

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Thursday 16th September 8 p.m.
The Archaeology of Hampton Court Palace
Talk by Ian Franklin

St Lawrence Junior School Church Road East Molesey



Ian, a former State Apartment Warder at Hampton Court Palace, will take us on a trip back through the history of the Palace site from the Bronze Age to the present. You will see artefacts and parts of the Palace never usually seen by the public – because they are in store or reburied! You will see parts of the Knights Hospitaller's settlement, Charles Daubeny's buildings, Wolsey's Palace etc., you will visit excavations in Clock and Base Courts, join the Timeteam as they uncover Henry's Bowling Alley, and visit the Tiltyard Gardens to see the recently discovered remains of the fourth of five of Henry VIII's Tiltyard Towers. There is a charge for members of £1 and for guests of £3, which can be paid by cash or card. Guests are welcome.

*Ian on the site of the most
recently discovered Tiltyard Tower*

Thursday 25th November 8 p.m.
Molesey's Enclosure Story: Looking for lost fields
St Lawrence Junior School Church Road East Molesey

This year is the two hundredth anniversary of the enclosure of Molesey's open fields. It is hard to exaggerate the significance of this event. The manorial system of farming in existence for over 700 years was swept away. A major part of the Society's research effort this year has been to piece together the story of the enclosure. Who was involved? What were their motives? Who were the winners and losers? How did it change Molesey and what traces of its legacy can we find in the landscape today?

APPEAL FOR INFORMATION/PHOTOGRAPHS

Next year will be the Platinum Jubilee of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II. To mark the occasion, we should like to prepare a display about royalty and Molesey. If anyone has any information about, or photographs of, any member of the Royal Family, either past or present, in Molesey we should be very grateful if you would please be prepared to pass on the information and let us have copies of any photograph. Please contact Jenny Wood 020 8979 0889, chair@moleseyhistorysociety.org.

MEETING REPORTS

ZOOM COFFEE MORNING
Hampton Court Village - Residencies and Residents
Talk by Richard McHardy
Thursday 27th May 2021
Report by Paula Day

Richard, who is a City of Westminster Guide, lives in Molesey, and has been a member of the Society for many years. He was inspired to find out about some of the historic houses in Hampton Court Village during the lockdown period. He began his talk by reminding us that although the Bridge Road area has now styled itself as Hampton Court Village, the Village was initially located north of the river, and was there to serve the needs of the Palace.



His talk concentrated on three notable houses, the first being Hampton Court House, which is entered via Campbell Road on the north side of the Green. It is a Grade II listed building, built around 1757 for George Montagu Dunk, 2nd Earl of Halifax, who was also Chief Steward of the manor of Hampton Court. The house was influenced by the Rococo style. Richard told us of the somewhat scandalous early history of the house, which the Earl bought as a love nest, sending his mistress's husband off to a profitable job in the colonies!

Thomas Wright, who was known as an astronomer but turned his hand to many things, designed the house and gardens, which included an amazing shell grotto which must have influenced his neighbour David Garrick to build his own. The house has been owned by a number of aristocrats, including the 12th Earl of Suffolk and John Montagu, 4th Earl of Sandwich. It is now used as a private school and a wedding and conference venue.



The second house in Richard's talk was Faraday House on Hampton Court Road. It was built in the early 18th century on the site of an earlier Master Mason's house. It is now divided into two properties, Faraday House and Cardinal House. It was given to Michael Faraday as a Grace and Favour house, and he and his wife Sarah lived here between 1858 and 1867.

In the 1890s, the house was occupied by three princesses of the Punjab; Bamba, Catherine and Sophia Duleep Singh. Sophia was born in Norfolk and was a Goddaughter of Queen Victoria. Richard showed some images of her lifestyle, including a Landau coach, a Steinway grand piano, a Morgan car and a Borzoi dog.

