Harvey Nichols). The attractive programme of eight lectures means that booking is essential. Hurry! Tickets for the day (10am-5pm) are £5 (tea, no lunch) from LAMAS Local History Conference, 36 Church Road, West Drayton, Middlesex UB7 7PX, with a cheque payable to London and Middlesex Archaeological Society, and s.a.e. please.

The London Book Trade

Subtitled ‘Topographies of Print in the Metropolis from the sixteenth century’, this conference will take place on the weekend of 30 November -1 December. It will explore the link between printing and bookselling and the lay-out of London. Why were there so many booksellers in St Paul’s churchyard in the sixteenth century? Where was the print trade based? Seven speakers are preparing to talk on various aspects of the book and print trade of London and there will be visits to the library of St Paul’s, Johnson’s house and St Paul’s churchyard. The fee of £70 includes coffee, tea and buffet lunch on both days. To book a place please contact Michael Harris on 020 7631 6680. The venue is St Bride’s Printing Library.

Wandsworth in 1787 (opposite page)

A plan of Wandsworth parish made by John Corris in 1787 (originally in Earl Spencer’s archives and now in the British Library) has been unearthed and researched by Dorian Gerhold and published by the Wandsworth Historical Society. The reproduction of the map (18 by 16 inches) is a little indistinct: the paper seems to have mellowed to a pale beige, but the wording and the numbers of the plots (1-197) can be made out and by referring to the accompanying book all is revealed. Using the original ‘book of reference’ Gerhold has been able to list the proprietor, tenant, local name and size of each parcel of land. This is as fascinating to anyone interested in Wandsworth in 2002 as it was to Earl Spencer in 1787 – he needed to clarify his holdings in the area and Corris obeyed his instructions efficiently. Most of the dwellings clustered around the High Street, which crossed the Wandle River on a bridge. Mills, dyeing works, Garratt Lane (now the A217), East and West Hill are easily located. The osier beds at the mouth of the River supplied willow shoots for basket makers, and nearby is the Island of Providence, created when a more direct outlet was cut for the Wandle to enter the Thames. Another area, with the enticing name of Point Pleasant was known for its forges – apparently the iron came from Wimbledon. Almshouses, inns, Drunken Bridge, the Garratt gunpowder mills, calico-printing works, a menagerie and to the south, farms and fields made up a parish populated by some 4,500 people.

Gerhold has compiled a similar analysis of Roehampton in 1617, based on a written survey by Ralph Treswell (son of the famous London surveyor). It seems that no map survives to accompany the 1617 document, so Gerhold has produced a reconstruction and other diagrams to enable the boundaries, landholders’ names and buildings to be located today. A major influence on the development of Roehampton was a Huguenot, David Papillon, who purchased land there in the 1620s. The Earl of Portland was another who left his mark, as did Charles I – indeed the landscape was shaped by grandees keen to avail themselves of large houses and parkland.

Roehampton in 1617: the village surveyed (2001) is £5.75 including p&p. John Corris’s map of Wandsworth in 1787 is £4 with p&p from Wandsworth Historical Society, 31 Hill Court, Putney Hill, London SW15 6BB. The reproduction of Corris’s map (1787) costs £5 from Wandsworth Museum, 11 Garratt Lane, Wandsworth.

London before London

This is the name of the new prehistory gallery at the Museum of London which takes visitors back through almost half a million years of Thames valley history. The redesigned gallery shows objects from recent excavations and a huge wall display of the Thames and the treasures it has yielded. Drift back in time...
Go forward to 1861 and find, in the World City Gallery, a recently acquired painting of the Houses of Parliament from Millbank by David Roberts. This glorious view of the Palace of Westminster highlights the contrast between the looming, majestic Victoria Tower and the rural Millbank riverside littered with barges. The painting was exhibited at the Royal Academy in 1862 and attracted critical acclaim.

Entry to the Museum is now free.

Maps and Society
Members are most welcome to attend the Maps and Society lectures at the Warburg Institute, Woburn Square, London WC1 at 5pm on Thursdays. The programme for the forthcoming session has an international feel with talks on mapping in colonial North America (5 December 2002), a Tsarist map of France (23 January 2003), the itinerary map of Matthew Paris (29 May 2003), Geddy’s map of St Andrews (20 March 2003). Enquiries to 020 8346 5112 or see http://ihr.sas.ac.uk/maps/warburgprog.html.

