
SOCIETY NEWS



THE BULLETIN OF THE ENFIELD ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

June 1998

No.149

CONTENTS

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Our winter lecture programme will commence on September 18th. Details will appear in the next bulletin.

Sunday 5th July – event.
Millfield House and Air Raid Shelter – Open Day.

MEETING REPORTS

A Tale of Two Provinces: Greeks and Romans in Ancient Libya.

The Great Fire & Great Plague of London 1665/6

Annual General Meeting and reports of Society Activities during 1997.

REPORT OF THE 35TH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGISTS

MILLFIELD HOUSE, EDMONTON: ITS HISTORY AND ARCHITECTURE.

OBITUARY: Alan Dumayne

MISCELLANY

Society News is published quarterly in March, June, September and December and is free to members. The Hon.Editor, to whom all correspondence and articles for publication should

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The statements and opinions of contributors to this newsletter do not necessarily reflect the opinions of the editor.

TWO

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

We now break for the summer recess and resume of lecture programme on September 18th with a lecture “The King Arthur Cross” by Geoffrey Gillam, details of which will appear in the next bulletin.

BUT.....DO NOT MISS.....

Sunday 5 th July	Millfield House and Air Raid Shelter 11.00am to 5.00pm	Open Day Admission Free
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Millfield House was built in the 18th century and occupied as a private house until 1849 when it was purchased by the Guardians of the Poor of the Strand Union for use as a school. The school closed in 1913 and, following the outbreak of the First World War, Belgian refugees were accommodated there. In 1917 the buildings were converted for use as a hospital (St.David’s) for epileptics which continued until 1971 when the patients were transferred elsewhere. The house was then carefully restored and became an arts centre for the London Borough of Enfield. This open day will be an opportunity for visitors to explore house and to look at the exhibits arranged by various local societies and organisations.

At the same time the nearby air raid shelter will also be open to visitors when, at about thirty minute intervals, small groups will again be able to descend into this large communal shelter. They will hear a short talk about the second World War and its affects on Edmonton and take part in an “air raid experience” when sound effects will remind many people, and make others aware, of the background against which people lived during the blitz.

GRG.

MEETING REPORTS

A TALE OF TWO PROVINCES: GREEKS
AND ROMANS IN ANCIENT LIBYA

Ian Jones

Friday 16th January

Most of Libya consists of the Sahara Desert with only a narrow fertile strip of land bordering the Mediterranean. This coastal strip is further divided by desert into Cyrenaica in the east and Tripolitania in the west. Little is known about the early prehistory of the country but Phoenician traders were active there in the 9th century

BC. Greek occupation began in Cyrene from 631BC with Punic settlement in Tripolitania and

both areas eventually became part of Roman Africa – Cyrene in the 4th century BC and Tripolitania after the defeat of Carthage in 146 BC.

The speaker took us on an extended tour of the country looking at, amongst other places on the way, some of the surviving remains of the towns of Appollonia, the port of Cyrene with its

THREE

odeon, forum, baths and other buildings and Tripoli which still displays in its remains much of the luxuriant lifestyle of its Roman occupants.

Although these and other sites contain much of interest they are all outshone by the splendid surviving remains of Leptis Magna, a town so well preserved that from a distance it appears to have been only recently abandoned – in spite of the extensive removal of materials for buildings in Europe from the 17th century onwards. Some excavation has taken place there but much of the town remains buried and awaiting exploration, as in the case with many other sites in Libya. Development of the town began with the Phoenicians but the Roman emperor Septimius Severus was born there and when he came to power in 193 AD he ordered a huge expansion of the town – amongst the triumphal arches to be seen is one to Severus himself erected in 203 AD. We were shown slides of the substantial remains of the harbour with rows of mooring stones where ships were tied while cargoes were unloaded – where the waves of the Mediterranean once lapped against the quaysides there is now only sand. Elsewhere we saw the forum (market place) and the basilica (law courts and administrative centre). The streets are flanked with houses, temples, theatres, an amphitheatre, circus, baths and other public buildings. As the speaker asked: “where did the large amount of fuel required for the baths alone come from?”

The economy of the province was based on grain and olive oil, large quantities of which were supplied to Rome. Large numbers of wild animals were also provided for the arena. There was extensive urban development during the first two centuries AD, after which a gradual decline set in and in 429 AD the province was overrun by the Vandals. A century later it was retaken by forces from the eastern Roman Empire but they were unable to hold it for long and in 647 AD the invading Arabs conquered the whole area.

This was a deservedly well-attended lecture and members and friends present were most appreciative of the care taken by Ian in presenting his well-illustrated lecture.

THE GREAT PLAGUE AND THE GREAT FIRE OF LONDON 1665-66

Ian K Jones

Friday 20th February

Due to the illness of Jennie Lee Cobban, our advertised speaker for the evening, Ian Jones, Society Treasurer, stood in at very short notice and provided, in his customary fashion, a fascinating and intriguing lecture on a subject which, I at least, thought I knew all about. I was soon to discover how little I really knew!

Our knowledge of the geography and demography of London in the seventeenth century depends entirely upon the fortunate survival of many contemporary prints and documents and the unique and fascinating Diary of Samuel Pepys which gives a quite astonishingly detailed record of daily events in the city at this time. Ian's lecture was illustrated by his own excellent slides of some of these prints (especially the series by Hollar which show the city from the south side of the Thames both before and after the Great Fire) and of many original documents which detail the mortality figures from London parishes during the plague.