She was a keen cyclist and was also a member of the East Molesey Hockey club. Sophia was more a Suffragette than a Suffragist – she campaigned outside Hampton Court Palace, refused to pay taxes, and once threw herself in front of Prime Minister Asquith's car. She also took part in the infamous Black Friday march and petition to the House of Commons on 18th November 1911. Richard speculated as to whether Princess Sophia could have had any prior knowledge of the arson attack on the Hurst Park Racecourse grandstand in June 1913. During World War One, she was a nurse in the British Red Cross Voluntary Aid Detachment, and after World War Two, she did her bit towards achieving Indian independence in 1947.



The final property in Richard's tour of Hampton Court Village was Wilderness House, commissioned by William III in 1698 within the grounds of the Palace as the house of the Master Gardener. Its first occupant was Henry Wise, who was a gardener in the more formal style and who lowered the Privy Garden by 8 feet so that the King got a view of the river. In the 1760s, Lancelot "Capability" Brown took up residence, and added a dining room and kitchen to the house. More importantly, his lasting contribution to the Palace gardens was planting the Great Vine which is still going strong.

Another notable occupant of Wilderness House was Grand Duchess Xenia, the sister of Tsar Nicholas II and cousin to our King George V. She fled Russia after the fall of the Romanov dynasty in 1917 and eventually came to Wilderness House where she installed a Russian Orthodox chapel in the dining room and became the focus for London's White Russian community. During the Blitz in World War Two, the house was hit by an oil bomb, and her daughter-in-law killed.

Many thanks to Richard for a very interesting and entertaining talk – I'll certainly take a closer look at those houses whenever I go past. If you were unable to listen to the talk at the time, it can be found in the 'Members Only' section of our website. (Password Mlhs2017)

SUMMER STROLL
Talk by Roger Hoad
Royal British Legion St. Mary's Road
East Molesey KT8 0ST
Report by Dave Jupp

On Wednesday, 4th August 2021, just under 50 members met in St Andrew's Hall, now the British Legion, in preparation for our Summer Stroll. This was our first physical gathering since lockdown, so it was good to see so many.



Quilleys Royal

After a brief welcome by Jenny Wood (Chair), we were introduced to our walking route by Roger Hoad. He gave a 30-minute presentation on what to look out for while walking.

Roger started with a short history of Molesey Manors (Prior and Matham) and explained the possible boundary ditch of the Caundle River and its development into Matham and Walton Roads. He then moved into St Mary's Road and Bell Road and out into the fields of Cow Common and the Wilderness. We visited places such as The Bell Inn (our first Post Office), Park House and Quilleys Royal (all listed buildings) to name but a few.

The route took us over the Rivers Mole and Ember, and we were able to see/imagine where the rivers originally meandered around Molesey prior to the flood alleviation works of the 1950s.

As members undertook the walk, many questions were asked, with some members visiting areas where they had never been before and yet others seeing things that they had passed many times and had not noticed.

An enjoyable stroll was had by all.

Members unable to attend can obtain details of the walk and a map in the 'Members Only' section of our website.

GLENLYN MEDICAL PRACTICE
(until 1993)

By Jenny Wood



James Jenkinson Knox

In our last newsletter, we published an article by Anthony Barnes about the history of Glenlyn in Molesey Park Road. In this article, I am looking at the history of the doctors' practice who moved into Glenlyn in 1993. I should like to thank John Humble, Dr Humble's son, and Dr Kenneth Brown for the information and help which they have given me and Primrose Knox for the photographs of Dr John Knox.

The origins of the practice can be traced back to the Knox brothers. James Jenkinson Knox came to Molesey about 1891 as assistant to Dr Skimming. He was a noted football player and played for Derby County, Cambridge University and Surrey. He was instrumental in founding Molesey Football Club. He started his own medical practice in 1893 and in May that year was appointed as Medical Officer of Health to the East Molesey Local Board. In the same year, he married Evelyn Andrews, the daughter of Herbert Andrews, the first owner of Glenlyn.

