

**Forthcoming Events:**

**Molesey Boat Club – 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary  
Wednesday 9 November 2016, 8pm,  
Graburn Way Barge Walk, East Molesey KT8 9AJ**

Illustrated talks on the history and achievements of Molesey Boat Club - all welcome, cash bar

- From working class to gentleman  
Boat design and construction development  
Early personalities - Club history and development  
Medal winners  
Regatta

**Magical Molesey  
Wednesday 7 December 2016, 5 – 7 pm**

Once again Tudor & Co are hosting the Society for the annual Walton Road Christmas celebration. We shall be showing displays on the 150<sup>th</sup> Anniversary of Molesey Boat Club and we hope you will pop in and see us for a chat and some Christmas cheer.

**AGM**

**The Power of Beauty in Restoration England: The Windsor & Hampton Court Beauties– Talk by  
Laurence Shafe  
Wednesday 1 February, 8 pm  
St Lawrence School, Church Road, KT8 9DR**

We will keep the business of the AGM as brief as possible and it will be followed by a talk by Laurence Shafe:

It is 1660, the English Civil War is over and the experiment with the Commonwealth has left the country confused. When Charles II was invited back to England as King he brought new French styles and sexual conduct with him. In particular, he introduced the French idea of the publically accepted mistress. Beautiful women who could attract the eye of the king could become his mistress and influence appointments at Court and political debate. The new freedoms introduced by the Reformation Court spread through society. Women could act for the first time, write books and one was the first British scientist. However, it was a male dominated society and so these heroic women had to fight against established norms and laws. This talk examines the power and influence of one group of women and they way they were represented in art.

You will be able to renew your membership at the meeting.

**Meeting Reports:**

**The King's Chocolate Kitchen,  
Talk by Marc Meltonville, Royal Palace Food Historian  
Thursday 9 June 2016**

*Report by Paula Day*



You and I might have difficulty in losing a kitchen but, when your residence covers six acres with over 1000 rooms and has undergone numerous transformations, it can happen all too easily. So it was that Marc Meltonville, Royal Palace Food Historian, was tasked with the challenge of finding the Chocolate Kitchen, which was built for William and Mary but mainly served the Georgian kings.

After months of painstaking research an inventory made after the death of William III was found, which showed an entry stating that there was a chocolate room, 8<sup>th</sup> door on the right in Fountain Court. This proved to

be a room that had been used as storage for Florimania items, but once emptied they were amazed to find the kitchen still intact – the original range where the beans would have been roasted, Georgian shelves and even the original fold-down table for preparing the drink, still firmly fixed to the wall.

Next came the task of showing the equipment that was used, and pots and cups were reproduced, based on written descriptions and illustrations from the late 17<sup>th</sup> / early 18<sup>th</sup> century. The chocolate pots, from which the drink was served, are similar in design to coffee pots, but with a hinged hole in the lid so that the contents could be stirred. Hot chocolate would have been served in cups, which were then placed inside a chocolate frame – a kind of saucer that was attached to the cup, to prevent any spills.

Marc explained that tea, coffee and chocolate all came to England during the 1650s. Coffee houses sprang up, where gentlemen would meet to discuss politics, arts and philosophy. The gentlemen would take their ladies to the more genteel tea houses, but they would take their mistresses to the chocolate houses!

So where does chocolate come from? Marc told us that the cacao tree only grows in a fairly narrow band of latitude in the tropics and is native to Central and South America. The pods emerge from anywhere on the tree, and contain a sweet white pulp and very bitter seeds. Interestingly, early explorers totally ignored the Mayan culture of using this drink. Tea initially came from China, which had an acknowledged culture, and the North African culture surrounding coffee was recognised, however evidence of the Mayan culture was dismissed, despite artefacts proving the drinking of chocolate being found.

The process of turning the cacao seeds into chocolate is a long and complicated one. The seeds are left to ferment and then dried. They are then roasted, de-shelled, and the nib is pounded into a paste, a process that takes up to 30 hours. The longer the grind, the better the chocolate. The resultant paste is 54% fat, and has no natural sugar so is very bitter.

Thomas Tosier was the personal chocolate maker for George I and was in charge of roasting and grinding the seeds, adding water, sugar and spices and turning it into a drink fit for a king. He himself would have served it at the King's table. Tosier's will has been discovered, which shows he made a good living from chocolate. A picture of his wife, Grace, hangs in the Chocolate Kitchen, and after her husband's death, she opened an exclusive chocolate house in Greenwich.