However, to start at the beginning, it was explained that the Great Plague of 1665 was merely a continuation of the outbreaks of Bubonic and Pneumonic Plagues which had affected so much of Britain and Europe since its first appearance in 1349 when it was referred to as the Black Death. From that time on there were regular outbreaks of varying seriousness - indeed,

occurrences in 1603 and 1625 led to the belief that royal coronations had some connection with the disease! Of course, at that time there was no knowledge of the cause or of the transmission of the infection and there was equally no cure - only isolation of infected persons could minimise the spread of the disease. It was not until the nineteenth century that it was established that the disease was spread by the fleas of the Black Rat (Bubonic form) or by

FOUR

breath-transmitted bacilli (Pneumonic form). Death from either form of the disease was certain within three to five days and often occurred before any symptoms were obvious.

In early 1665 an outbreak of the disease began in the St.Giles parish but was not taken seriously by the City authorities at that stage. As the year progressed it was soon obvious that a major epidemic was present and the death rate grew rapidly month by month until a peak was reached in September when the mortality figure was 30,000. Some of the slides showed the original mortality returns from the wards of the City of London and made macabre reading, not just because of the thousands dying weekly from the plague but because of the other major, regular causes of death such as the encompassing heading "teeth". (Strangely, cancer and heart disease scarcely registered on these lists but perhaps these were not properly identified or were included in other headings with obscure descriptions such as "griping of the guts", "frighted" or "lethargy".) At the height of the epidemic the King and the Court rather wisely fled the city and left the population to fend for itself. The first royal refuge was at Salisbury where they presented the city with an outbreak of the plague before moving on to Oxford.

It was not, however, the just the idle rich who left London - almost everyone who could do so and had somewhere to go also made an exit as the year progressed, frequently taking the disease with them as fleas in luggage and clothing. Public assembly was forbidden and the escalating rates of death and evacuation soon meant that the remaining population of London fell below the point where normal commerce could continue. One of the few remaining paid occupations was that of burying the ever increasing number of corpses. Plague pits were dug (although far fewer than is normally believed) and packed with corpses covered thickly with quicklime but finding space for the dead was obviously a major problem. A contemporary print of plague carts and the phrase "Bring out your dead" reminded me at least of a classic scene from "Monty Python and the Holy Grail".

The advent of winter brought about a rapid decline in the death rate amongst the remaining population, which we now know would have been the result of the inability of fleas and bacilli to survive low temperatures. Gradually the absent population returned to the city and by the end of winter the epidemic seemed to have ended, although isolated outbreaks continued into the summer of the following year. Officially the death toll in London was 68,576 but the true total was probably nearer 100,000 and just when the people of London thought that their luck had changed for the better.....

The Great Fire of London in September 1666 was a disaster of an entirely different sort, since it is believed that only six people died whilst the medieval city was almost totally destroyed. As evry skoolboy nowes the Great Fire began on the night of 2nd September 1666 in the house of Farriner the royal baker in Pudding Lane in the east of the City - although the exact cause will forever be a mystery. The fire was quickly brought to the attention of the Lord Mayor Sir Thomas Bloodworth who considered it to be a minor matter and suggested a crudely basic method of extinguishing the flames but to his horror and embarrassment the next twelve hours and a strong easterly wind saw the destruction of 300 houses, several churches and half of London Bridge, including the tidal powered water pump. Both 1665 and 1666 had been exceptionally dry summers (global warming?) and the largely timber and thatch houses of London were a disaster waiting to happen. City commerce was just beginning to recover from the effects of the plague of the previous year and riverside warehouses were packed with inflammable goods. Within a very few hours of dawn on 3rd September the fire was seen to be beyond any attempt to extinguish it and thoughts turned to trying to create firebreaks by

demolishing properties in the path of the fire but (surprise!) the City authorities balked at the potential cost of compensation to the owners of houses demolished before the fire reached them. Fortunately, upon the instigation of Pepys himself (he tells us) the King took charge of the situation and placed his brother James in overall control with instructions to demolish wherever necessary to contain the fire.

FIVE

By September 4th about half of the City had been destroyed (rumours of sabotage were such that Frenchmen, Dutchmen and Papists were being locked up for their own protection) but the advance demolition tactic was working in spite of a by-now gale force easterly wind driving the flames towards Westminster. Indeed, it is said that debris from the fire was blown as far west as Windsor. Those whose houses had not yet been destroyed (including Pepys) had either fled the City or were planning to do so but in the event our diarist was fortunate in that his house was spared by a few hundred yards. It was widely believed that St.Paul's Cathedral, being stone, would be spared and was used as safe storage by booksellers and merchants but by sheer bad luck the east end of the building was surrounded by wooden scaffolding which carried the fire inside where the books and other goods soon caught alight. An inferno took hold of the structure melting the lead roof and causing the limestone fabric to often literally explode in the heat.

By this time however, the fire was in its last throes and at last the fire-fighters were gaining ground and extinguishing flames. Naturally it was many weeks before all remaining fires were fully out and the damage could be assessed. We now know that 400 acres had burned within the City walls and 63 acres without; 87 churches, 44 livery halls and 13,200 houses had been completely destroyed - a slide of Hollar's view of the City post-fire showed clearly the extent of the devastation. About 200,000 people had been made homeless and had to be housed in the open in temporary shelters and to make matters worse the winter of 1666/7 was the coldest ever recorded until that time.

The aftermath of the fire was of course that the City and environs had to be rebuilt and the authorities were determined to see that such an event could never occur again. Strict building regulations were introduced and external wood work was severely limited - all new buildings were required to be in brick or stone and whilst one must of course rue the loss of the medieval buildings, it seems that the reconstructed City must have been a magnificent sight with all trace of the fire having been erased by 1730. Few secular buildings of that period remain today (thanks to the bombing of the 1940's and the even less forgivable property developers of the last fifty years) but those few that do clearly indicate the magnificence that was created by Sir Christopher Wren and his fellow architects of the period. The rebuilt St.Pauls and many post-fire churches remain to delight us today and it remains debatable whether the Great Fire was truly a disaster or a blessing in disguise.

