

Saturday 8 July, 12 – 2 pm
10th Anniversary of Molesey Local History Society
Launch of 'Molesey Then & Now'
Refresh, 129 Walton Road. KT8 0YW

We should be delighted if you would join us for a glass of wine to celebrate the 10th anniversary of Molesey Local History Society and the launch of 'Molesey Then & Now'. The books will be on sale at £15. If you are unable to come on Saturday, copies can be ordered on 020 8979 6744.

Forthcoming Meetings

Thursday 20 July 2017, 2.30 pm
Summer Stroll round Painshill Park
Portsmouth Rd, Cobham KT11 1JE
Cost £10 per person - Please book by Friday 14th July

A one and a half hour walk round the beautiful grounds of Painshill Park laid out by Charles Hamilton in the mid-eighteenth century. Our guide will tell us about Charles Hamilton and the history of the landscape garden and will take us to the best view points and inside the sparkling crystal Grotto to see the dazzling stalactites. The tour will not visit the Gothic Tower, Hermitage or Waterwheel but you may visit these yourself at the end of the tour. Subject to availability, we can pre-book a buggy seating up to 5 people at a cost of £10. Wheelchairs are available at no additional cost. If you would like us to book a buggy or request a wheelchair please let us know. Refreshments will be available at an additional cost.

Thursday 21 September, 8 pm
Surrey in the Great War
Talk by Imogen Middleton
Hurst Park School, Hurst Rd, Molesey, West Molesey KT8 1QS

This talk by Imogen Middleton, Surrey Heritage WW1 Project Officer at Surrey History Centre will provide a brief insight into the 'Surrey in the Great War: A County Remembers' project, interspersed with archival sources and discoveries. Then, discover more about how WW1 affected the local area, through stories about people, places and wartime activity, all of which has been uncovered and shared by volunteers and researchers.

Meeting Reports

Thursday 9 March 2017, 8 pm
Kenneth Wood, Molesey Architect
'A Modernist in Suburbia'
Talk by Dr Fiona Fisher
Report by Lynda McCarter



Our March meeting was devoted to the work of Kenneth Wood, a renowned architect who lived and practised in Molesey. Our talk was given by Dr Fiona Fisher, who lectures in the Faculty of Art, Design and Architecture of Kingston University and supports the research and activities of the Modern Interiors Research Centre. Dr Fisher is also curator of Kingston University's Dorich House Museum, the former studio home of the sculptor Dora Gordine and her husband, the Hon. Richard Hare, a scholar of Russian art and literature. Her book 'Designing the British Post-War House, Kenneth Wood 1948-1968' provided the background for the talk, which included slides of his work.

Kenneth Wood was born in 1921 and attended Dartford Grammar School. During the War he served in the R.A.F. as a transport auxiliary. After the War he went to evening school to study architecture. His first job was with Eric Lyons (who later established Span Development) in East Molesey from 1953. He established his own practice in 1955, still in East Molesey, until 1984. He then joined another practice until his retirement in 1994.

During his early years, he worked on two churches, St George's and Emmanuel Church, both in Tolworth. His designs provided social spaces and included both the interiors and exteriors. He cleverly allowed the original architecture to be enhanced rather than destroyed.

During the post-war years, building restrictions were relaxed for private homes. Brick buildings were the norm, so Kenneth found it difficult to find contractors prepared to work on his predominantly wood and glass constructions. He had been to Canada and been impressed by the timber framed constructions.

Some of his most notable local designs were: 'Wildwood' in Strawberry Hill, built for under £3,200, 'Wyldewood' in Oxshott, 'Nathan House' and 'Hampton House', (House of the Year Award 1961). Torrent House on Hampton Court Road was originally a trolleybus substation and was converted into a house in 1962-3, winning a Civic Trust Award in 1965. Wood kept the original shell of the building and built on top in his favoured glass and wood. Other projects were Barnfield Youth Club in Kingston and St Paul's Church of England School, also in Kingston, which featured hexagonal classrooms.

Perhaps his most well-known building is the Stanley Picker House on Kingston Hill. Stanley Picker wanted a contemporary home in which to house his art collection. He had made his money in the world of cosmetics and owned the Gala factory on the A3, which produced Outdoor Girl and Quant products. Building began in 1968 and Kenneth Wood designed plinths for the sculpture and even oversaw where the paintings should be hung. The interior furnishings were by Terence Conran. In 1976 Kenneth Wood was again employed to design a private gallery in the grounds of the house.