Folding London
An exhibition of over 500 folding maps of London from a private collection can be seen at the Shapero Gallery, 24 Bruton Street, London W1 from 8-29 November. Bernard Shapero is selling what is probably the largest collection of folding maps in the world. You can buy the lot for £300,000, you can buy the book, London: A Cartographic History 1746-1950, 200 Years of Folding Maps by Lucinda Boyle with an introduction by Ralph Hyde at £95, or you can merely go and have a look at the display in the Shapero Gallery. For further information please phone 020 74491 0330.

The story of the Crystal Palace and the Great Exhibition of 1851 is a familiar one, but although this book has that as its eye-catching title, its real content is revealed by the secondary title, A History of the Royal Commission for the Exhibition of 1851. The man-in-the-street (but not a Top.Soc. member) may well be unaware that the Commission presided over by Prince Albert was given new life after the exhibition itself closed, in order to devote its profits to the work of improving industrial design and promoting international co-operation. With £150,000 tucked away (though nearly half this sum represented the guarantee fund subscribed by provincial cities and never returned), the Commission had a serious endowment. It was Prince Albert himself who in August 1851 suggested that it be used to buy 25 or 30 acres in Kensington Gore, a largely undeveloped area nearly opposite the site of the Crystal Palace in Hyde Park. Hermione Hobhouse’s basic theme is the use that the Commissioners made of the estate they purchased.

First, however, she explains the background briefly: the need to improve British industrial design, the idea of an exhibition, borrowed from the French, but widened to embrace all nations, the important role of the Society of Arts (of which Prince Albert had become President in 1843) in bringing together the promoters of the Great Exhibition and gathering subscriptions and executing the groundwork generally. It seems to have been the Prince who suggested siting the exhibition in Hyde Park, on vacant ground between Rotten Row and the Kensington road. His insistence on the need to associate the government with the project was achieved by his chairing a Royal Commission that included ministers, politicians, bankers, and representatives of the arts and sciences. This Commission, having endorsed the choice of site, invited a competition for ‘suggestions’ for the buildings required: some 250 flooded in providing much illumination but no solution for the problem: a cheap temporary building that would provide adequate display and circulation space to be built in less than a year. A design formulated by the Commission’s building committee excited public hostility, so that Paxton’s proposal for a giant greenhouse rescued the whole project.

Hobhouse points out that the final exhibition building, covering 19 acres, was not all Paxton, but the result of a remarkable effort of teamwork: engineering expertise was contributed by the contractors Fox and Henderson and the glass manufacturer Chance, as well as the chairman of the building committee, William Cubitt (1785-1861), himself a leading engineer, who supervised and modified the construction, and C.H. Wild, an assistant of Robert Stephenson. Owen Jones designed the decoration, with some input from Charles Barry, who also proposed arching the vault of Fox’s transept in order to embrace the great elm trees. Fox devised a clever glazing wagon that carried workmen over the immense ridge and furrow roof. The courage of the contractors must also be noticed in executing some £50,000 worth of work before any contract was signed (the Royal Commission originally lacking power to conclude contracts). Colour plates of the exhibition’s interior, from the Elton Collection, Ironbridge Gorge Museum, are a delight to linger over.