Our thanks of course are due to Ian for filling the breach at short notice and for providing us once again with a memorable lecture.

J C S

MILLFIELD HOUSE - ITS HISTORY
AND ARCHITECTURE.

Geoffrey Gillam

Friday 20th March

occasions in the past, our Chairman Geoffrey Gillam stood in to fill the gap at the last moment

Unfortunately, for the second meeting in succession our intended speaker was unable, through illness, to attend to give the arranged lecture (which would have been on the subject of the Royal Opera House and the Middle Saxon town of Lundenwic. As has been the case on many

and gave his lecture based on his researches at Millfield House to a most appreciative audience. A full article by Geoffrey on the same subject follows below and the lecture is not therefore reported here.

J C S.

SIX

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Friday 17th April

The 42nd Annual General Meeting was opened by Chairman Geoffrey Gillam who welcomed all those present before the commencement of formalities by reading the minutes of the 41st AGM which took

place on the 8th April 1997. As all those present were in agreement, the Chairman signed the minutes as approved on behalf of the Committee. The Annual Report of the Executive Committee had been previously published as part of Society News 148 (March 1998) and was accepted by those present. The Financial Statement for 1997 was distributed at the meeting and this too was accepted.

The next item on the agenda was the election of Honorary Officers and Committee members. Membership Secretary Linda Tyler will shortly be moving to Surrey and has therefore resigned the position. The Chairman thanked her for all of her efforts whilst in her post, which included the computerisation of the Society's membership records, and also expressed appreciation for her hospitality in providing accommodation for committee meetings. It was explained that the office of Membership Secretary will nominally remain vacant whilst the duties of the post will be shared between John Stevens and John Tanner for the foreseeable future.

Geoffrey Gillam then formally announced his resignation as Society Chairman, a post he has occupied for twenty nine years, and Professor Dennis Hill was nominated as incoming Chairman. The Honorary Officers and Committee members were formally elected unopposed, as follows:

President: Harvey Sheldon

Vice Presidents: Ild Anthony
Joy Adams
Ivy Drayton
Bill Gregory
John Kent

Chairman: Dennis Hill

General Secretary: John Stevens

Treasurer: Ian Jones

Meetings Secretary: Geoffrey Gillam

Editor: John Stevens

Auditor: Michael Ranson

Trustees: Leonard Hemming
John Wright

Committee: Roger Dormer
Roger Eddington
Les Whitmore
Jon Tanner
Caroline McKenna (co-opted during 1997)

There were no nominations for the offices of Vice-Chairman or Social Secretary.

SEVEN

This concluded the formal part of the AGM, at which point Geoffrey Gillam relinquished the chair and the baton was taken by Professor Dennis Hill. His first action as the new Chairman was to pay tribute to Geoffrey's long and tireless service in the post of Chairman and to his love and great knowledge of archaeology and local history. On behalf of the Society Dennis thanked Geoffrey for his immeasurable contribution and, to the warm applause of the membership, presented him with a gift as a token of the Society's gratitude and esteem.

Dennis then thanked Ian Jones for the annual accounts and Ian took the floor to begin the reports of fieldwork and research with a resumé of his investigations into the history of Salisbury House and Bury Lodge. This was illustrated by slides, including Ian's own floor plans of the houses, and a full account was published in the March 1998 issue of Society News. Ian is particularly interested in the L-shaped link between the two houses shown in a 1798 drawing, which contributes to Ian's belief that Salisbury House may have begun as an elaborate extension to Bury Lodge. It is hoped that this theory will be confirmed by an excavation of the link area this summer and anyone interested in taking part should contact Ian Jones (0181.363.4094)

Geoffrey Gillam then took the floor to summarise the other activities of the Society over the preceding year, beginning at Forty Hall.

- Following from Geoffrey's publication of the history of the house and its occupants, Roger Eddington has been investigating the large number of signatures which are to be found on the inside of a cupboard door in the Rainton Room. Roger has painstakingly identified a total of 646 decipherable names of the children of the Meyer and Bowles families and their friends, some recording their heights and ages as children often do. The signatures date from 1800 (Christian Paul Meyer) to 1951 (Mary Anne Parker Bowles) and an account of the research and its findings will appear in the bulletin in the near future.
- Restoration of the large barn and the stable block in the outer courtyard commenced during the year and dendrochronological dating showed that the roof beam timbers were felled in the fifteenth century and had therefore probably been reused from a previous building, perhaps Elsyng Palace. The barn roof has been retiled and the barn will become a Museum of the Working Horse.
- English heritage has carried out a magnetometer survey of the Elsyng Palace site which revealed a number of sub-surface features and the results of a resistivity survey are awaited. A little nostalgia was indulged in when Geoffrey showed slides of the Society's excavations of part of the Palace site in the 1960's.
- Geoffrey then gave a brief description of Camlet Moat, where the undergrowth has been cut back from the moat and silt deposits carefully removed. Dendro dating of a large timber from the bridge that once spanned the moat gave a date of c1357, somewhat later than expected. Was this part of the original bridge or later repair work? Ian Jones has prepared the wording for an information notice board for the site.
- The 1821 New River aqueduct in Flash Lane was excavated by the Society in 1968 and repairs to the brickwork have recently been effected by the Enfield Preservation Society using lime burnt on site to prepare the mortar.
- Attention then turned to the ABC cinema (previously the Savoy) in Southbury Road which is currently being demolished to enable the building of yet another supermarket. Designed by George Cole, the cinema seated 1400 people in the stalls and 950 in the balcony and

boasted a café/restaurant, five dressing rooms, a large stage and, of course, a Wurlitzer organ in its heyday. It was later converted to a four screen format. Roger Eddington managed to make a photographic record during the demolition process.

