

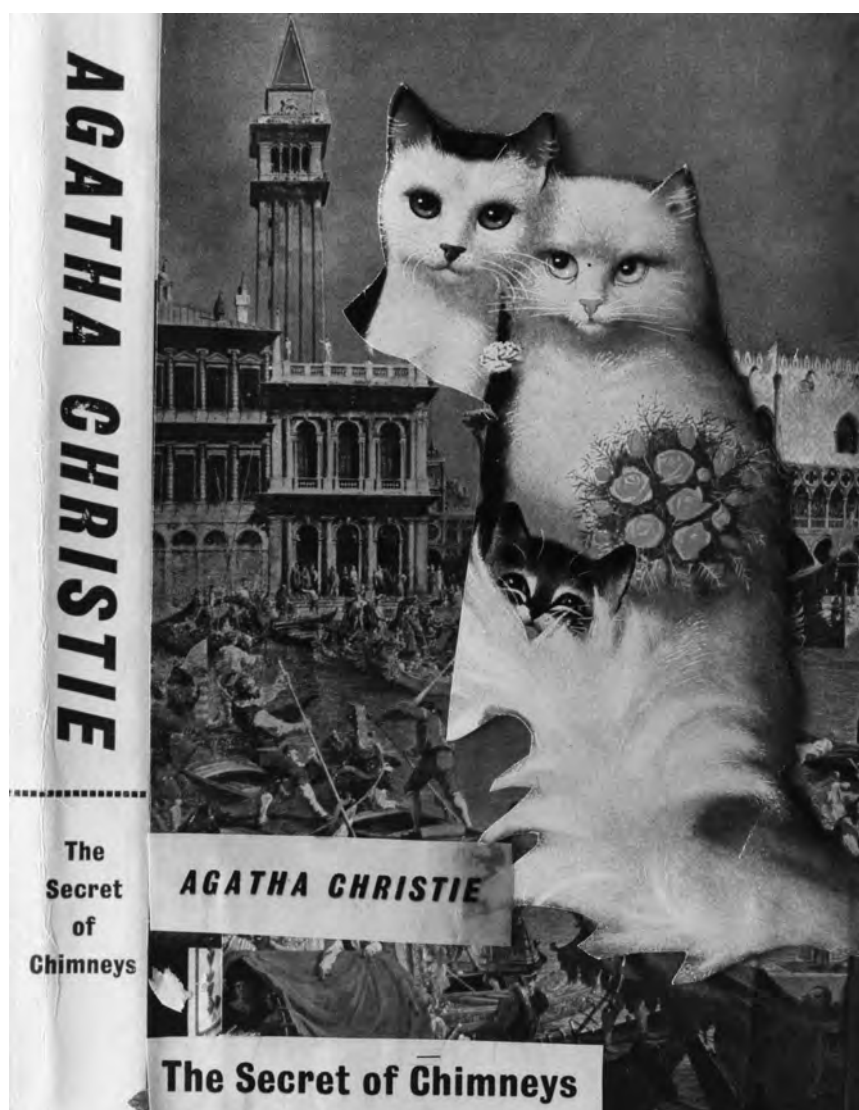
Journal of the Islington Archaeology & History Society

*Journal of the Islington Archaeology & History Society
incorporating Islington History Journal*

Vol 1 No 3 Autumn 2011

The life and crimes of Joe Orton

Major exhibition looks back
at playwright Joe Orton, his life
and work, and why he defaced
Islington's library books



Insanity in Islington ● The world's first spiral escalator ● Could Benjamin Disraeli have been born in Upper Street? ● Marie Stopes's shocking clinic in Upper Holloway ● Festival of British Archaeology ● A murder draws the crowds ● When the Almeida Theatre building had a science laboratory ● Your local history questions answered ● News and events

About the society

What we do

The society arranges lectures, walks, visits and outings about the archaeology and history of Islington.

We liaise with the council and others in matters of planning and development to record and protect Islington's sites that are of archaeological and historical importance.

We also aim to document archaeological findings in the borough.

Local historical and literary walks are arranged for groups.

Why archaeology?

Archaeology is not just about what is buried; it includes structures and fragments that still exist, and the people who lived, worked and died in them.

We are here to investigate, learn and celebrate what is left to us.

Our website

Go to www.iahs.org.uk to find out more about us and our events.

Memories, reviews, old photographs, ideas sought... contribute to this journal

We welcome contributions, including articles on local history, memories and more academic pieces.