The Society of Arts had contemplated a decennial series of exhibitions, and any profits had been seen as seed-corn. But the financial success in 1851 suggested that exhibitions would be self-financing. So Prince Albert proposed that four permanent teaching institutions might be established, corresponding to the four main classes of exhibits — raw materials, machinery, manufactures, and art — supported by a National Gallery removed from Trafalgar Square, and a gathering of the learned institutions, some of which were about to be expelled from the rooms at Somerset House for the benefit of the Inland Revenue. Kensington Gore and Brompton (‘South Kensington’ was a later invention of Henry Cole’s) offered a site of suitable extent at moderate price. A supplemental charter in December 1851 perpetuated the Commission and gave it the necessary powers to pursue the Prince’s objectives, and he campaigned with politicians and savants to gather the various institutions. Gladstone at the Exchequer was persuaded to put up half the money to purchase about 150 acres on condition that half was to be used for government-funded institutions connected with art and science. With the help of Kelk, one of the leading developers of the area, the Gore House estate was secured for £2,790 an acre, while Thomas Cubitt was the agent for buying another important estate (negotiations that are recounted in detail in The Survey of London vol xxxviii,1975). The Commissioners, however, were unable to obtain Lord Auckland’s Eden Lodge (a copyhold) because, we are told, he did not wish to disturb his sister, Emily Eden, the life tenant – an appropriate sentiment for a peer who was also a bishop. That was later rebuilt by Norman Shaw as Lowther Lodge, subsequently becoming the Royal Geographical Society’s headquarters, thus bringing to South Kensington one of the learned societies. Prince Albert’s vision of bringing together all the learned societies was however never to be realized. Hobhouse quotes Lord John Russell on the subject: “the old gentlemen of our scientific societies will be very apt to grumble if they are put out of their way for their evening meetings”; but she also notes Prince Albert’s complaint of the Royal Society’s
“lethargic state and exclusive principles”, which may scarcely have encouraged such a move.

The Prince’s desire to see the National Gallery moved to South Kensington was also thwarted. Hobhouse sketches the struggles on this issue but they are tangential to her theme, which is the work of the Commission in improving facilities and opportunities for industrial education, in both its artistic and scientific aspects. One such was the Government School of Design which eventually blossomed as the Royal College of Art, still at South Kensington and currently contemplating the extension of its premises, last reconstructed by Cadbury-Brown and Casson in the 1960s. Another aspect was the museum of industrial design, opened as the South Kensington Museum in June 1857, a project driven forward for many years by the irresistible Henry Cole. The ill-defined partnership with the government terminated in 1858 when the site of the museum passed to the government. On the other side of Exhibition Road the government finally (after much argument among the scientists) located the British Museum’s natural history departments, so that the famous giraffes were despatched from the head of the stairs at Bloomsbury. The science elements came to be concentrated in this western sector, so that when the South Kensington Museum, completed by Aston Webb thanks to Makers-Douglass’s ingenious financial arrangements, was opened in 1902 as the Victoria and Albert Museum its was devoted wholly to the arts. The corresponding Science Museum was not opened until 1928. A commitment to support its extension financially was an obligation from which the Commissioners escaped only in 1935 in the interests of ‘improving the educational service of the Empire’ through scholarships and bursaries.

As well as street frontages that could be developed for housing, thereby providing a steady income in ground rents, the Commission had been left in 1858 with a large area between the roads, which Prince Albert envisaged as the centrepiece of the estate. He secured a tenant in the Horticultural Society, of which he had become President in 1858. The Society was granted a thirty-one-year lease in 1859, undertaking to spend £50,000 on laying out gardens, while the Commission undertook to spend a similar sum, surrounding the gardens with arcades, built in various Italianate styles by architects Francis Fowke and Sydney Smirke. Hobhouse describes the result as “one of the grandest formal gardens ever created in England”, depicted in colour plate xiv. Unfortunately the gardens were not a financial success, and in 1889 they were dismantled so that they might be built over, thereby destroying the north-south axis on which both the Albert Hall and the Albert Memorial were laid out; “a major loss to the planning of the South Kensington estate, and one which no subsequent management has succeeded in rectifying” (p.230). The two bandstands, bought by the new London County Council, were re-erected in Southwark Park and at Peckham Rye.

Prince Consort Road was formed across the gardens site, with blocks of flats planned to the north (only that on the north-east was built), and to the south new buildings for the Royal College of Music. Further south, some 8 acres were granted for the Imperial Institute, that unloved offspring of Victoria’s Golden Jubilee, an extravagant erection by Colcutt that eventually supplied offices for London University. Opposite, to the north of the Natural History Museum, Aston Webb’s fine Royal College of Science was built of corresponding length. These splendid buildings were swept away (save for Colcutt’s fine tower), along with the eastern and western galleries attached to the Horticultural Society’s arcades, in the 1960s development of Imperial College, the great scientific institution that had absorbed all the technical and scientific institutions of the area except the museums. The Commission’s topographical role was fairly minor by this time. The College sometimes did not bother to “obtain its landlord’s consent for further demolitions”. These topographical developments are illustrated in a series of plans in the text reproduced from the Commission’s Reports, but the page size is too small and the reproduction often too indistinct; one longs for a large fold-out on suitable paper. But Athlone Press is to be commended for its typographical accuracy, too rare these days.