James Knox lived and practised at Redlands, which was situated in Walton Road on the corner of Hansler Grove. James died after a short illness at Redlands on Christmas Day 1898 at the age of 32. When he died, his younger brother Dr John Edmund (Eddie) Knox came to Molesey from Bakewell in Derbyshire where both he and James had been born. Eddie moved into Redlands and took over his brother's practice. He remained at Redlands until about 1910. He then lived for a short time in The Limes, 5 Palace Road, before buying The Hollies, 12 Palace Road, about 1911. The Hollies remained his home and surgery until he died in 1932. (*For further information about The Hollies see Newsletter no.46 September 2019*)

As well as succeeding his brother as the Medical Officer of Health for East and West Molesey in February 1899, Eddie Knox also took over from him as Public Vaccinator for the Molesey District of the Kingston Union and the doctor of Hurst Park racecourse. He later became Honorary Surgeon for the East Molesey and Hampton Court Cottage Hospitals and Medical Superintendent of the Molesey Isolation Hospital and for many years he was the Police Divisional Surgeon for Molesey.



Dr John (Eddie) Knox as a young man and in later life

During the majority of his time in Molesey, Eddie Knox worked as a sole practitioner, as was common in the first half of the 20th century but, in 1927, he decided that he needed some help and advertised for an assistant. John Humble replied to the advert and travelled from his home in Scotland to Molesey for an interview, which took the form of a social chat with Mrs Knox as “The Doctor” was out on his rounds. Dr Knox only appeared just before Dr Humble had to leave to catch his return train and he limited his enquiries to whether John could ride a horse, or would be prepared to learn, and when he would be able to start work. John Humble had never been on a horse in his life, so after starting work as Dr Knox’s assistant he took lessons after each evening’s surgery to enable him to attend as a medical officer at Hurst Park Racecourse. During any hurdle race or steeplechase the attending doctor was required to ride to the centre of the course and wait there in case there were any problems with a fallen rider. Dr Humble confessed that, “The first few times I was petrified. But Kitty the mare knew more about what was going on than I did and I needn’t have worried. Each time the ambulance started up, Kitty immediately followed; I just sat still and went with her.” (Roy M. Humble ‘While You Sleep A Personal Journey in Anaesthesia’).



5 Spencer Road

When John Humble first came to Molesey, he lived at The Hollies with Dr and Mrs Knox, but about 1930, he moved to 5 Spencer Road. In the same year, he became Dr Knox’s partner, and also got married. When Dr Humble became Dr Knox’s assistant in 1927, he could not afford a car so did his rounds on a bicycle with a medical bag tied to the back carrier. Unfortunately, his bicycle was stolen on his first house call and the Knox family lent him a motorcycle and sidecar to visit his patients. Two years later, he bought his first car with the help of a loan from his father.



By this time, Eddie Knox had been using a car for about 20 years. He initially used a horse and carriage to visit his patients, but soon after this photograph of his horse and carriage was taken about 1907, he became an early user of a motor car, buying one of the first motor cars to be seen in the area. When he died, his two-seater motor car which he used in his practice followed the coffin to St Mary’s Church where the funeral took place and then to the cemetery in West Molesey where he was buried.

Dr Knox’s driver, George Gray, driving through the River Ember watersplash in Summer Road.



Dr Knox's car and chauffeur outside The Hollies. We think that the car is an A.C.Sociable built between 1907 and 1914 by the company that later became known as A.C.Cars Limited. The company was founded in 1904 and moved to Ferry Works, Thames Ditton in 1911. The first car produced by the company in 1904 was a commercial vehicle, the Auto-Carrier. This was an immediate success, as it was a quicker and more efficient means of transporting goods around towns and cities than either horses or bicycles. In 1907, a passenger version called the A.C. Sociable, was introduced with a seat in place of the cargo box. The A.C. Sociable was described in a review of the 1912 Motor Cycle and Cycle Car Show as "one of the most popular cycle cars on the road, both for pleasure and business". The single rear wheel contained a two-speed hub, and the single-cylinder engine was mounted just in front of it, with rear chain drive. The A.C.Sociable was frequently referred to in the company's adverts as 'The Mighty Atom'.