- The owner of a house at Fyfield Road, Enfield asked Geoffrey to inspect some “graffiti” which had been discovered on her staircase wall. This proved to read “Papered by Gordon & Son 1898” but brief investigations have not identified any contemporary firm or tradesmen of that name.

EIGHT

It only remained for Dennis Hill to thank Ian and Geoffrey for their talks and to close the meeting at 9.50pm.

Jon Tanner.

THIRTY FIFTH ANNUAL CONFERENCE OF LONDON ARCHAEOLOGISTS

This important annual conference took place, as usual, at the Museum of London. The day aims at giving a general overview of archaeological activities in the City of London and its environs. The morning session had the title “Recent Work”. The Chair was taken by Harvey Sheldon, the President of the Enfield Archaeological Society. He presented the Ralph Merrifield Award to Jill Pollard for the work which she and her colleagues had undertaken to ensure the rehabilitation of the tidal Deptford Creek at the mouth of the river Ravensbourne – a first rate video of this project was shown later.

The opening paper was by Andy Crockett of Wessex Archaeology who described their contract series of excavations on the site of the former Imperial College Sports Ground at Harlington, Middlesex before its use for gravel extraction. The site lies between the River Colne to the west and the River Crane to the east. The site has been inhabited from the Lower Palaeolithic era through the Late Palaeolithic, Mesolithic, Bronze Age, Iron Age and Romano-British periods. A small number of flint tools were found together with a large rectangular enclosure and a number of pits containing high quality, richly decorated pottery and worked flints. The site was divided into separate areas for ritual and domestic activities, the former including a Bronze Age cemetery with inhumations and cremations. A later Romano-British settlement consisted of round houses with a Roman trackway running through the site from the Bath road to a likely ford on the River Crane.

Nick Holder of MOLAS followed with a fascinating account of an excavation of a prehistoric island off the Thames on the site of the Royal Docks Community School in Newham. The sites dates from 3,000 – 2,000 BC and consisted then of two adjacent islands with one metre of silt now preserving the prehistoric landscape. One island had a narrow inlet from the Thames with stake holes delineating a jetty for boats. Pottery, a flint arrowhead and flint scrapers were found together with a Bronze Age cooking pit.

Jon Binns of the Thames Archaeological Survey outlined recent work on the foreshore in 1997. The Survey, including the pilot study, has been running for three years and had provided for local archaeological societies such as COLAS and Richmond. The Erith prehistoric forest and medieval fish traps at Isleworth and Chelsea are now well known. Some detailed studies have been made of ship building and breaking from the finds of nails and timbers used.

Vicky Ridgeway of Pre-Construct Archaeology described the excavation of a 1.8 acre in Hopton Street, Southwark which was originally a natural sand island on the Thames flood plain 3 metres below present street level. It was inhabited in the Late Bronze Age and then covered by 1.8 metres of silt by the rising Thames. Some 3,500 artefacts were mapped and

recovered, covering the Late Neolithic to Early Bronze Age and some Mesolithic pot fragments. A small pit contained a Mesolithic Beaker bowl, a flint blade and a flint core. An early 18th century glassworks was excavated on the site, having a fire chamber below ground with subterranean tunnels to provide draught and a series of crucibles in a chamber above ground.

Work had also been undertaken at Carshalton on a late Bronze Age ritual site. Post-medieval ploughing had destroyed some features but several pits were found, one of which contained a horse skull. There were also large flint nodules, a saddle quern and Red Deer skulls and antlers.

NINE

Ian Blair of MOLAS gave a full account of the excavation of the site of Low Hall, a medieval moated manor house in Walthamstow. The wooden frame of the baseplate for the drawbridge has been dated to 1344. The original manor house was built on chalk and ragstone foundations with a single service wing, a separate kitchen range and a Great Hall with a solar block at the end. The service wing contained a buttery and a pantry with chambers above to be used by guests or the eldest son. The open hearth has been dated to 1425 and there was a large quantity of decorated 14th century floor tiles made in Penn, Buckinghamshire. In the 15th century an L-shaped garderobe extension was added on the edge of the moat fed from a stream via sluices. During the 17th century the medieval house was demolished and a U-shaped smaller house was built on the site, having a parlour, hall and kitchen. A permanent brick bridge across the moat linked with a brick parlour. In the 18th century the house was remodelled and a tiled floor cellar from that period was found along with a brick rainwater tank. At about the same time Low Hall was reduced in status and became a farm and a Smallpox isolation unit before finally being destroyed by a V2 rocket in 1994.

The title of the afternoon session was “Twenty Five Years of Digging in the City” and was introduced by Nick Bateman of MOLAS. He outlined the principal buildings of Roman Londinium and pointed out that there is no ‘standard list’ of buildings for a Roman city. There then followed descriptions of the Huggin Hill baths, the South West Temple, the Basilica, the Forum, the Flavian Hall, the amphitheatre and the Old Bailey mansio.

Bruno Barber of Molas detailed his studies of Roman cemeteries of London. The Eastern Cemetery near Hooper Street held 121 confirmed cremations and 151 inhumations but there could be as many as 600 counting the fragments of bodies. There was very little evidence for funerary rites but the remains of one pyre had been noted. Objects found with cremations included bone clips to fasten shrouds and the remains of food which had been thrown on the fire. Large numbers of animal bones had also been found. Female bodies were in the minority but the merchant city had been male dominated. The Western Cemetery was near St. Bartholomew’s Hospital

Gustav Milne of the Institute of Archaeology gave a spirited version of his talk on London’s Waterfront where dendrochronology has enabled timbers from wharves to be dated to an accuracy of within six months. The first Roman shoreline was 100m north of the present river bank. The original embankment had been made from 200 year old large, square beams. The quays were in front of open-fronted warehouses which held wine, olive oil and fish sauces in amphorae, natural oysters from the Thames estuary and cultivated oysters from France. The remains of wooden barges have been found near the quays. In AD 90 there was a wooden London Bridge for which a low and sandy island on the south bank formed a bridging point. There was 150 metres of stratigraphy in front of the first waterfront resulting from a series of revetments pushed out into the Thames which had been filled with material from the City’s middens. A study of timbers and nails from the Thames has tracked the ship-building and repair yards from west to east of the City’s waterfront and in Southwark.