To revert to the Albertine era, the Society of Art’s enthusiasm for decennial international exhibitions was satisfied in 1862 under the aegis of a new Royal Commission, though several members were also 1851 Commissioners and as such landlords of the vast new exhibition building by Fowke that fronted the Cromwell Road and ran back to the gardens. Ministers’ attempts to retain this building as a museum caused a parliamentary storm, and it was largely demolished, so providing the site for the Natural History Museum. The 1862 Exhibition, which suffered from Prince Albert’s death in December 1861, failed to realize the expected profit. The national memorial to Prince Albert in Hyde Park (the subject of a recent book reviewed in Newsletter No.54) was of course outside the Commission’s remit; but with the Royal Albert Hall, “a personal objective of Henry Cole”, it was intricately connected. The Prince had wanted a hall for music, and this was seen at first as part of his national memorial, but when it became clear that the subscriptions would not be adequate, it was set aside. Cole saw it as a venue for the exhibitions the Society of Arts was keen to hold annually, as well as a meeting-place for learned societies. The Commission agreed to provide a site and contribute to the building costs, receiving in return 800 seats and participating in the management, a regime that lasted until 1908. It was closely linked also with the gardens, the Horticultural Society’s splendid conservatory forming its southern porch until its demolition in 1889.

Hobhouse weaves an intricate tapestry of all these various threads, the topographical and educational woof threaded through with the financial
and administrative web of the Commission's development - though it is not always easy to follow a particular strand. For the topographical student, the design has already been drawn in detail by the Survey of London's volume on The Museums Area of South Kensington and Westminster (1975). Hobhouse enriches this with her examination of how and why the Commissioners responded to the problems that faced them. That their role as landlords (and landlords too often lacking the requisite financial resources) was seen essentially as subordinate to their duty to foster art and science education, and collaborate with government policies, goes some way to enable us to understand why Prince Albert's noble vision has disintegrated into the architectural muddle of the present day. Albertopolis has dissolved into scholarships, and bricks and mortar have been transmuted into the less tangible bonds of an international brotherhood of scientists.

- M.H.Port

The Great War, Memory and Ritual

This detailed study concentrates on the small geographical area of the City, East London and what was then metropolitan Essex. As the author explains, although small in area it was socially and economically diverse, and thus it is possible to draw far wider conclusions about the attempts to orchestrate remembrance during and after the Great War.

The author divides his text into two broad sections: 'The Iconography of War Memorials' and 'Armistice Day, 1919-1939'. These are supplemented by an extensive bibliography and a detailed list of memorials. The latter includes war shrines, which are often overlooked as they were temporary, although became widely revered and led to a desire for more permanent memorials to the war dead. Connelly has made an exhaustive study of local sources, principally faculty papers, parish magazines and local newspapers, to give a detailed and highly informative picture of the moves to decide on appropriate forms of commemoration, gather funds, and carry out the proposals. It is an intriguing and absorbing story.

Apart from the familiar public monuments, the study area includes a unique memorial in Poplar to eighteen children of Upper North Street School who were killed in a Zeppelin raid in June 1917. Also there was the example of local hero Jack Cornwell, killed at the Battle of Jutland in May 1916, who became the youngest ever recipient of the Victoria Cross. Boys from his school at Manor Park raised funds for a memorial plaque and postcards of his portrait by Frank Salisbury were distributed to local children. He was "eulogised as a hero of and from the people... and an example to children throughout the Empire". Even local scout troops were renamed in his honour.

Connelly devotes a chapter to other forms of memorial, most notably the building of hospitals, which became a matter of rivalry between neighbouring boroughs. The often tortuous arrangements for fund raising - a "byzantine puzzle" is how he describes what happened in Romford - provide a fascinating insight into local administration and politics.