In May 1932, Eddie Knox died unexpectedly at the age of 62, after collapsing while visiting a patient. In its report of the funeral service, the Surrey Comet said, "As the cortege left the church and made its way to the cemetery, hundreds of people including women with babies in arms, shopkeepers and residents lined the streets and paid their last tributes to a beloved physician."

(To be continued)

MEMORIES OF EAST MOLESEY BOYS' SCHOOL 1964-1968

By Jim Fife

At 7 years old, my parents opted for me to go to East Molesey Boys' School, or "Farrow's", as it was called, as opposed to "Dunkley's". I didn't object to this as I thought "Dunkley's" was too close a word to "Dunce's". However, it involved a bus journey or 1 mile walk from Molesey Avenue. There were a few of us who made the journey together- John Stewart, Chris Bush, John Hunt, Peter Rowe and me. The 131 bus cost 2d. (old pence) each way starting from Central Avenue shops, outside the Post Office, and we disembarked opposite the cobblers in Walton Road, opposite Pemberton Road. In the summer, we would walk all the way along Walton Road and talk about James Bond films, pop groups and so on. If we walked, we had enough cash to buy some of yesterday's cakes at the East Molesey Bakery in Walton Road to eat on the way to school.



East Molesey Boys' School

EMB School in Park Road was a Victorian institution where I think many things had remained unchanged in the 20th century. Discipline was incredibly strict and competition was fierce by modern standards. Corridor prefects were appointed to ensure that pupils walked down one side of the corridor for each direction. Pupils were seated in class according to their ability, after a series of tests, and a report was issued every term for each pupil which went home in a sealed envelope.

Structurally, the school was classic Victorian, with large high domed windows, varnished floorboards throughout, many layers of paint on brick walls. I remember thinking that the fact that the first 4-5 feet of wall around the school was painted dark red could be significant, quite frightening for a 7 year old on first entering. Every class had a large boiler shielded by a fireguard; the crates of cold milk bottles were brought in and stacked next to the boiler for a few minutes in winter to take the chill off. A new toilet block was built on the side of the school soon after I arrived.

I jumped the lower class (Mrs Fulljames) and went straight into Mrs Barnshaw's. I remember a painting on the wall of rocks and a rough sea, and sometimes thought being on a boat there would be preferable to being subject to Mrs Barnshaw's strictures. For spelling tests, we would face the class and be asked to spell words until we failed. We were divided into houses for activities. Drake, Scott, Nelson and Raleigh, which were Red, Yellow, Blue and Green. I remember feeling a bit "at sea" because I had deserted my colleagues at Sunnymead, who had mainly gone to "Dunkley's". Especially, it was unfair that girls weren't included at EMB. I spent two years in Mrs Barnshaw's class and remember (not fondly) her love of "Nature Studies - plants, flowers and so on. I was more interested in "real" science, cars, jet engines, radios etc.

In the third year at EMB, I enjoyed myself much more. I was invited to join the school soccer team, despite being only in the third year out of four. This involved travelling around the district, once a week, playing against other schools. Mr Webb, my teacher, was also a more appropriate mentor than Mrs Barnshaw, with his light blue Jaguar saloon, Sherlock Holmes pipe and an adventurous style of teaching. Fewer Nature Studies, more Jet engines and Maths! We started playing soccer in the playground, but because this wasn't allowed with a football, we used ping-pong balls or, more dangerously, marbles. I was a dinner monitor, and along with two or three others, was chosen to read out what was to come for lunch. I remember starting to suffer migraines around this time, and I was convinced that the school "mince" played a part in that. The worst part of my week was reading out "Lunch today is Mince" Other lunches I remember were Liver and Bacon, Cottage pie, Roast beef, Steak and kidney pudding and a bacon suet roly-poly, which would be outlawed today on health grounds. For pudding I remember loving the very rectangular pieces of "jam tart". I remember a large portrait of Queen Elizabeth II displayed on the wall in the dining hall.