John Schofield of MOLAS spoke on “Building in the City from the Saxons to the Great Fire” and Simon Thurley, the new director of the Museum of London, wound up a memorable day by setting out his thoughts on the Museum and London’s archaeology.

Dennis Hill.

TEN

MILLFIELD HOUSE, SILVER STREET, EDMONTON

Although given a grade II listing, Millfield House is an unremarkable late 18th century former country residence which could be described as a house built for a minor and aspiring member of the gentry. Today, firmly set in an urban townscape, it is an arts centre for the London Borough of Enfield where its lecture, rehearsal, music, committee and other meeting rooms and facilities for various crafts make it a popular venue for local societies and drama groups.

In my search for the architect who designed Millfield House my attention was drawn by Graham Dalling to Southgate House, until years Minchenden School, with which it has similarities of design; a central projecting porch forming part of a circular vestibule behind which is a semi-circular stairwell lit by an oval lantern (MINCHENDEN). Southgate House was built between 1788 and 1800 to a design by Robert Mylne (1744-1811). He designed houses in other parts of this country and, although no detailed examination and comparison of these properties has been made, it is noticed, for instance that the lodge of the house at Addington, Surrey, bears a striking resemblance to the lodge on the west side of the entrance to Millfield House (MYLNE). It has been claimed elsewhere that Millfield House was built about 1760 by the Adams brothers (COLE) but the evidence is not convincing. The house undoubtedly took its name from the field in which Edmonton Mill stood on the south side of Pymme's Brook behind the house and is shown on John Rocque's map of Middlesex published in 1754. The remains of the mill were uncovered in 1974 during work being carried out to contain the brook and a granite millstone discovered at the time is on display in the grounds of the house. Coins, pottery and other items of 17th to 19th century dates were also found when the site was examined by members of the Enfield Archaeological Society (SOCIETY NEWS A).

The first mention of the house is in the minutes of the Edmonton Vestry in December 1796 which record that it had been let by Mr Wigston to the Imperial Ambassador (VESTRY) thought to have been Graf Ludwig von Starhemberg, Envoy Extraordinary and Minister Plenipotentiary of the Holy Roman Empire (DALLING). In 1801 the property was owned by Daniel Beale Esq and the map and schedule attached to the Enclosure Act of that date record a mansion house, offices, lawn and pleasure grounds covering an area of more than eight acres and there was also a substantial kitchen garden. Robert Mushet (1782-1828), who held a senior position at the Royal Mint, died at Millfield House in 1828 and his wife Henrietta continued to live there until her death in 1842. The house and grounds, valued in 1828 at £6300 and mentioned as occupying 15 acres, were then put up for auction and appear to have been purchased by Benjamin Wilson and Frederick Clark. Detailed sales particulars give the sizes of the various rooms and their uses as well as details of the grounds and outbuildings (COLE) but the measurements given for individual rooms described in the sale particulars cannot be exactly matched to those in the house today. There are other anomalies, such as the description of the drawing room being on the first floor and yet having a balcony and veranda, implying that balconies of two stories had originally stood against the front of the house. Nevertheless, the 1842 sale particulars is the only document we have on which to

base a reconstruction of the interior of the house and an attempt has therefore been made to fit these descriptions to the present rooms. Names that have been given to the various rooms since the house became an arts centre are shown in brackets.

In 1849 Millfield House and grounds were sold to the Guardians of the Poor of the Strand Union as a school for their workhouse children who were housed in a large building erected for the purpose behind the house. The design for this and other buildings on the site has been attributed to the architects Finder and Lewis, Adelphi, London (COLE). Set in the wall which runs along the eastern side of the nearby car park is a foundation stone where the surviving part of the heavily eroded inscription runs:

ELEVEN

Strand Union Schools
This stone was laid by
George Wilkinson and Henry Mason Esq
Chairman and Vice Chairman of the Board
.....

In its early years, illiterate and untrained staff, poor diet and shortages of bedding, clothing etc were commonplace in this and many similar institutions elsewhere. Claims that the children in the Strand Union School at Edmonton were living in appalling conditions were made in 1852 when, apart from listing the various ailments suffered by the children, a careful reading of the text of one of the reports hints at physical and sexual abuse. It was also stated that sexual intercourse took place between the children. While accepting that improvements were necessary at the school, most of the allegations were hotly denied by the authorities concerned and the truth probably lies somewhere between. The extreme nature of the claims and counter claims were the result of long-standing differences between the parties concerned. (1852)(STARK).

By 1898, however, conditions had improved when there was accommodation in the school for 397 children although the average number was 350; in July 1897 there were 338 children there – 168 boys, 130 girls and 40 infants. There had been many additions made to the house by this time with other buildings erected elsewhere in the grounds; two infirmary blocks were built in 1878 and more additions made in 1889. Apart from the dormitories and dining rooms there were separate day-rooms for boys, girls and infants and a swimming bath capable of being converted into a playroom for girls. The boys had an open-air gymnasium, a playing field and a covered playground for wet weather. Workshops provided training for boys in tailoring, shoemaking and carpentry and they were also taught to play various musical instruments, as a result of which many entered the army as band boys. Girls received training in housework, needle work and allied subjects that prepared them for entry into domestic service. (MONNINGTON).