Each page takes about 500 words, and the maximum article length is 1,000 words. Email the editor for a copy of our writing guidelines.

We like receiving pictures, but please check that we can reproduce them without infringing anyone's copyright.

Deadline for the winter issue is 1 November.

Ever wondered...?

Do you have any queries about Islington's history,

streets or buildings? Send them in for our tireless researcher Michael Reading – and maybe other readers – to answer.

● See Letters, page 6

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Any questions?

Contact editor Christy Lawrance (details right).

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Join us and benefit from membership

Members receive this journal and are invited to 10 talks a year with guest speakers and other events.

We run a wide range of talks, with topics going from Roman gardens to the Routemaster bus, transport, political and social change, map-making, building

restoration, architecture, entertainment, health, crime and politics.

Members also receive the journal four times a year.

Non-members are always welcome at talks – we invite a £1 donation towards the speaker's expenses.

✂ (photocopies acceptable)

Membership form

Membership per year is: £10 single; £12 joint at same address; concessions £6; joint concessions £8; corporate £15

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I/We would like single/joint/concession/joint concession/corporate membership, and enclose a cheque payable to "Islington Archeology & History Society" for

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Journal of the Islington Archaeology & History Society

Incorporating *Islington History Journal*

Vol 1 No 3 Autumn 2011

History brought to life is more than a subject

Spending an afternoon with staff and students of the Rosemary Works School has proved to be the highlight of the year so far for me.

They had been studying dissent and revolution, looking at France, Russia and Cuba. After studying *Animal Farm*, they asked to walk the area George Orwell knew during his most prolific time. I was taken aback by the intelligence of their questions.

The children then staged a play based on their interpretations of the novel and performed their end of term concert at Union Chapel. The chapel is not just about "big name" concerts – it is for the community.

It is wonderful to see young people like these who are growing to view history and literature as disciplines, not subjects. Those of us who are older can feel reassured we are not a dying breed.

Inspiration around us

Islington People's Plaques have been installed, under both parties at the town hall, to mark: Kenneth Williams; Mary Wollstonecraft; the Peasants' Revolt gathering at Highbury Barn; the Keskidee community centre; John Wright's founding of the Little Angel Theatre; and Crystal Hale for her work to save the City Road Basin and found the Angel Canal Festival. Each in their own way provides inspiration.

Goodbye, Allie

I am sorry that we have lost Allie Dillon from the Islington Local History Centre, who was due to talk to the society this autumn. She has always been tremendously helpful. I've been glad to earn her friendship, and wish her well in her new post in Bristol.

Andrew Gardner

Chairman

Islington Archaeology & History Society



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In brief

Demolition of villa results in record fine

A Twickenham resident who demolished his 19th century house has been fined £80,000, a record amount for demolishing a house in a conservation area without conservation area consent. Richmond council pursued the case as a criminal matter.

Two Temple Place mansion reopens

Two Temple Place, WC2, known as Astor House, is reopening in October. It will show publicly owned art from regional collections. The neo-Gothic house was built by William Waldorf Astor.
● twotempleplace.org

'Bunnygate' raises fears of business bias

Fenland council's leader caused a stir this summer when he said the council would remove provisions for archaeological investigation. Cllr Alan Melton also referred to historic environment professionals as "bunny-huggers" but later apologised for this. The Heritage Alliance said: "While an isolated incident, 'Bunnygate' is concerning in a climate of increasingly business-led planning."

Railway and postal workers' records online

Records of railway and Post Office workers are now available at www.ancestry.co.uk. The 1.4 million records in the postal service appointment books for 1737-1969 show jobs held and locations. The railway employment records for 1833-1963 contain a million records showing positions, salaries and staff transfers.

Caledonian Road tube station listed

Caledonian Road tube station was one of 16 "iconic" London Underground stations listed this summer. It was given Grade II status.

The station, fronted with ox-blood red glazed tiles, was designed by Leslie Green and opened in 1906.

English Heritage said the station was of architectural interest because of its red tiled, original shopfront, tiling along passageways and at the platform levels – including several aedicular signs – and its flight of stairs with rare pomegranate frieze tiling (see back page).

The station served the Great Northern Piccadilly & Brompton Railway, which became the Piccadilly Line. Original signs pointing to the first terminal stations at



Caledonian Road tube station, designed by Leslie Green; below: metal roundel circa 1910 – very few of these are still in place

Hammersmith and Finsbury Park can still be seen.

English Heritage said: "The characteristic ox-blood faience façades are instantly recognisable and count among the most iconic of London building types."