In the fourth (final) year we were taught by Scot Charles Thompson, who was a musician, pianist and English Language perfectionist. We sang along to Scottish songs, such as Mairie's wedding, the Road to the Isles, and so on. We made certain our reading ages were at maximum (11+ I think). Reading ages were displayed on the wall for all to see, so with a 7 year old reading age at 11 you were regarded as without hope. The 11+ exam came to me quite unexpectedly - I hadn't been made aware of either its existence or importance, and remember, despite being taught traditional English, that that didn't stand me in good stead for verbal reasoning. I think I passed on the basis of good maths, which came naturally to me. Catechism had to be memorised, and I remember being terrified at the possibility that I wouldn't remember parts of it when asked to recite it in front of the class. Reading tests were carried out to verify one's "reading age" on a termly basis in Mr Farrow's study. A list of words typed on a sheet of A4 was provided by Mr Farrow, placed on a lectern, and each child would individually be invited to read through the list. Words became more and more difficult as you read down the page.

Mr Farrow owned a light blue Triumph 2000, and I remember locking the door having got into the car on the way to a soccer match only to be told "never lock a car door. If we're in an accident, the police wouldn't get you out". A good man, with half-moon glasses, he would push forward the most able, and give responsibility to those he thought would cope with it. I remember hearing the news of the Aberfan Disaster sitting in class in the fourth year at EMB. About the same time, we heard the first supersonic jet "bang" over the school. Mr Farrow's study was situated on the left-hand side after entering the wide front school door. There was therefore an ingrained fear on entering the school that Mr Farrow would catch you for something - a crooked tie, shirt not tucked in. He would also occasionally peer through the window into class and just watch to note any misbehaviour not being picked up by the class teacher, or where things were happening when the teacher was facing the blackboard. There was the occasional caning in the headmaster's study. In class, light whacks on the backside with a cane would happen on a weekly basis for minor stupidities or really poor performance. It was a good incentive to work hard and keep one's nose clean.

Despite the discipline, I increasingly liked the school. I was given the job of guarding the school gate and front door at lunch time. The milk would be delivered and placed on shelves outside the front door first thing in the morning, and the one-third pint bottles would then be distributed to classes in crates. Arriving in class frozen in mid-winter, we would then drink frozen milk! I remember a Miss Ashby, who arrived as a peripatetic teacher in our last year and was the only female teacher who was under 50 years old in the school!

I learned the nature of regret in the fourth year. I was a slam dunk for the school soccer team, having unusually played for it in the third year. However, a choice came along as Mr Farrow decided for the first time in EMB's history that the preferred few in the final year would be given the chance of swimming in Kingston Coronation Pool, but on the football afternoon! Whether it was wanting to back-up Mr Farrow's new idea, or whether because my best friend chose swimming, I opted for that. Mr Webb was distraught, and then so was I... he'd picked me for the school team in year 3, and now I was deserting him to go swimming in year 4! I actually preferred soccer, but couldn't find a way to reverse my decision, and regrettably lost my place in the team.

60 YEARS AGO - THE MOLESEY REVIEW - June 1961

The editorial comment discussed the question of whether we should join the European Economic Community of France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, Luxembourg and Belgium which was formed in 1958. "By joining, we would gain access to the market. But our economy would be geared to that of the other members. Our food, the cheapest in Europe, would go up because farm subsidies would almost certainly disappear. This might save us income tax – and the defence burden might be more evenly shared. But there might be direction of our manpower, and dictation about what goods we could make. As a European government emerged, many people fear that partnership today may spell puppetry tomorrow."