Kenneth Wood will be remembered for his concept of flexible living: homes able to adapt to changing family needs. By the use of moving panels or curtains, space could be opened up or closed off to suit the unique requirements of the family: features we take for granted nowadays, but at the time were cutting edge.

A number of the audience had personally known Kenneth and his wife, and several recounted their own memories following the talk.

It is hoped to arrange an MLHS visit to the Stanley Picker House in the near future. If you would be interested in joining a tour please let us know. Contact details are at the end of the newsletter.

The Stanley Picker House is open to the public for a limited number of pre-arranged group visits on weekdays only, from April to October, with visiting parties no larger than 12 people at any one time. The house, which was designed for its location on the side of a hill, is split level and there is no lift. The garden, the main areas of the house and the gallery can be accessed only by a series of steep stairs. For visitors with limited mobility it is therefore regrettable that no access can be given beyond the entrance level of the house. There are no special facilities on site. There is no toilet facility. Unfortunately, children under 15 cannot be admitted to the house, gallery or garden.

For further enquiries regarding possible visits to the Picker House and Private Collection, please contact the administrator by e-mail: lorraine@stanleypickertrust.org. Please note that although the current guardians of the property live on site, the office hours are part time only. <http://www.stanleypickertrust.org/opening-arrangements/>

You can see a 15 minute video about Kenneth Wood, entitled 'A Modernist in Suburbia', on the Stanley Picker Gallery Website: <http://www.stanleypickergallery.org/online-works/video/gilly-boothhijack-a-modernist-in-suburbia-kenneth-wood-architect/>

Wednesday 26 April 2017, 8 pm
'Painshill, The Restoration Story'
Talk by Cherrill Sands
Report by Lynda McCarter

Cherrill Sands is a freelance garden historian and is also chair of the Surrey Gardens Trust and on 26 April she gave us a talk entitled 'Painshill – The Restoration Story'.

The Painshill Landscape Garden was originally created by the Hon Charles Hamilton, who bought land near Cobham in 1738. He was a younger son of the Earl of Abercorn and was never likely to inherit property or to be left a fortune. However, he had been on two Grand Tours, where he had collected statues and been influenced by the landscape paintings of Claude Lorraine and Salvator Rosa.

Garden fashion of the time was all about man 'controlling' nature. This took the form of abundant topiary and symmetry, as can be seen in the restored Privy Garden at Hampton Court Palace. Hamilton's idea was to create scenes and views to be enjoyed on a set route around the garden. Each area would evoke a different emotion in the viewer. He carried on creating until he ran out of money and being forced to sell in 1773, when he retired to Bath.

After the second World War, various parts of the estate were sold and the garden became neglected and overgrown. In 1964, local historian, David Taylor, highlighted the state of Painshill and Elmbridge Borough Council began to buy back land that had been part of the original estate. Unfortunately, the National Trust was not interested, as there was too much work involved. In 1981, the Painshill Park Trust was set up to 'research and restore' and 'manage and maintain'.

With no estate papers to help, archaeology was used to identify features. It was decided to replant only with varieties that would have been available in the eighteenth century up until 1770. It was necessary to remove a huge rockery from the vineyard and a smaller area was replanted with Pinot Noir and Semillon Blanc vines. Evergreens were kept separate and planted on the amphitheatre. The John Bartram collection of American trees and plants grown for autumn colour dates from the 1750s.

The Gothic Temple was one of the first highlights to be restored, open on five sides for views of the lake. The bridges had all decayed, as Hamilton could only afford to build with cheaper materials. The Chinese Bridge, the Five-Arch Bridge and the Woollett Bridge, based on a design by Palladio, have all been restored. The lake was filled by raising water from the River Mole using a water wheel and this, and the cascade, have been restored.

In the Alpine Valley, the Gothic Tower, from which Windsor Castle and St Paul's can be seen, burned down in the 1970s. This now includes a café and habitable rooms. The Ruined Abbey and the Mausoleum have been made safe to current standards of health and safety. The Mausoleum features on the famed 952-piece dinner service made by Josiah Wedgwood in 1775 for Catherine the Great decorated with British landscapes, antiquities and gardens, but now looks slightly different for safety reasons.

One of the most challenging restorations was the Grotto, complete with occasional hermit. The site of the Turkish Tent had to be moved slightly, as the boundary of the garden has changed. The Temple of Bacchus is currently being restored. This was built to house a collection of antiques, collected by Hamilton during his travel on the Grand Tour. The centrepiece was a seven foot marble statue of Bacchus, which Hamilton had bought under the impression that it was 'Roman', although it was subsequently found that only the hands and feet are original. The statue had long ago been sold and was discovered at Anglesea Abbey, where a cast was taken. The temple will once again be home to its namesake.