Holloway Road, the next station along, also designed by Green, was listed Grade II in 1994.



Tottenham recovers from riot



1930s former Co-op building burnt out in the Tottenham riots

Much of Tottenham has been repaired since its High Road was "smashed, torched and looted by mindless criminals", according to the Hornsey Historical Society.

Its journal said the council had "excelled itself by its speedy response". It added: "It was heartbreaking to see the destruction but heartwarming to see the community cohesion that followed. Residents and council alike are determined Tottenham will survive."

Joyce Rosser of the

Tottenham Civic Society sent the IAHS the picture above of the burnt building. "This is just one of the many buildings destroyed or damaged in the High Road," she wrote. "In this building – the carpet shop (ex Co-op building) – there were flats on the top floors. Luckily the residents managed to get out."

Many Georgian buildings were also burnt out.

Haringey council has set up a fund to help those affected by the riots.

Planning rules condensed

The government is consulting on condensing planning policy statements, including PPS5 on heritage, into a single, shorter document.

The Heritage Alliance is alarmed by the *Draft National Planning Policy Framework's* strong bias in favour of granting consent. It is concerned that this could lead to decisions being made without enough weight being given to environmental, cultural and social considerations.

Consultation ends on 17 October. See <http://tinyurl.com/3kemwo2>.

● The government has said it would reconsider proposals to make councils take financial matters into account in planning decisions as we went to press (summer issue, page 6).

Turnmill building to make way for offices

This 1887 Turnmill building in Farringdon will be demolished next year and replaced with a six-storey glass and steel office block, despite objections from English Heritage, the Victorian Society and even council conservationists.

Speaking to the *Islington Tribune*, Heloise Brown, English Heritage's conservation adviser, said: "The loss of historic material in this location would significantly compromise Clerkenwell's historic character."

Scientific discovery

Laboratory equipment belonging to the scientist who discovered carbon dioxide has been discovered in an archaeological dig at the University of Edinburgh. The 18th century items belonging to Joseph Black include ceramic distillation equipment made by Josiah Wedgwood.

Oxford bones may date from St Brice's Day

Human remains found in Oxford three years ago could be from the St Brice's Day massacre of Vikings in 1100 ordered by Saxon king Ethelred the Unready, the BBC has reported. The bones of 35 men aged 16-25, discovered at St John's College, were examined by osteologist Ceri Rallies of Thames Valley Archaeological Services.

Fat, old trees sought

The Ancient Tree Hunt aims to find and record "all the fat, old trees across the UK". Find an ancient tree and your name will be recorded next to it in the public database.

● www.woodlandtrust.org.uk

Tony Benn looks back at Peasants' Revolt at Highbury Barn as green plaque unveiled

Tony Benn unveiled a green plaque to mark the Peasant's Revolt in 1381 at the Highbury Barn Tavern this summer.

The plaque is one of five Islington People's Plaques for 2011 voted for by more than 3,000 residents.

The left-wing politician and former cabinet minister, introduced by Jeremy Corbyn MP, described how thousands of peasants revolted against a poll tax, introduced by Richard II.

Several officials were beheaded during the revolt, including Sir Robert Hales, the lord treasurer, who was in charge of collecting the tax.

He was prior of St John of Jerusalem in Clerkenwell,



Tony Benn: Peasants' Revolt campaigned for social justice

which was burnt to the ground by rebels.

An estimated 20,000 people converged at Highbury and destroyed Highbury Manor, the fine moated house where Hales lived.

● Also this summer, the nephew of Walter Sickert, Henry Lessore, unveiled a green plaque commemorating the artist.

The plaque is at 1 Highbury Place, N5, home to the artist's last studio in Islington, where he worked from 1927.

Between 1924 and 1934 Sickert lived and worked at several places in the borough, including Noel Road, Quadrant Road and Barnsbury Park, as well as Highbury Park.

Other plaques unveiled this summer recognised: the Little Angel Theatre in Dagmar Passage, in memory of John Wright; and Crystal Hale, boat club pioneer, in City Road Basin.

George Gilbert Scott bicentennial

This window at St Clement's Church on Davey Close, N7, certainly has a touch of St Pancras Chambers about it, which is not surprising since both buildings were designed by Sir George Gilbert Scott.

Sir George Gilbert Scott was born 200 years ago on 13 July. He has 607 structures listed as historic, more than any other architect.

The church, now converted into flats, was listed Grade II in 1972.