The second section of the book gives a new and revealing awareness of the social history of commemoration as views changed through the inter-war period and Armistice Day evolved into Remembrance Sunday. The role of the newly-erected war memorials in these ceremonies is another aspect of Connelly's study which has rarely been investigated before and certainly not in such depth or in such readable form.

- Stephen Croad

Railways of Camden

A useful book for students of the area which includes the main line termini of Kings Cross, St Pancras and Euston, the cross-London lines to Richmond, Barking and North Woolwich and many Underground lines, with good reproductions of photographs and engravings. With only fifty-two pages, the descriptions cannot be very long, but there is a reading list of books and periodicals for further study. The only mistake this reviewer found was in the list of stations accompanying a map of the system in 1914 - the map is correct but the Central London Railway list should not include Holborn or say that British Museum is closed (these changes occurred in 1939).

Postal orders for the book can be sent to the LTS Treasurer who wrote the preceding paragraph - but rest assured his sales enthusiasm has not influenced his critical faculties!

- Roger Cline
Brief Book Notices

Mercator: the man who mapped the planet by Nicholas Crane, Weidenfeld and Nicolson £20 is a biography of Gerhardus Mercator who made a large and detailed map of the British Isles in 1564 and produced 'A New Geography of the Whole World' in 1594. Famous for transferring three dimensions into two, as in the Mercator Projection, Mercator himself led a difficult life at a turbulent time in the Low Countries. Good Christmas present for map fiends, with interesting biography thrown in.

The map that changed the world by Simon Winchester, paperback £6.99. The map that changed the world was William Smith's geological map of 1815, 'Strata Smith', as he was nicknamed, became fascinated by stones and fossils as a small boy when he scoured the fields of Oxfordshire for the 'pound stones' dairymaids used to weigh butter. He produced his circular map of the geology around Bath in 1799 -- technically the oldest of all true geological maps -- and his famous map in 1815 (it was based on John Cary's New and Correct Atlas of England and Wales, 1794). Not as technical as it sounds, this is a good read.

Moreover, visitors are invited to view the original, enormous geological map of 1815, taking in a portrait of Smith and other items of interest at the Geological Society, Burlington House, Piccadilly. Tours, conducted by Dr Ted Nield, take place on Mondays and Fridays at 3pm and last about forty minutes. The tour is free but a donation to the William Smith map restoration fund is welcome, and it may be wise to check on the day by e-mailing ted.nield@geolsoc.org.uk or phone the Geological Society on 020 7434 9944.

Under Hackney. The Archaeological Story by Keith Sugden and Kieron Taylor is more than archaeology. In booklet form, with plenty of illustrations it presents the history of Hackney from prehistory to 2003. Added to which it includes a reading list, places to visit and other useful information. A stocking-filler for Hackneyites. £6.45 including p&p from Hackney Archives, De Beauvoir Road, London N1 5SQ, cheques payable to London Borough of Hackney.

The seventeenth edition of the Blue Guide to London was published by A. and C. Black earlier this year at £15.99. This well-known (and rightly so) guidebook to London has been re-written by Roger Woodley who is especially interested in art and architecture. To supplement his exhaustive survey of what there is to see in London, Woodley chooses his personal most loved and most loathed architecture, the delights and dismays of the capital. The colour photographs feature some unexpected treats such as the Horniman Museum in Forest Hill, the new City Hall near Tower Bridge and "first class engineering in completely the wrong place" -- the London Eye.

The programme for the opening of Harringay Arena, 1936. From the Harringay Historical Society's The Story of Harringay Stadium & Arena

Hornsey Historical Society's booklet on The Story of Harringay Stadium & Arena by Mike Ticher is available at £4.55 including p&p from The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, London N8 7EL. From the 1920s Harringay was associated with greyhound racing and boxing at the Stadium and Arena. The man who put Harringay on the sporting map was General Alfred Critchley, sports promoter par excellence, a restless, dominant, impatient man who got things done. What enterprise and what short-lived glory: neither the Stadium nor the Arena fulfilled their potential and neither has survived. At least we have a record.

P.S.

The Newsletter editor welcomes news, views and articles. The Newsletter needs to be fed!
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