



Newsletter 3 Autumn 2007

Welcome to the third Newsletter of Molesey Local History Society. Since our inaugural meeting in March this year, we have gone from strength to strength, and now have over 230 members. Research groups have been established and your Committee has been working on next year's programme, and are considering talks on the fire at Hampton Court Palace, on Alfred Sisley, to coincide with an exhibition of Sisley's work at the National Gallery in November 2008, and a summer evening historic walk.

FORTHCOMING EVENTS

Tuesday 13 November

7.30 pm - Vine Hall, Vine Road

Relative Connections: Sources for Family History at Surrey History Centre

Find the route to your roots with this practical illustrated talk on sources for family history available at Surrey History Centre.

Vine Hall is in Vine Road, almost opposite the end of Dennis Road. Limited parking on site.

Refreshments will be available

Free of charge to members, £2 for guests, who are welcome.

CHRISTMAS PRESENT

Thursday 6 December - 5.30 to 8 pm

Tudors Estate Agents have kindly offered to host an MLHS exhibition on the evening of 6 December as part of the Molesey Village Late Night Shopping Event. They will also be selling the Rowland Baker books – The Book of Molesey and Thameside Molesey. Why not take this opportunity to support our local retailers, see the exhibition and pick up a couple of Christmas presents? The books are £15 each and also available at MLHS meetings and from Paula Day, 020 8979 4397.

Tuesday 15 January – 8 pm

**St Paul's Church, Palace Road
Members' Evening**

Do you have any memorabilia that you would like to show to other members? If so please let us know. Members of the Special Interest Groups will be talking about their groups and the areas that they are researching. This should be a fun and sociable evening (with mulled wine and cake), so it would be great if a lot of people could come along and learn more about Molesey, share their memorabilia and have the chance for a chat.

1st MOLESEY SCOUT EVENING

On the 7th of September we were invited to the 1st Molesey Scout Hut for an evening of scouting nostalgia. Ken Eldridge, John Duncan and Doreen Freeman spoke about how the group had developed over the years. They were all grateful for the Scouters, old and new, who had given time to the boys to become good citizens as Robert Baden Powell envisaged when he started Scouting in 1907.



The 1st Molesey was one of the first troops in scouting, being formed in 1908, initially meeting at St Mary's Church, then at St Andrew's Hall, which is now the Royal British Legion, before moving to their current hut.

Everyone enjoyed looking at photographs that were displayed, some dating back to 1912, which were collected over the years. Along with pictures were copies of the Scout Newsheet dating back to 1911. The photographs and memorabilia were interesting for everyone showing activities such as camping, parades and water sports from yesteryear to the present. Not all of the photographs were dated but if you think that you might know the dates, venues or people in the earlier photos please let us know

On the previous day a Nostalgia Evening was held for those associated with the 1st Molesey Scouts. This was a meeting of old friends showing the companionship of the Scouting movement.

SPECIAL INTEREST RESEARCH GROUPS

Transport

Transport and the way that it interacts with an area is highly important in local history. Indeed the way that the roads, rails and boats flow through an area, dictates how that area changes over time. Would anyone in Molesey be living in their current home if the railways had not come? Would river-based industries have built up elsewhere if there was no boat traffic? Therefore the role of the Local History Society's Transport special interest group is not just to know about transport in Molesey, but to also understand its impact.

This is of course a bit-by-bit journey. Our second meeting was held on the 12th of September. Members of the group were treated to a talk by group member and railway biographer John Chacksfield, who gave a presentation

on Dugald Drummond, Locomotive Superintendent of the London and South Western Railway. In the future we hope to get Audrey Giles to come and talk to the group as she has just completed a PhD on London and South Western staff living in Kingston.

We have a number of projects running and it has been decided that a couple of members will talk to friends who were involved in the boat building, while others will look generally into transport in the area. I myself am currently researching all 'Hampton Court Station' references in the National Archives as I conduct my PhD in railway history. As a group we have a number of goals. We wish to collate the data on-line to make it easily accessible to all Society members (with a hard copy of our findings based somewhere) and there has been some musing of a publication, but that is many moons away. Many group members also participate in the Model Railway Club that meets next door, and there is a plan to perhaps make a model of Hampton Court Station at the turn of the century. All that it leaves me to say is that if anyone has any information or would like to join please don't hesitate to contact me. Meetings are held in the Methodist Church Hall...all are welcome.