Rats may not have carried Black Death

Rats might not have been the carriers of the Black Death, according to research by former IAHS chairman Barney Sloane.

In *The Black Death in London*, Mr Sloane, formerly a Museum of London archaeologist, wrote that the disease spread too quickly to have been transmitted by rats and fleas. In addition, evidence from excavations does not support the theory that the disease was passed on by fleas on rats.

Many plague records have gone missing – and names of those buried in emergency cemeteries were not recorded. Mr Sloane researched records from the Court of Hustings of wills made during the plague. These showed the speed at which the disease spread between family members.

Black rat skeletons from the 14th century have been found, but not in high enough numbers to make them the carriers of the

plague, he said.

He also questioned whether bubonic plague actually caused the pandemic, as many of its symptoms appear in other diseases. People may have been infected with bubonic plague bacteria but the disease might have been caused by something else.

He also believes that up to 60% of people in London died in the Black Death, higher than the usual estimates of 35-45%.

Letters and your questions

We welcome letters. Our researcher Michael Reading can answer your queries, so get in touch if you have a query or can answer or add to anything mentioned here

Pillar puzzle in Tufnell Park

Has the society ever investigated the history of the two pillars topped by balls on either side of Tufnell Park Road, near the junction with Lady Margaret Road?

I can't find anything in the usual local history sources, and council officers have no information.

Kathleen Greaves
kmgreaves34@googlemail.com

Michael Reading writes:

The area where the two pillars are situated in Tufnell Park Road was part of the medieval Manor of Barnsbury or Bernersbury, a much larger area than the present day Barnsbury district in the south east of the borough.

The Barnsbury manor house was the only medieval building mentioned in 1297. It was ruined by 1388 and probably uninhabited by the 15th century, although the medieval site remained until the 19th century.

The moated manor house of Bernersbury stood behind where the Odeon cinema now stands on Holloway Road.

In 1725, John Warminger, a carpenter, built a messuage (a house with outbuildings and land), probably in the disused moat. This was known as Manor Farm or Manor House in the 19th century and formed part of the demesne for 1804, 1822 and 1862.

The house and moat were occupied by Manor House School in 1851.

In 1753, the area became the property of William Tufnell, who was granted the manor by his father-in-law, Sir William Halton. The Tufnell family developed the surrounding land in the 19th century.

It is probable that during this period of development, the two pillars were erected on the site of the original gateposts to the entrance to the manor at the western end of Tufnell Park Road.

It is also possible that the pillars stand on the Islington borough boundary. Today, the boundary lines cross the west side of Huddleston road, crossing Tufnell Park Road a short distance east of the junction of Warrender Road and Corinne Road where the pillars stand.

I have no idea of the actual date the pillars were built, but would think this was some time during the 19th century as the pillars look particularly Victorian.

Seeking church records

I read with interest the reply by Michael Reading about my old school (letters, summer issue, page 8).

On the opposite page

As well as being used by the Home Guard, the houses in Canonbury Park were a perfect playground for boys. No health and safety then!

there was a reply about St Anne' church. Could you tell me where, if any, the parish records are, please?

I have often wondered whether I was christened, although I was confirmed when about 12, and I believe you have to be christened before you can be confirmed. I have not found any physical evidence of a church in the area when doing my own family research.

Thanks to Doris Evelyn Lea, my search may be over.

Once again, thank you for such an informative journal.
George Goodwin
queenborough@gmail.com

Michael Reading writes:

The London Metropolitan Archives holds the following records for Islington churches:

- Register of baptisms 1867-1963;
- Register of marriages 1867-1963;
- Register of banns 1931-1941.

The first two registers would seem to cover the whole period of St Anne's church's existence.

All these will be on microfilm. You can view them and print off copies.

Michael Reading

Grove House, Alwyne Road

My late mother was born in London and, for many years (1906-1939), the family lived Canonbury, in houses in various locations such as Alwyne Road, Alwyne Villas, St Paul's Road, Canonbury Lane and Quadrant Road.

My mother's aunt lived in Grove House in Alwyne

Road from 1919 to 1927; my mother had her 21st birthday in the house.

I have a copy of the 1894 Ordnance Survey map for Highbury and Islington. This shows that Grove House and its surrounding grounds were much larger than most other properties in the area, giving me the impression that the house had some significance in the past.

However, it would appear from studying current maps of the area and Google Earth that Grove House was demolished and the site redeveloped and called Abbotts Close.

I am wondering if you could give me an approximate date when this occurred, and whether you have any old photographs or maybe an old postcard of the house before it was demolished.