Marc's talk about Hampton Court's Chocolate Kitchen was absolutely fascinating, and the Kitchen itself is well worth a visit. One word of warning though – it's known that the Spice Kitchen was in room 1, and Marc is keen to restore that to its original use. However, it's currently used as the ladies' loo...

#### **Saturday 4 June 2016 – Molesey Carnival**



Once again the Society had a stand at Molesey Carnival. We had photographs of previous Carnivals, the 1968 Floods and 'Then & Now'. It was a sunny day and, as usual, our tent was crowded and the displays attracted a lot of interest.

#### **Summer Strolls – Guided Walks through Kingston**

Tuesday 12 July at 10.30 am or Wednesday 13 July 2016 at 7.30 pm

*Report by Jenny Wood*

About forty members went on walks round Kingston Town Centre led by Kingston Tour Guides on the morning of Tuesday 12 July or the evening of Wednesday 13 July. The walks were led by three different guides and it seems that we were taken on slightly varying routes and that in some cases the guides emphasised different facts. The walks were extremely interesting and informative and we were given so much information that it would be impossible to attempt to summarise it all. Instead we have picked out a few facts which we found particularly interesting.

Many people believe that Kingston derived its name from the Coronation Stone (King's stone) but in fact its name comes from the Old English words 'cyning' and 'tun', meaning 'the king's estate'. The first written mention of Kingston is as Cyningestun in 838.

There are claims that seven Saxon kings were crowned in Kingston but there is only firm documentary evidence to show that two were crowned there – King Athelstan and King Ethelred the Unready. 'Unready' is a mistranslation of the Old English word 'unraed', meaning 'badly advised'



### ***Frieze Depicting the Saxon Kings in Eden Street***

The Domesday Book lists 3 salmon fisheries, 5 mills, one church and about 500 people in the Royal Manor of Kingston. The coat of arms of the Royal Borough of Kingston upon Thames shows three salmon, representing the fisheries mentioned in the Domesday Book.

The church listed in the Domesday Book was the old Saxon building of St Mary's Chapel. There are markers in the churchyard of All Saints Church showing the extent of this chapel. The chapel collapsed in 1730 when the sexton, Abram Hammerton, was digging a grave with the help of his son and daughter. The sexton was killed and his son and daughter buried under the rubble for more than seven hours before being freed.

All Saints Church was built by the Normans in the 12<sup>th</sup> century. Originally the church had a spire but this was destroyed by a storm in 1455 and, after being rebuilt, destroyed again by a hurricane in 1703. This time it was not replaced.

Eden Street was previously called Heathen Street. There were several non-conformist churches in the street and in the 19<sup>th</sup> century the Anglicans poked fun at the non-conformists for worshipping in Heathen Street. This led to its name being changed.



During the 1930s Bentalls new store was built. At the request of Leonard Bentall the architect, Maurice Webb, based the design of the store on the façade of Hampton Court designed by Christopher Wren. Webb appointed Eric Gill to carve the stonework but Bentall fell out with Gill over the leopard shown above the coat of arms on the façade. Bentall contended that the Bentall family name was dishonoured as the leopard looked like a dog as its tail curved downwards rather than up like the tail of a cat. Gill offered to add a few more spots to show that it was a leopard but the Bentall family was not impressed and refused to acknowledge Gill's contribution.

Kingston's 'cathedral', according to the guides, is the Bentall Centre which was designed on cathedral lines.

The Druid's Head is an old coaching inn in Kingston Market Place. The right hand side of the property as you look at it from the Market Place has changed very little and contains a fine 17<sup>th</sup> century staircase leading to well-preserved Stuart rooms on the upper floor. On the evening walk we were shown the staircase and encouraged to return and ask to see the rooms on the upper floor in better light.

If you would like to find out more about Kingston's history, Kingston Tour Guides run walks every Sunday from April to September and on the first Sunday of the month from October to March. Walks start at the Church Gates in the Market Place at 11 a.m., last about 1½ hours and cost £5.

Ian Smith of Frederick W. Paine very kindly opened their museum at 24 Old London Road on the evening of 13 July and several of us visited this after the walk. Frederick W. Paine has conducted funerals from this property for over a century. Ian showed us many of the interesting artefacts in the museum and told us about some of the funerals which they have conducted, including that of Harry Hawker, one of the co-founders of Hawker aircraft.