The school closed in 1913 and on the outbreak of the First World War in 1914 it provided accommodation for Belgian refugees. In 1915 the Metropolitan Asylum District purchased the site and subsequently began work to convert the buildings into a hospital (St.David's) for epileptics (COLE). The hospital was closed in 1971 and work began in demolishing most of the buildings erected after 1849 and restoring the house for its eventual use as an arts centre for the London Borough of Enfield. It was at this time that the house became the subject of a preservation order.

Built of stock bricks, Millfield is a house of two storeys, each separated by a string course four bricks deep, containing a recessed three-bayed central section with wings, also of three bays each, at the north and south ends. The ground floors of the wings are each fitted with a long cast iron veranda with a concave roof. Earlier verandas had decayed and have been replaced in recent years. A single story kitchen wing extends back from the rear of the south wing and was later increased in height by the extension of the rear corridor and additional bedchambers on the first floor. The roofs of the house are covered with Welsh slate and have stone capped parapets with a string course three bricks deep along the base of

each. Over the south wing there is a mansard roof covering an added attic bedchamber with a dormer window.

Sash windows in the front elevation are set in plain rectangular openings with flat arches formed by the use of gauged bricks, with the exception of the one in the central bay which has a moulded architrave. The front of the ground floor of the central section is divided into five bays by a colonnade of six Roman Doric columns and frieze. The three central bays form a curved projection where, between the columns, there are three round-headed half-glazed archways in reeded architraves containing a central doorway flanked by windows. In the stucco on either side of the curved projection are round-headed niches. Beyond the front door is a circular hall or vestibule. Inside, the door and adjoining windows are flanked by fluted pilasters with flat capitals decorated with an incised key pattern while the walls rise and curve inwards to form a domed ceiling decorated with banding and stucco flowers surrounding a

TWELVE

modern light fitting in the centre. The ceiling is new and replaces an earlier one that had collapsed through water damage. At the back of the vestibule is a long barrel-vaulted corridor to the rear of the house. A corridor on the right of the vestibule leads to a large dining room (Strand) that occupies the whole of the ground floor of the south wing where as well as three pillared windows with folding wooden shutters on the front elevation there is a large tripartite window reaching to floor level in the south wall. Recessed wall cupboards with glass doors in the north and south walls were probably intended for the display of china and plate. This room, in common with many others in the house has well carved doorways. The decorated fireplace surround in fine white marble with a frieze and carved brackets was stolen a few years ago and has been replaced with a plain wooden surround. A door in the east wall provides access to back stairs and to a corridor leading to the rear of the house. A corridor to the left of the vestibule leads into an oval stairwell where access can be gained to the library (Committee Room) which has a large bay window at the far end, perhaps installed at some later date while next door is the morning room (Clubroom) where the fireplace contains part of a damaged marble surround and glass doors in the end wall which open into the garden. Nearby are two gentleman's dressing rooms (Bar and Caretaker's Room).

The staircase with its iron railing ascends in a graceful curve to the first floor. The railing is modern and replaces a much lower version which, because of the use of the house by the public, was considered dangerous. About halfway up the staircase is a maid's water closet (ladies lavatory) whose door, together with two others, is shaped so that when closed matches the curve of the staircase wall. Natural light to the stairwell is provided by a large lantern in the ceiling covered by a skylight in the roof where examination of the structural timbers revealed that they had been cut through and partly removed to allow the lantern to be fitted or later modified.

The circular upper landing gives direct access to the drawing room (offices) in the north wing, a dressing room and adjoining bedchamber (Aylward) and a transverse corridor across the back of the central block. At the other end of the corridor is a lady's morning room (Huxley) over the south wing. The placing of a drawing room and morning room on the first floor suggests a variation of the *piano noble* where the principal floor was raised one storey above ground level. Because of subsequent internal alterations to the house two of the windows in the drawing room were bricked up when it was later divided into smaller units. Other doors on the upper landing lead into the drawing room and into the small dressing room attached to the bedchamber (Aylward) and across into the lady's morning room where, in the far corner, another door opens on to a short flight of stairs leading to another small bedchamber or dressing room at a lower level with a larger bedchamber (Bridport) beyond. A narrow flight of stairs, entered from the corridor, was later fitted into the bedchamber (Aylward) and leads up to another large bedchamber (Sanderson) under the mansard roof over the south wing. These features are later additions and, as they appear in the 1842 sale particulars (COLE) they must have been added before that date. The 1842 sale particulars state that the property had been *adapted for a large family* which must have been for Robert Mushet and his wife Henrietta *by whom he had issue* (COLE). For reasons as yet unexplained, ceilings in the drawing room in

the north wing and the dressing room and adjoining bedchamber in the central range are about two feet below the tops of the windows. There were two small rooms - probably servant's bedrooms - in the roof space above the drawing room but it is hard to believe that, even if they were later insertions, the space required for these rooms would have necessitated lowering the ceilings of the rooms below not only in the north wing but also in the central block.

The upstairs corridor turns sharply at the door to the lady's morning room and passes another water closet before reaching a flight of stone stairs which lead down to the kitchen and servant's quarters. The rooms over the kitchen wing were added later, as shown by the tops of the arches of two former windows outlined in the external brickwork at the back of the south wing and partly obscured by these additions and an enlarged chimney stack. This work was probably carried out at the same time as the large bedchamber (Sanderson) was fitted creating a second floor over the south wing. The transverse corridor at the rear of the

THIRTEEN

house has three similarly arched windows and another can be seen high up in the rear wall of the north wing. A large square sash window occupies the south wall of each floor in the south wing, the one on the first floor being flanked by two blind windows with shallow segmented arches which were never intended to be glazed and were installed only as an architectural detail. Windows in the south wall of the kitchen block and the rooms above are plain rectangular openings and have shallow segmented arches. There is a door on the ground floor that provided access to the kitchen wing on this side - the second door, at the far end of the wing, is a recent addition. The ground falls sharply away across the narrow flood plain of Pymmes Brook necessitating raised foundations at this end of the house and a flight of steps up to the original door into the kitchen wing.