If you cannot help with any photographs, could you direct me to a local museum or heritage centre?

Stuart Green
stuarthcgreen@aol.com,
11 Bruges Close,
Chippenham,
Wiltshire, SN15 3SG
(Letter passed to the IAHS by the Canonbury Society)

Michael Reading writes:

You are quite correct that Grove House, which is in the cul-de-sac end of Alwyne Road, appears on the Ordnance Survey Map of 1894, as it does on the previous edition of 1871.

Alwyne Road was started at the Canonbury Road end, in 1848. Abbotts Close was built in 1955.

I have a map of Islington for 1853, but Grove House is not shown. In the next 20 years, the existing street patterns were completed and all the houses built as they appear on the 1894 map.

I would guess that Grove House was built around 1865. I have no information on who built the house. Looking at the census for 1871 might give a clue.

On 24 August 1940, a bomb fell on the corner of Canonbury Park North and South (see your Ordnance Survey map) and the houses at that point are classified on the bomb damage map as "seriously damaged, doubtful if repairable".

The map also shows Grove House classified as "damaged beyond repair".

Looking at the bomb damage map, it is surprising that Grove House was so badly damaged, as it was some way away from the point of impact, and the houses behind it in Willowbridge Road appear unscathed.

Dawson's was tremendously important to people living in the East End as it accepted payment via a Provident cheque

During the war, in 1942-1945, I lived with my grandparents in Alwyne Villas and played with other boys in Alwyne Road.

I have dim memories of going into the overgrown gardens at the end of Alwyne Road. This would suggest that the house was derelict then.

There were several other large houses in a similar state in Canonbury Park North and South. In



Tufnell Park pillar: replacing the entrance to a medieval manor or a Victorian marker of a borough boundary?

addition to being used by the Home Guard for practice, these were a perfect playground for young boys. No health and safety then!

I can refer you to two sources for additional information. There may be a photograph of Grove House in the collection held under Alwyne Road at the London Metropolitan Archives (see Directory, page 29).

The LMA also holds microfilm copies of electoral rolls up to and beyond the war, although I believe those for 1945-1950 were not in a good enough condition to be filmed. Paper copies of the electoral roll are held at the Islington Local History Centre.

I have a CD of the *London Post Office Street Directory* for 1935 and a Mrs A Hewitt is shown as living at Grove House, Alwyne Road.

Dawson's City Road store

I am looking for information about Dawson's department store, which once stood on City Road.

I have a website – www.eastend-memories.org.uk – which has been archived by the British Library. Here I write about people and places that I knew as a child.

Dawson's was tremendously important to people living in the East End when I was a child as it accepted payment via a Provident cheque. This allowed the poor to pay for essential goods over a number of weeks at a low rate of interest. This was before the days of hire purchase, cheque accounts and credit cards.

I have just written a story about Dawson's for my site

Sadly, I have no history of the building. I do not know who designed it, who owned it and when it was demolished.

I would be grateful for any information on the store and would welcome a photograph to put on my site. I will be happy to reference any help that is given.

*Dr Charles SP Jenkins PhD
DSc (London) MD
execelsior999@gmail.com*

Michael Reading writes:

I have searched all the sources I use for dealing with Islington enquires, but have found nothing on Dawson's department store.

I have a CD of the *Post Office Street Directory* for 1935 and this lists Dawson Bros (London) Ltd, Drapers, which occupied 139-149 City Road. I imagine the store was there – at least until after the second world war. I have checked my bomb damage map and this shows the building having suffered no damage.

May I suggest two lines of enquiry.

One, when the building was closed, this may have been reported in a local newspaper and some historical information included. The Islington Local History Centre may hold a cutting.

Two, there may be a photograph in the London Metropolitan Archives.

Library 'came up trumps'

The journal has been forwarded a letter from a researcher seeking information on the Golden Fleece pub which was at 216 Essex Road.

Andy Moreton wrote: "Islington Local History Centre came up trumps – I got chapter and verse."

Write to us at news@iahs.org.uk, via our website at iahs.org.uk or c/o 6 Northview, Tufnell Park Road, London N7 0QB. If you do not want your address printed, let us know

Insanity in Islington

Islington was a pioneer in the treatment of mental health problems, often offering humane care in public and private asylums. Kathleen Chater delves into the stories of madhouses before modern psychiatry and tells the stories of some well-known patients

Until the development in the 20th century of psychotropic drugs – those that act on the mind – not a great deal could be done for the mentally afflicted.