Cherrill impressed us with her enthusiasm for Painshill and its importance to Surrey. Funding and volunteers are always needed. If you have never visited Painshill, why not join us for our Summer Stroll on Thursday 20 July at 2.30 pm? You will find details under 'Forthcoming Meetings'.

Anne Boleyn, A King's Obsession

Talk by Alison Weir

Tuesday 6th June 2017

Report by Jenny Wood

On 6th June we were fortunate to hear the renowned novelist, Alison Weir, speak at the Clore Centre, Hampton Court Palace, about her latest novel, 'Anne Boleyn, A King's Obsession'. We were extremely pleased that we were once again able to hold a meeting in the lovely setting of the Clore Centre and are very grateful to Paul Gray and Fiona of Historic Royal Palaces for their help in arranging the meeting.

Alison is the top-selling female historian in the United Kingdom. She has sold more than 2.7 million books – over a million in this country and more than 1.7 million in the U.S.A. Her latest book about Anne Boleyn is the second novel in a series, 'Six Tudor Queens', about the wives of Henry VIII. Alison said that her favourite of Henry's wives was probably Catherine of Aragon but that Anne Boleyn is definitely the most fascinating. She described Anne as 'unknowable'. Unlike Catherine of Aragon, Anne did not leave a wealth of letters and much of the contemporary information which we have about her comes from hostile sources, such as Eustace Chapuys, the diplomat who served the Holy Roman Emperor Charles V as ambassador to England from 1529 to 1545.

In 1522, at the age of about 21, Anne returned to the English court after spending about seven years in France. Anne is not mentioned in any contemporary French sources but it is likely that she travelled widely with the French court. Anne was an immediate success at the English court and by 1526 Henry VIII was in love with her. In 1527-8, Henry wrote seventeen love letters to Anne. These letters are now in the Vatican library, but unfortunately none of Anne's replies have survived. It is not clear how the letters ended up in the Vatican but a likely explanation is that they were stolen from Anne to provide evidence of her relationship with Henry. Alison argued that Henry was probably in agreement with Anne's decision not to sleep with him because he could not risk her becoming pregnant while he was proclaiming Anne's virtue to the Pope.

Anne finally became Queen in 1533 following the annulment of Henry's marriage to Catherine of Aragon and in September of that year her daughter, Elizabeth, was born. Anne was an unpopular queen, reviled for immorality, for supplanting Catherine and for her radical religious views. Alison said that Anne helped to open Henry's mind to new ideas by showing him banned books that outlined the Reformation.

Alison spoke about Anne being revered as a feminist icon and said that she feels that it is legitimate to see Anne as a feminist. Anne, who served at the court of Margaret of Austria, regent of the Netherlands, between 1513 and 1514 and then at the French court, was exposed to the debate, which was being carried on in early 16th century Europe, that questioned traditional concepts of women and called for them to enjoy equality with men. Anne served Margaret of Austria and Marguerite of Valois, who both talked about the power of women in antiquity and argued that a woman could be a match for any man.

In January 1536, when Anne had a miscarriage, her enemies, particularly Thomas Cromwell, determined to bring about her downfall. Cromwell and Anne had originally been friends, but they had fallen out and Cromwell became the prime mover in the plot against Anne. Alison thinks that Cromwell may have believed that Anne was recovering some of the ascendancy over Henry, which she had lost, and that it was his neck or hers. Cromwell based his case on Henry's fear of treason and Anne's flirtatious nature. He accused Anne of adultery with five men, including her own brother, and of plotting Henry's assassination. Anne was arrested and imprisoned in the Tower of London. No wife of a reigning English monarch had been held prisoner since the 12th century and none had ever been accused of treason. In the Tower, Anne was imprisoned in the Queen's lodgings, a set of luxurious apartments. Anne was tried by 27 peers, who unanimously found her guilty. Her trial was attended by about 3,000 people. On 14th May 1536, Anne's marriage to Henry was annulled and Elizabeth was declared a bastard. On 17th May, the five men accused of adultery with Anne were executed. Four of them continually maintained their innocence; only the musician, Mark Smeaton, who had been tortured, pleaded guilty. Anne was executed on 19th May. Before her trial, Henry had sent to France for an expert swordsman to perform the execution. Henry's promise of a swifter death by execution, rather than by burning, was probably used to secure Anne's agreement to the annulment of her marriage and the disinheritation of Elizabeth. Throughout her trial and until her execution, Anne affirmed her innocence. Alison believes that Anne was probably innocent of adultery because she does not think that she would have risked her immortal soul by lying.