**Eadward the Elder 900** – killed a lot of Vikings.

**Athelstan 925** (definitely crowned in Kingston) – very religious.

**Eadmund 940** – at a feast, an intruder attempted to kill a servant and the King intervened and was killed himself.

**Eadred 946** – Weak king ruled by his mother (who can be seen looming over him).

**Eadwig 956** – was found enjoying himself with women instead of being at a meeting of nobles!

**Eadward the Martyr** – was assassinated, buried and disinterred a year later when his body was said not to have decomposed. This was taken as a miraculous sign and he is recognised as a saint.

**Aethelred the Unready** – See above.

## Cameras and Corsets – Dating Historical Photographs

Talk by Jane Lewis

Wednesday 14 September 2016

Report by Anthony Barnes

“It’s easier to date the fashion than the photograph” declared Jane Lewis. An old family portrait showing three generations of women illustrated the point perfectly: the grandmother decked out in the fashions of yesteryear, the mother a little behind the times and the daughter wearing the latest fashion. Outfits and hairstyles can be dated – even for men whose clothes and facial hair changed more subtly than those of women. These clues give important indications as to not just when a photograph was taken but where. Fashions then as now could vary depending on where you live; but dating photos is still full of pitfalls. The sitters could be wearing the clothes they kept for ‘best’ which were long out of fashion when the picture was taken or they might be wearing clothes that the photographer supplied (agricultural smocks were highly popular, recalling a vanished rural idyll).

Jane’s illustrated talk was full of rich detail enlivened by humorous asides and personal anecdotes of her own family history photographs. She treated us to a whistle-stop tour of fashion from the 1860s to the mid-twentieth century which never flagged or felt rushed. It is clearly a passion which serves her well in her day job at the Surrey History Centre in Woking. When dating photographs for the archives, she is helped by others in the team with particular specialisms such as uniforms and forms of transport which can provide other important clues to the age of a picture. Jane is willing to help visitors to the Centre with dating any photos that they bring along or you can email them to Jane at [shs@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:shs@surreycc.gov.uk).

If you missed the talk and would like to know more about how to date old photos, Jane provided a useful bibliography of fashion and photography books, websites, societies and collections. Please contact Anthony Barnes for a copy (020 8979 6744 or [people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org](mailto:people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org)). If you would like a taster of the resources she lists, [www.rogerco.freeserve.co.uk](http://www.rogerco.freeserve.co.uk) is a wonderful collection of Edwardian and Victorian photographs.

### People and Buildings – Educating Molesey

The Society is planning its next major research effort – an exhibition on schools and schooling in East and West Molesey to be held next autumn. We are looking for volunteers to join members of the People and Buildings interest group to help with preparing for the event. If you would like to be involved, please let Anthony Barnes know (020 8979 6744 or [people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org](mailto:people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org)). The group will not be holding bi-monthly meetings, but meetings will be arranged for the ‘Educating Molesey’ project as and when necessary.

We would also like to hear from anyone who has memories or memorabilia of their own school days in Molesey, e.g. stories, photographs, school magazines, exercise books, uniforms. We have access to cameras, scanners and photocopiers so you do not need to part with originals. Again please let Anthony know in the first instance.

### Kitty Marion and The Arson at Hurst Park Grandstand – ‘A Beacon for Women’s Rights’

by Anthony Barnes



In the early hours of Monday 9 June 1913, suffragettes Kitty Marion and Clara Given set fire to the grandstand at Hurst Park racecourse. For over two hours, firefighters from five brigades battled the blaze. It lit up the sky as far as Carshalton where the local fire brigade turned out thinking the fire was in their area! Kitty Marion had planned the arson attack as a beacon for women’s suffrage and a fitting reprisal for “the supreme sacrifice” made by Emily Wilding Davison who had been struck down by the King’s horse at the Derby on the previous Wednesday. The damage to the grandstand, the members’ and Tattershall’s stands, the kitchens and dining rooms was estimated at over £6,000.

### ***Kitty Marion being arrested after heckling David Lloyd George on 5th September, 1912***

What does the Hurst Park incident tell us about the Women’s Social and Political Union (WSPU) campaign to win the vote in 1913 and about Kitty Marion who masterminded it?