Those who suffered from a (curable) neurosis might be helped by removing the source of their problem or by talking, but psychosis is incurable and those with, for example, schizophrenia or life-threatening depression, could only be contained to prevent them harming others or themselves.

The first and for many centuries the only asylum for the insane in England was the hospital of St Mary of Bethlehem, established at Bishopsgate in London in 1274. Originally it treated the physically ill but in 1377 it began to take lunatics. It became known as Bethlem and from it comes the word “bedlam”.

First Islington asylums

In the 17th century “mad doctors”, as they became known, started to establish places where they could treat the mentally



Bethlem Hospital: the first and for many years the only asylum for the insane in England. By Thomas Shepherd



Dining hall, asylum, 1808: people with schizophrenia or severe depression were contained to prevent harm to themselves or others. By Thomas Rowlandson and Augustus Charles Pugin, after John Bluck, Joseph Constantine Stadler, Thomas Sutherland, J Hill and Harraden

afflicted. One of these was on the road out of London to Islington.

Dr James Newton had a house at Clerkenwell Green in 1672, where he said he had cured his first patient, a woman placed there by parish authorities.

By 1678 he had moved to a former manor house and his “Madd House” appears in a map of 1720, at the top of John Street, south of where Sadler’s Wells Theatre stands today. He died in 1750.

Around this time, another mad doctor, William Battie, took premises in Islington Road. By 1754, he had also acquired Newton’s madhouse.

Therapeutic rural Hoxton

The northern suburbs of the City became a popular place for this kind of establishment, with

Hoxton and Hackney particularly favoured. It was thought that the cleaner air and rural setting would help troubled minds.

In 1751, St Luke’s Hospital for the insane moved from Moorfields to Old Street. What were called the visiting physicians of this hospital usually also ran private asylums.

Visiting physicians Alexander Sutherland and his son John had a long association with this hospital, as well as owning premises elsewhere. John Sutherland had private businesses in Fulham, Chelsea and Islington.

The last was Fisher House on Essex Road, more or less opposite the eastern end of Cross Street. Built in the early 17th century by Sir Thomas Fisher, it became a madhouse in the late 1790s and closed in 1844.

Famous patients

One of the first – and perhaps most famous – patients in Fisher House was Mary Lamb, co-author with her younger brother Charles of the children's book *Tales from Shakespeare* and other works.

Mary was the second surviving child of a servant to a lawyer at the Inner Temple. Her father seems to have had a stroke, which prevented him from working, and her mother had developed arthritis.

She had to take in sewing to help support her family and, as the only girl, was also expected to care for her parents and run the household.

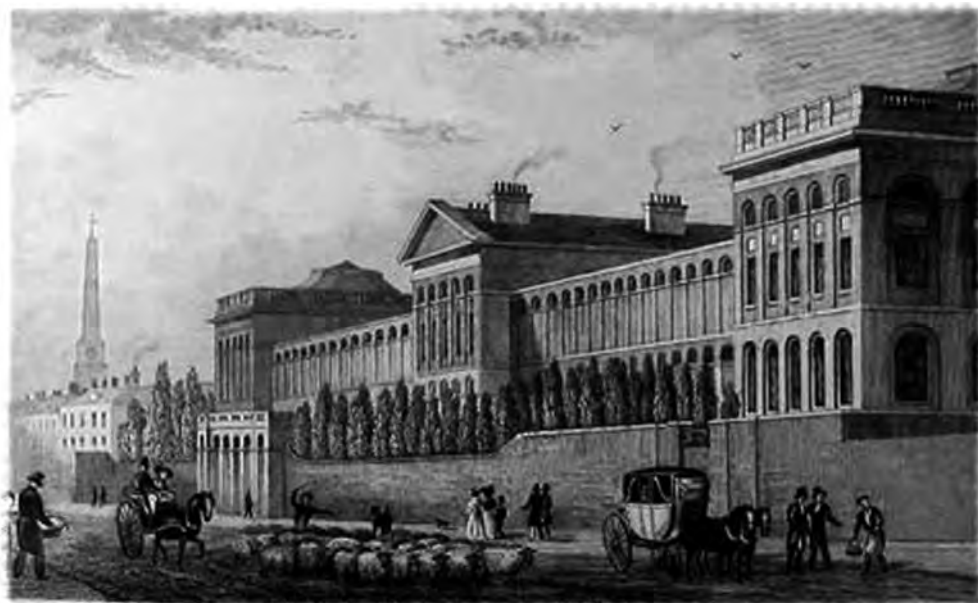
She seems to have suffered from bipolar disorder and in 1796, in a fit of insanity, she stabbed and killed her mother. Charles placed her in Fisher House, then under the day-to-day management of a woman called Jess Annandale.