Back on the ground floor, the corridor from the vestibule to the rear of the house has the butler's pantry on the right where the stairs within led from the cellar below to the butler's bedchamber above. The stairs from the cellar have been removed and no trace of the former entry remains but the stairs to the bedchamber are still in situ. The butler's pantry may originally have been much wider and have included the passage built later on, probably after 1915, to provide a link to the room added at the rear of the pantry. A narrow corridor with a short flight of steps taking one to a lower level runs alongside the wing containing the servant's hall, kitchen, scullery, wash house and laundry before reaching a door at the back of the house. At the dining room end of this corridor are back stairs to the first floor. Also to be seen are the outlines of a bricked-up window and of a large entrance since reduced in size when this was an external wall of the kitchen wing.

In the basement there are brick bays of wine cellars and a coal cellar where the blocked coal chute can still be seen. The slate floor of the larder still exists and rows of game hooks line the walls. On one of the walls can be seen the outline of a flight of stone steps that once led to the surface at the back of the house but were removed when the present gentleman's lavatory was installed by extending a former china and plate closet at some time after the middle of the 19th century. A brick platform in the middle of the cellar floor marks the site of the stairs that once led to the butler's pantry above.

In the cellar in the middle of the house is a well which was described in the 1842 sale particulars as : *a well, with a never failing spring of excellent water, supplying the various parts of the house.* In 1984 the Enfield Archaeological Society persuaded a member of the local sub-aqua club to don his wet suit and descend into the well to establish its depth and to see what might be found in the silt. In the event, even allowing for the accumulation of silt, the well was found to be quite shallow and part of a wine bottle (shaft and globe type) dating from about 1780, the pawn of a chess set and the skeleton of a cat (age and date unknown) were recovered (SOCIETY NEWS B). The room added behind the butler's pantry was, at the same time, provided with its own cellar and a cellar entrance at the eastern end. A small three-roomed cellar is situated under the north-east corner of the house where a flight of steps leads down into a rectangular room with two parallel transverse rooms of about the same size at right angles to it. There are brick bays that may have been used to store the ale and beer

referred to in the 1842 sale particulars. At an earlier and unknown date one of the transverse cellars was bricked up – perhaps for safety reasons. There was originally means of communication between all of the cellars.

The entrance to the grounds of the house is from Silver Street with quadrant walls on either side to allow easy passage for carriages entering and leaving. A lodge on the west side of the entrance is original and there was another on the opposite side, both of which are described in the 1842 sale particulars as *of Uniform Elevation, one of which contains a Sitting Room and Bedchamber; the other is arranged for a Turning Room and a Laboratory*. The surviving lodge has two single recessed arches and a central double recessed arch on the side facing the drive. The door in the centre has a stone lintel that supports the brickwork filling the arch above. The single recesses on each side (the one on the left contains a door, the one on the right contains a sash window) have within them lower flat arches of gauged bricks which also support brickwork filling the higher arch above. At springer level there are three courses of bricks forming a deep string course and there are similar single recessed

FOURTEEN

arches and sash windows in the end walls of the lodge. The lodge is roofed with slate and has a central chimney stack containing two flues each capped with a pot. The lodge on the eastern side of the entrance drive was replaced between 1867 and 1986 (OS) with a much larger, double-fronted structure of two storeys built of stock bricks with red bricks used to provide decorative banding, to mark the corners of the wall and placed around the window openings. In 1842 the house was “approached by a broad carriage drive through a thickly planted shrubbery”. Now surfaced with granite setts, probably dating from the middle of the 19th century, the drive would not only have originally been surfaced with gravel but it would have followed a very different course to that of today. The whereabouts of the stabling for eight horses and the double coach house are not known today but the most likely location would have been behind the house.

The grounds have been considerably reduced in size by the construction of Sterling Way, a section of the re-routed North Circular Road, which crosses part of the grounds and a modern housing development behind the house has replaced buildings which belonged to the 19th century Strand Union Poor Law Union and St.David’s Hospital. Elsewhere the construction of other ancillary buildings, either for the Strand Union after 1849 or St.David’s Hospital after 1915, together with three large communal World War II air raid shelters and later changes such as the children’s play area have obliterated all traces of the former Pleasure Grounds. These were once thus described: *.....abound with a great Collection of Choice and valuable Plants and the Walks are tastefully and judiciously displayed, adding much interest to the scene, which is considerably increased by a beautiful sheet of water, flowing through the lawn and pleasure grounds, intersecting them in a most advantageous manner and discharging itself into a constantly flowing stream which, passing through the Grounds, refreshes the Walks, Banks and Plantations. On the north side of the lawn, and near the Lake, is erected an elegant, circular green-house. Adjoining is a very capital and productive Kitchen garden with a lofty brick wall to a good aspect, fully clothed with Fruit Trees of the Choicest sorts. A large Hot House divided into two compartments, Melon Pits etc .* By the time that the first edition of the 25 inch Ordnance Survey plan had been published in 1867 the kitchen garden walls had been demolished, with the exception of the north side where it formed part of the estate boundary wall along Silver Street. However, the positions of the east and west walls appear to be indicated on the plan by paths which once ran around the interior. Any surviving garden features were subsequently obliterated by the erection of buildings there (OS). Millfield Theatre and the adjoining car park now occupy the site of the kitchen garden. *In the Farm Yard which is well enclosed is a neat Cottage for the gardener with wash house, A Room for Roots etc. A cart Stable with Six Stalls and Harness Room adjoining with Hay Lofts over. Apple Room, Carpenter’s Shop, Sheds etc.* (COLE). The farmyard has disappeared beneath Sterling Way and the development beyond.