The failure of the suffrage movement to make progress by constitutional means had led the WSPU to develop its policy of ‘deeds not words’. The actions of militant suffragettes like Kitty Marion had steadily escalated from heckling and whipping MPs to arson and bomb attacks. Sanctioned by Emmeline and Christabel Pankhurst, suffragette activists launched an all-out attack on private and public property in 1913. There were an estimated 330 bombings and arson attacks between 1913 and August 1914 when the campaign was suspended at the

outbreak of World War One. The arson at Hurst Park grandstand was part of an ever more desperate and determined attempt to force the issue of women's right to vote and one can only speculate what both sides in the dispute might have done next had war not intervened.

Kitty Marion was one of those members of the WSPU who opposed the suspension of the campaign in 1914. Born in Westphalia in 1871, she came to England when she was 15 to escape a tyrannical father. Here she experienced modest success as a touring music hall artiste and actress. Her anger at the casting couch and 'white slave traffic' in the theatre (tricking would-be actresses into the sex trade) led her to join the WSPU in 1908 and to co-found the Actresses' Franchise League in the same year for the regulation of theatrical agents. From then on she became a tireless campaigner for women's rights graduating from writing to the press and giving public lectures to stone-throwing and incendiarism. She was imprisoned on seven occasions and endured 232 force feedings in prison while on hunger strike. Kitty was sentenced to three-and-a-half years in prison for the arson attack on Hurst Park but was released after four-and-a-half months under the terms of the so-called 'Cat and Mouse Act' (for the temporary discharge of ill prisoners). She had not intended to get caught when she plotted the outrage! Unfortunately, the police knew about the safe house in Twickenham where she and Clara planned to hide after the fire. The police also found the piece of carpet they used to protect themselves from the spikes and barbed wire when they climbed over the fence from the cricket ground and matched it with a piece at the home of Kitty's landlady.

As Kitty had been born in Germany, the government decided to deport her from Britain in 1914 but following protests from influential figures in the women's movement she was allowed to go to the United States where she lived until her death in 1944. Once in America, she resumed her career as a campaigner, this time providing information on contraception to give women control over their own bodies – another important strand of the women's movement. Selling birth control literature on the streets of New York was illegal and Kitty was arrested nine times and imprisoned for 30 days in 1918; but later, in 1930, she was honoured for her work by the American Birth Control League. In that same year, she also visited England briefly for the unveiling of the statue to Emmeline Pankhurst in London and gave a copy of her autobiography to the Fawcett Library.

Until recently, the contribution of Kitty Marion to the fight for women's rights had been largely neglected. It is true that the arson at Hurst Park was only one of many high profile attacks carried out by her, but it attracted considerable publicity at the time and for a brief moment put Molesey at the heart of the struggle for votes for women.

## **60 YEARS AGO**

### **THE MOLESEY REVIEW June 1956 – September 1956**

#### **June Review**

The approximate population of Molesey was 14,550 (East Molesey 6,920, West Molesey 7,630).

The residents of Molemer Road sent a petition to the Thames Conservancy Board asking for the removal of the weeds in the Mole, which were a nuisance to boats and fishermen.

"Old Timer" reported that Nielson's playing field was "in a deplorably neglected condition" and suggested its development for a couple of soccer pitches or an athletic track.

The Girl Guide company and the Brownies at St Paul's were being restarted.

#### **July Review**

'Comment' said, "The fate of one of our cherished traditional events is in the balance: the postman's knock and Christmas Cards on Christmas morning." The Union of Post Office Workers was seeking the abolition of Christmas Day deliveries.

There was a record entry of 18 local girls for the Carnival Queen contest, which was won by Miss Pat Smith. The Carnival procession was due to leave Weston Avenue at 1.30 p.m. on its way to Cigarette Island. Arena shows at the Carnival were to include a display of horsemanship, a show by the Welcome Club concert party, a concert by the military band from Kneller Hall, an exhibition of judo, dancing and a display by the Surrey Lambretta Club. There would also be a baby show and a donkey derby. In the evening there was to be dancing on the lawn from 9.30 until 11 p.m.

"Old Timer" was complaining about "the refuse which is flung into the River Mole" and about the "very worst rubbish dump in Molesey ... on the waste land at the junction of Molesey Avenue, Eastcote Avenue and Central Avenue, West Molesey. It's disgusting" He said that, "Within a few square yards I saw a Valor stove, a dustbin lid, and attaché case, an oil-can, a bath, three bicycle frames, a galvanised tank, part of a lorry, two pushchairs, sundry pieces of corrugated iron, a mattress ... and other odds and ends."