The inquest brought in a verdict of insanity and a surprisingly enlightened decision was made to release Mary into Charles's care.

She remained in Fisher House, where she was treated with kindness and even affection. Charles, a clerk, who himself had mental health problems, took on the responsibility of paying for her keep, at one guinea (£1.05) per week, with some help from their older brother John.

After six months, she was well enough to move to lodgings in Hackney and, a year later, was able to rejoin Charles. They lived happily together, writing and entertaining literary friends including Samuel Taylor Coleridge, William Hazlitt and William Wordsworth, until his death in 1834, although she

The northern suburbs of the City became a popular place for this kind of establishment. The cleaner air and rural setting were thought to help troubled minds



St Luke's Hospital for Lunatics, mid 19th century. John Sutherland, visiting physician at St Luke's, also ran the private Fisher House asylum on Essex Road; its patients included Mary Lamb, who wrote *Tales from Shakespeare* with her brother Charles, and James Boswell's daughter Euphemia

periodically returned to asylums when her mental health broke down. Mary herself lived to the age of 82 and died in 1847.

Law tightened after royal attack

Mary Lamb was fortunate that she killed her mother when she did. In 1800 James Hadfield or Hatfield shot at King George III at the Theatre Royal in Drury Lane. This prompted legislation which would have led to her being put into an asylum for life.

Hadfield's action was precipitated by Bannister Truelock, a cobbler from Islington. The two met when both went to White Conduit Fields in Barnsbury to see a public execution.

Hadfield believed that the second coming of Christ was imminent and his execution by the British government would help bring this about. Truelock was also a religious fanatic and persuaded Hadfield that "the Messiah would come out of his mouth" if the king also died.

Both were detained in Bethlem – they had no relatives able or willing to pay for their private care – for the rest of their lives.

A later patient at Fisher House was Euphemia Boswell, the second daughter of Samuel

Johnson's biographer James Boswell. She was declared insane in 1816 and her brothers, who put her into the asylum, paid four guineas a week for her care, this later being reduced to £140 a year, the amount of an annuity she received. She was discharged "convalescent" in 1836.

England's first child clinic

Islington has another claim to fame in the field of mental health. In 1929, the London Child Guidance Clinic, also known as the Canonbury Child Guidance Clinic, was opened here.

It was the first of its kind, based on an American model and, in 1936, was the first in the country to employ child psychiatrists and educational psychologists.

So, as you walk today through Islington and the surrounding area, think of the role that it played in the advance of treatments for mental health problems for both adults and children. ■

Kathleen Chater recently addressed the Islington Archaeology & History Society on insanity and how it was historically treated in Islington



Hundreds of people of all ages dug for archaeological finds at the Tower of London's beach (left) before identifying them with the help of archaeologists (above).

The beach was originally opened in 1934, to give London children their own seaside. The foreshore was covered in 1,500 bargeloads of sand, and a patrol boat and watchman kept children safe as they played. It was closed in 1971 when the water was deemed unsafe for bathing but much of the sand remains.

Sites usually closed to the public were opened up for this year's Festival of British Archaeology

Rare chances to descend into the Victorian ice wells at the London Canal Museum, dig for finds at Tower Bridge and visit Roman baths in the City were on offer at this year's Festival of British Archaeology. These opportunities are not usually available to the public.

This summer's festival, organised by the Council for British Archaeology, presented hundreds of events run by museums, societies, parks, universities and heritage organisations in the UK.