Until September 1988 a large part of the 18th century brick wall that ran along the northern boundary of the property, behind which was the kitchen garden, had survived intact and was listed as a grade II monument. It was a tall red brick wall with a curved slope to the coping of bricks which had been laid on their sides and at a later date ten courses of bricks had been added as well as some later buttresses at the west end of the wall. Suddenly, and without warning, the wall was totally demolished and the bricks disappeared without trace. The excuse given at the time by the Council was that the wall had been found to be unsafe and had to be demolished immediately and application was then made for retrospective permission to knock down this scheduled monument. The bricks were not preserved as it "was found to be cost prohibitive". Protests were made at the time but it was obviously too late and English Heritage did nothing more than administer a mild rebuke (GAZETTE).

Very little is known about the families who lived at Millfield House from the late 18th century until it ceased to be a private residence in 1849. Nothing at all is known about the small army of staff who occupied or used the servants' quarters of facilities named in the 1842 sale particulars: *butler's pantry, maid servants' closet, servants' hall, coach house...four rooms*

FIFTEEN

for men servants, cottage of gardener and a carpenters' shop. As well as the butler there would have been a housekeeper and between them they would control the day to day running of the household. There would have been a footman, perhaps even two, house and parlour maids and perhaps a personal maid for the lady of the house. In the kitchen the cook would reign supreme, delegating some of her work to an assistant cook and even more, especially the scrubbing and cleaning, to the scullery maid. Outside of the house would be the coachman, ostler, groom and stable lad. A head gardener with an under-gardener and gardeners boy(s) would tend the kitchen garden and the pleasure grounds. Elsewhere there would have been work for the carpenter and a labourer or two.

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I am grateful to the following for their help with my enquiries into the history and architecture of Millfield House: Graham Dalling, Local History Librarian and his assistant Kate Godfrey and Maureen Austen; Penny Wilkinson, Community Arts Development Office LBE; Christine White, Conservation Officer LBE; Robert Whytehead, English Heritage.

Geoffrey Gillam.

SIXTEEN

OBITUARY: Alan Dumayne.

It was with infinite regret that I heard of the news of the death of Alan Dumayne at the age of 69 on Thursday 30th April. Born in Hornsey, Alan moved with his family to Winchmore Hill four years later and thereafter remained a resident of Southgate. He attended Winchmore Hill Junior School and later Southgate County School in Fox Lane, Palmers Green – I remember Alan describing how a few years ago he watched the conversion of the County School building into flats and to his horror saw workmen ripping out and throwing on to a bonfire honours boards and other items which should have been saved. Alan had a great love of Southgate and he found a means of expressing that feeling in his three books: 'Southgate: A Glimpse Into The Past' (1987), 'Once Upon A Time in Palmers Green' (1989) and 'Fond Memories of Winchmore Hill' (1990) and in the many talks that he gave on these and other subjects. At the time of his death he was completing the draft of another book dealing with social history. His interest in local history resulted in him becoming an active member of the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society. A keen sportsman, he played in many cricket matches at the Walker Cricket Ground in Southgate. Alan will be sadly missed by many people and I for one will always remember what a delight it was to be in his company.

Geoffrey Gillam.

MISCELLANY. In March English Heritage arranged for a team from Oxford to carry out a geophysical survey over the site of the Tudor palace of **ELSYNG** in the grounds of Forty Hall. In fact the whole of the former park containing the avenue of trees has been surveyed and we look forward to reading the report to see if the full extent of the palace buildings has been revealed. The survey may show suspected later garden features associated with Forty Hall.

Before the geophysical survey began, agreement was reached between English Heritage and Enfield Council regarding the removal of some of the trees which had been planted within the scheduled area containing the remains of **ELSYNG PALACE**, especially those close to the known remains excavated by this Society in the 1960's. We were represented when removal took place in February and a note was made of a hard-packed area of gravel containing fragments of brick and tile at one point. Rather significantly, two other trees nearby had died and the gravel layer may have contributed to their demise.

Recent restoration of the brickwork associated with the cast iron aqueduct carrying the **NEW RIVER** over Turkey Brook is an excellent example of how such work should be carried

out. The badly decayed brickwork was carefully dismantled and the bricks cleaned before the walls were reconstructed using properly prepared lime mortar. The New River is enclosed by very distinctive cast iron railings and examples have been discovered close to the aqueduct. It has therefore been decided to cast more railings to the same design and to use them to enclose the aqueduct in Flash Lane. The restoration work is being financed by English Heritage and the Enfield Preservation Society.

Excavations by Wessex Archaeology in advance of the construction of the **INNOVA SCIENCE PARK** in eastern Enfield have revealed bones, worked flint and pottery from the Bronze Age c1000 BC. It is hoped to have further details in time for the next bulletin.

Enfield Council is planning to develop the areas of Enfield Town now occupied by the Sydney Road and London Road car parks as part of the regeneration of the Town centre. It was in Sydney Road that the first **ENFIELD GAS WORKS** was constructed in 1840 and it is believed that the cast iron frames which once accommodated the gas storage tank(s) may still be *in situ* there. Apart from this, there may also be evidence of **MEDIEVAL ENFIELD** awaiting discovery and we hope that excavations will be carried out on the Sydney Road site at least before building work begins.

G R G.