The scaffold on which Anne was executed is probably by the entrance to the present Waterloo Barracks, on the north side of the White Tower. It was not upon the site of the execution memorial, which was erected during the reign of Queen Victoria.

Following her death, Anne was blamed by Catholic Europe for the English Reformation, but was seen by Protestant historians as having done much to further the cause of the true religion. When Elizabeth came to the throne, she made efforts to rehabilitate her mother's reputation.

(1935-2011)

Samuel Carter Hall and Anna Maria Hall

By Claire Annable



Samuel Carter Hall was born in 1880 near Waterford, Ireland, the fourth son of a solidier and ruined copper miner. Leaving Ireland and coming to London in 1821, Samuel worked as a parliamentary reporter and secretary. In 1841, he was called to the bar but never practised. He continued his career as a journalist and art critic contributing to a series of magazines notably *The Art Journal*. Perhaps unfairly, he was described in the literary world as "Shirt Collar Hall" "due to his pompous stiffness.

Anna Marie Fielding was born in 1880 in Wexford, Ireland, later moving to England with her widowed mother. Here she met and married Samuel Carter in 1824. She was a writer in her own right, and had a variety of published works including a number of novels, children's books, minor stage dramas and magazine articles. However, first and foremost, she was an Irish writer, focusing on "true Irish life", publishing titles such as "Sketches of Irish Characters" (published in 1829).

In 1851, Anna Maria and Samuel Carter bought Firfield House in Addlestone where they entertained various notable people such as Charles Dickens. At some point before 1881, she and Samuel Carter bought Devon Lodge in East Molesey (almost certainly situated in Palace Road and named after his parents who were born in Devon).

Perhaps the most significant book for us, co written by them, and concerning Molesey was *The Book of the Thames From its Rise and Fall* (published in 1867). Here, they describe their musings on the Thames.

“.....the villages of West and East Molesey....between the former village and river lies the low open tract, or common, known as Molesey Hurst, and memorable chiefly in the annals of pugilistic encounters and horse racing. East Molesey has very rapidly increased during the last few years. Fine trees have disappeared and rows of genuine suburban residences have sprung up in their place. A new church of agreeable aspect has been added to the group near the Hurst. Opposite the Palace of Hampton Court a station of the railway and a cluster of hotels have established themselves. The old church of East Molesey is small and belongs altogether to a period in which Moulsey itself was simply a country village and not yet risen to the dignity of a metropolitan railway station.”

Along with their writing, the Halls were confirmed spiritualists. Anna Maria was involved in the founding of the Hospital for Consumption Brompton, The Governess' Institute, the Home for Decayed Gentlewomen and she worked hard for the Temperance movement and women's rights.

Anna Maria died at Devon Lodge in January 1881. Samuel Carter died in Kensington in 1889 leaving an estate of £500 14s 2d. They are buried in St Paul's churchyard Addlestone, along with her mother.

With thanks to the Chertsey Museum for allowing us to reproduce the photograph of Anna Maria Hall.

'Death by Chocolate' – A Case of Mistaken Identity

by Jill Wilkins

Our last newsletter contained a report by Dave Jupp on the talk at our AGM by Laurence Shafe on 'The Windsor Beauties'. These are a series of paintings by Peter Lely of the mistresses of Charles II which can be seen at Hampton Court Palace. Laurence gave nicknames to these ladies and gave a brief history of each one to bring their portraits to life.

The newsletter report described Henrietta Boyle, Countess of Rochester (left): the alleged 'Poisoner'. The diarist John Aubrey (1626-1697) wrote that Lady Denham 'was poisoned by the hands of the Countess of Rochester'. It was rumoured that Lady Denham had been murdered with a poisoned cup of cocoa, the motive being jealousy – a case of "death by chocolate". The poet Andrew Marvell wrote couplets on the supposed murder in his poem "Last Instructions to a Painter", written in September 1667: "What frosts to fruit, what arsenic to the rat, What to fair Denham, mortal chocolate."