The Molesey Division of St John's Ambulance Brigade was organising the Hurst Park Horse Show on 10th June. In 1960, 300 horses took part and it was hoped that this figure would be nearly doubled for the 1961 show.

The Molesey Hurst Cricket Club appealed for playing and non-playing members. The Club was formed in 1946 and played on the Hurst Park Paddock situated on the corner of Hurst Road and New Road.

The 'Manor Barn Society' was endeavouring to preserve the "Manor Barn" which lay on the borders of Molesey and Thames Ditton and was about 500 years old. The Society applied for a grant for the external restoration, which it was estimated would cost between £4,000 and £5,000, from Esher Council, but the Council refused its application. Because of the historical value of the building, the Molesey Society wrote to the Council asking them to refer the matter back to the appropriate committee for further consideration.

Radnor House on the corner of Walton Road and Hansler Grove had been compulsorily purchased by the Council and was to be pulled down and replaced by 'a new home for the aged'. The other corner of Walton Road and Hansler Grove had become "a rubbish dump housing 1 omnibus, 1 car minus wheels, 2 or 3 boats, 2 sheds, 1 caravan and various abandoned signs."

In a talk which he gave to the Molesey Society on 'The History of Molesey', Rowland Baker quoted from a book called "Rambles by the River Mole" written in 1844 which described East Molesey as "a lovely rustic village" and from a book entitled "Churches in Surrey" which in 1910 referred to Molesey as an "ugly suburban looking village", a big change in little more than half a century.

The Review contained an article by Rowland Baker on Wedding Customs. He said that one of these was the scattering of flowers in and around the church, as indicated by the following entry in the school logbook at East Molesey, "August 31, 1869 The children were taken to church in the morning to strew flowers after a marriage ceremony." Mr Baker speculated that this custom may have had its origin in offerings to Hymen, the god of marriage, and said that it is perpetuated by the custom of the bride and her attendants carrying bouquets of flowers. A wedding custom which was popular in East Molesey was the playing of 'Rough Music'. "After the groom had returned with his bride to their home after the marriage ceremony, all his friends and acquaintances, which usually meant the whole village, gathered around the house and 'serenaded' the couple with the 'music' of stones rattled in tins, or with sheets of metal beaten with sticks, saucepan lids banged together, or any other means of creating a din." Mr Baker said that the last time this custom seems to have taken place was around 1896.

ELMBRIDGE MUSEUM

New Exhibitions

100 Years of Remembrance, at Dittons Library and online <https://elmbridgemuseum.org.uk/online-exhibitions/100-years-of-remembrance/>

The Royal British Legion has remembered fallen war veterans since 1921. In this collaborative exhibition to mark a century since its formation, Years 8 and 9 at Hinchley Wood Secondary School have produced an array of stunning creative pieces, all of which use original local artefacts in the Museum's collection, to reflect on what remembrance means to them. Their work highlights the extremely unique and personal significance the Poppy holds for each individual, while also commemorating our shared past.

Elmbridge Museum at 30, at Cobham Library and soon to be launched on the Museum's online exhibitions page. In 1991, Weybridge Museum became 'Elmbridge Museum'. The museum's long past is interwoven into over a century of local history, and has formed a key part of the area's changing identity over the decades. This exhibition, to celebrate 30 years of 'Elmbridge' Museum, examines the personalities, places and events which have shaped the museum's aims from its formation in 1909 right up to the present day.

A Day at the Races, at the Museum's new display case location, Xcel Leisure Centre foyer in Walton. This exhibition has been on display for a while but for any who missed it at Dittons Library the same items are now being displayed at Xcel. The online exhibition is here <https://elmbridgemuseum.org.uk/online-exhibitions/a-day-at-the-races/>

Produced by:
Molesey Local History Society
Email: enquiries@moleseyhistorysociety.org
Website: moleseyhistorysociety.org
Tel: 020 8979 0889