David Turner 07940 016255

People And Buildings

Our numbers are looking very healthy! 19 people came to the second meeting. Nearly half were 'first-timers'. We also had several apologies.

We started with a round of introductions. It was fascinating to hear people talking about their interests and Molesey connections. From this, the topics that people wanted to discuss seemed to

arise quite naturally. People got into small sub-groups to talk about:

People living and working in the large houses in Molesey and Hampton Court Palace: One group will start with studying Matham Manor. The present owners have joined the group and the first job is a measurement survey of the present building, for comparison with old maps.

Contacts: Jill Wilkins, 020 8979 3465 (Matham Manor), Dennis Ashbourne, 020 8979 8253 (Hampton Court)

Oral history recordings of people's experiences of Molesey schooldays

Contact: Rita Ashbourne, 020 8979 8253

The lives of artists who lived in Molesey for a time, especially Terence Cuneo (this year is the centenary of his birth), Alfred Sisley, Francis Frith (photographer) and Alfred de Breanski

The 1841 census for Molesey which has been transcribed by Ann and Neville Ash.

The 1901 census for Molesey. We now have a complete photocopy of the census register thanks to Sue Hawkins who arranged for us to borrow the CD-ROM of the census from Kingston University's Centre for Local History Studies. Help is needed to transcribe this census to make it easy for everyone to use. Please contact Anthony Barnes (see below) if you can help.

The next meetings of the People and Buildings Group will be at 8 pm on Tuesday 27th November 2007 and Tuesday 29th January 2008, at the British Legion, St Mary's Road.

People & Buildings Contact:
Anthony Barnes, 020 8979 6744

Waterways Group

We had our first “solo” meeting on 23rd October at the British Legion hall in St Mary’s Road. It was well attended by 12 enthusiastic waterways historians.

Our aim is to cover the Thames from Platt’s Eyot to Cigarette Island, where the Mole and Ember add to the flow. We also intend to explore the Mole and the Ember in detail a little later - for the present we are concentrating our efforts on all aspects of Platt’s Eyot.

Our first two presentations focussed on Platt’s Eyot were made by our members; they showed information on (and photographs of) the buildings and boatbuilding activities that have taken place over the years. We will continue to delve into local knowledge to create a full record of the history of this fascinating island.

Our next meeting is at 8pm on Monday 19th November at the British Legion – anyone who has an interest in the history of these waterways is welcome to join us, particularly if they have local information or photographs.

Contact: Jenni Haile 020 8979 0958
jenni.haile@btinternet.com

Sports

The first meeting will be held on 31 October. If you are interested, please contact Pauline Sieler, 020 8979 7556, pauline.sieler@btopenworld.com.

Allotments

One member has approached the Committee, as they would like to look into the history of the Molesey allotments. If anyone is interested in joining with them please contact Pauline Sieler (details above).

CLORE LEARNING CENTRE HAMPTON COURT PALACE

The Clore Learning Centre has published a brochure called ‘Take a closer look’, giving details of a programme of courses, workshops and lectures for adults. This is obtainable by email: education@hrp.org.uk or by telephone: 0870 751 5190 (after 4 pm)

Two lectures that may be of interest to MLHS members in the near future are:

Wednesday 7 November, 7.30 – 8.30

The Reformation

Was the Reformation a consequence of Henry VIII’s ‘tyrannical lusts’ or was he, in fact, devout? Was Henry the author of the Reformation or the puppet of faction? This lecture explores the latest historical thinking on the English Reformation and reaches some thought-provoking conclusions.

Wednesday 14 November, 7.30 – 8.30

The lives of the poor in Tudor England

The story of kings and queens in Tudor England is the subject of every primary school syllabus and the background to many a popular novel. This lecture examines the reality of life for the rest of the population and the changes experienced by the poor over the course of the 16th century.

Lectures cost £7 per person (£6 for Historic Royal Palaces members) and can be booked on 0870 751 5190 (after 4 pm)