Unfortunately, the accompanying illustration was not of Henrietta Boyle, but of Barbara Villiers (right), the most notorious mistress of Charles II, by whom she had five children all of whom were ennobled. She was described as the 'Uncrowned Queen' and, by John Evelyn, as the 'Curse of the Nation'. Tall, voluptuous, with masses of Brunette hair, slanting, heavy-lidded violet eyes, alabaster skin, and a sensuous, sulky mouth, Barbara Villiers was considered to be one of the most beautiful of the Royalist women. She had many descendants including Princess Diana, the Mitford sisters, Bertrand Russell and Sir Anthony Eden.



Although she was known to have a foul temper, Barbara Villiers was never suspected of murder and I apologise for the mistake, which I was able to rectify for our email members. The ladies have now been restored to their rightful positions in the identity parade and, in doing so, we now know a little bit more about the mistresses of Charles II.

60 YEARS AGO

THE MOLESEY REVIEW March - June 1957

All the Reviews, except the May Review, contained articles by James Williams on 'A History of Education in East & West Molesey'. These articles will be used in the research for our November meeting, 'Educating Molesey'.

April Review

- Cycling Proficiency Tests had been taking place in schools in the district for two years. The tests were those devised by the Royal Society for the Prevention of Accidents and were carried out by Sgt. Cavell of the Metropolitan Police and the Road Safety Organiser of Esher.
- The Rev. R. F. D. Spargo was leaving West Molesey because the Church authorities would not recognise that a need existed for another church in the parish. When Rev. Spargo took over St. Francis Hall in Eastcote Avenue two years previously, it was almost derelict. By April 1957, it was "a beautiful church with a Sunday School attendance of 140".

May Review

- The organisers of Molesey Carnival, the local division of St. John's Ambulance Brigade, reversed their decision not to have a carnival procession because of petrol rationing.
- Molesey Football Club won the Surrey Senior League Charity Cup in their third season in Senior soccer, defeating Farnham Town by four goals to one in the final.
- A newly formed St John's cadet unit in Molesey was flourishing.
- Residents of New Road were annoyed because the racecourse authorities had felled most of the trees in Hurst Park Paddock saying that the trees were unsafe. The residents felt that only a small proportion of the trees were unsafe. In the Review, "Old Timer" said that the character of the road was completely changed.
- There were the following extracts from the bye-laws of the Local Board of East Molesey, made on 25th July 1868:-

46. Bathing "No persons shall bathe in any part of the rivers, streams or watercourses within the district after the hour of seven in the morning, nor before the hour of nine in the evening during the following months, (that is to say,) June, July, August, and September; nor before the hour of eight in the evening, during the remainder of the year."

44. Cleansing Footways "Every occupier of premises within the district shall keep clean and free from filth the footway and pavement adjoining the premises occupied by him."
- The Council was considering the making up of the stretch of Island Farm Road from its junction with Approach Road to Pool Road.
- Pytram Limited had purchased the factory in Central Avenue previously occupied by Bayer Products Ltd. Pytram moved from New Malden because it needed larger premises. The company was a pioneer of the advertising model and also produced mannequin display figures, children's figures and animated units for advertising displays.



Illustration of the Johnnie Walker figure, manufactured by Pytram, from Terence Cuneo's 1967 painting of Waterloo Station.

June Review

- A Molesey man from Hurst Lane, Victor Masters, was charged with the murder of his wife.
- "Old Timer" complained that he did not see why Molesey people had to travel to Hampton Wick to pay their gas bills. As the gas and electricity industries had been nationalised, he thought that they should be able to settle their gas bills at the electricity office in Walton Road.
- For the first time, the BBC was going to broadcast ball by ball coverage of Cricket Test Matches for radio listeners in the United Kingdom.
- The executive committee of Molesey Amateur Regatta decided to abandon the regatta course which had been used for some years and to revert to the old course with the finish near Hampton Ferry and with the enclosure on the Surrey side of the towing path.
- One of Molesey's finest soccer teams of the 1930s, Molesey Wednesday F.C., wound up its affairs in May 1957. The "Wednesdays" was originally formed in the late 1920s and won every mid-week soccer trophy "within their grasp with the exception of the London Mid-Week Shield". The Club's honorary treasurer said, "There is little or no support for Wednesday football nowadays. Very few young men work in shops and so it's impossible to field a mid-week team. Times have changed."

Education in Molesey – November Meeting

Our November meeting is an exhibition and talk on schools and schooling in Molesey. We would love to hear from you if you would like to tell us about your schooldays in Molesey. Get in touch with Anthony Barnes at people-buildings@moleseyhistorysociety.org.

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