Molesey Regatta was to take place on Friday and Saturday, 20th and 21st July, with racing on the Friday evening and Saturday afternoon over the course in use during the period 1867 to 1886. "It may interest readers to know that when the selection of the course for the Royal Regatta first came under discussion, Henley and Molesey were the two favoured sites and the final choice was Henley."

### August and September Reviews

'Comment' asked if readers could claim to have the same vocabulary as Sir Winston Churchill. "Out of a potential 60,000 words in general use, this politician, author and master of oratory employs no fewer than 25,000 to 30,000. The average well educated man cannot aspire to such heights: his working vocabulary stretches to only 7,000 or 8,000; his speech is strongly repetitive."

Since St. Francis Hall was built about 20 years previously, it had gradually become less and less well known. Rev. Spargo tried to "put it on the map again" by organising a summer fair.

Molesey cyclist Mike Gambrell won the National Amateur Pursuit Championship, beating T. Simpson in the final. He was then chosen to represent Great Britain in the World Championships in Denmark and the Olympic Games at Melbourne. Mike had only taken up track cycling at the beginning of the year and had little time for serious training as he had been attending night school. However, he reached the semi-finals of the World Championships.

Pigeon racing was one of the most popular sports in Molesey. There had recently been a big race starting at Cognac in France, about 400 miles away. Only one Molesey pigeon made it home the same day; that pigeon came second in the 'London Area and the Southern Roads Combine' out of a total entry of nearly 2,000.

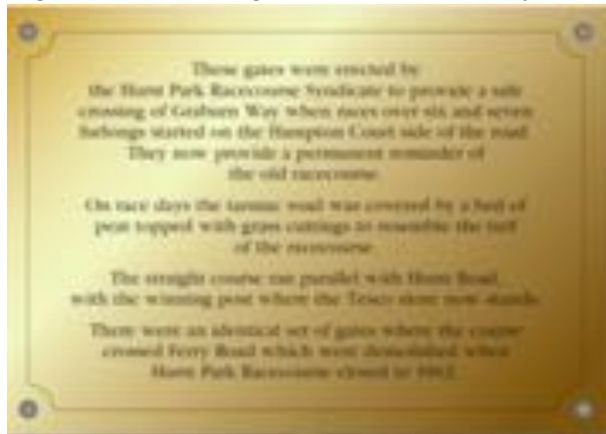
"No news is yet forthcoming regarding the occupants of the new shops adjacent to Woolworths Walton Road store."

The local historian, James Williams, wrote to the Review saying that, "The Post Office officially adopted the spelling 'Molesey' in the first half of the year 1858 instead of 'Moulsey' which was the usual spelling until then. The older spelling continued to be used locally for a number of years after that date."

Esher Urban District Council had approved in principle a modified scheme for the proposed widening to 24 feet of the carriageway of Walton Road between Park Road and Spencer Road.

### Graburn Way Gates

Exactly forty years to the day since the last race on the Hurst Park racecourse, a plaque was unveiled on the original Hurst Park gates at Graburn Way, East Molesey, explaining the gates' origin.



Horses were raced on Molesey Hurst from the 1700s but a formal enclosed flat racing course was laid out in 1891 and the last race was run on 10th October 1962.

The Molesey Local History Society was asked for advice with this plaque, and Stewart Nash, a Society member and local expert on the racecourse, supplied the final wording.

The plaque was funded by a grant from Elmbridge Borough Council, and organised by the Thames Landscape Strategy [Weybridge-Hampton-Kew], which was established to conserve, enhance and promote the remarkable River Thames. It's part of a wider project to enhance and improve the riverside and towpath in this area.

### **Surrey in the Great War Open Day Wednesday 30 November, 11am - 4pm**

**Kingston United Reform Church, Eden Street, Kingston upon Thames, KT1 1HZ**

*Displays about the Kingston area in World War One and talks on topics relevant to WWI in Kingston (the SGW project, the Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment, Surrey men who served in the Navy and the Sopwith Aviation Company).*

*Drop in - attend for as much or as little time as suits. Attendance is free and a free sandwich lunch will be provided for all attendees. For more info contact [surreyinthegreatwar@surreycc.gov.uk](mailto:surreyinthegreatwar@surreycc.gov.uk)*

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