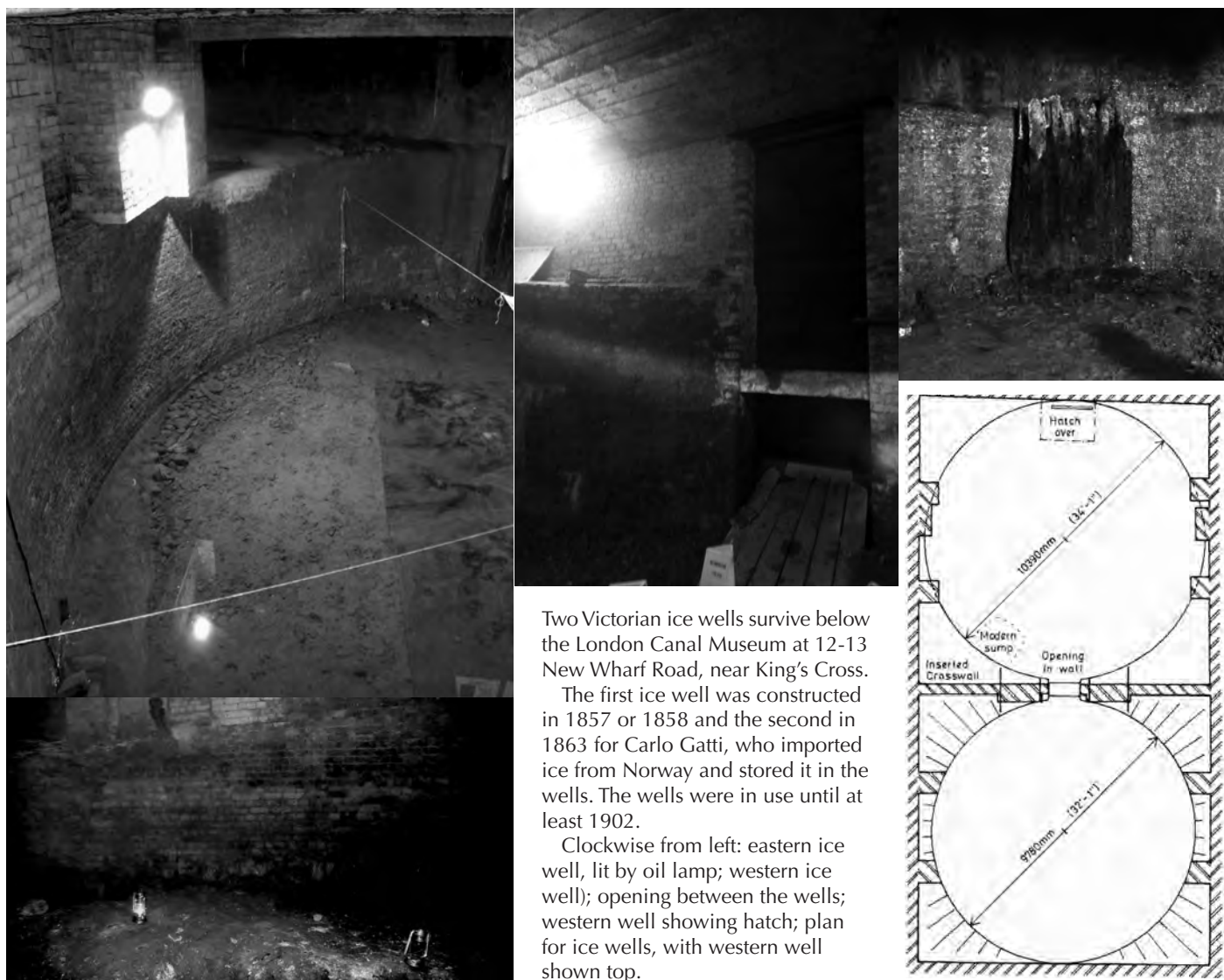
The Billingsgate Roman House and Baths complex is a rare example of a building that was still in use in the 5th century when much of Roman London was in decline.

Collected finds (in boxes) include "pilae tiles", "pilae inc hoof print", "tiles inc pila tile and roof tegula", bricks and "mixed deposit".

On site during the festival were students from the Institute of Archaeology at University College London who have been working on the site at 101 Lower Thames Street.

This summer, saturated old sand from previous works was removed and unstable surfaces consolidated with lime mortar.

The remains were discovered in 1848 by workmen building the coal exchange. The house, which may have been a waterside inn or a private home, dates back to the second century. The baths were added the following year.



Two Victorian ice wells survive below the London Canal Museum at 12-13 New Wharf Road, near King's Cross.

The first ice well was constructed in 1857 or 1858 and the second in 1863 for Carlo Gatti, who imported ice from Norway and stored it in the wells. The wells were in use until at least 1902.

Clockwise from left: eastern ice well, lit by oil lamp; western ice well; opening between the wells; western well showing hatch; plan for ice wells, with western well shown top.

Picture of western ice well and plan for ice wells: Malcolm Tucker

Islington burials: do you recognise any names?

Hundreds of coffin plates have been recovered from the Islington Green burial ground. Do you recognise any of the names or addresses? They were provided by Derek Seeley of the Museum of London, an IAHS committee member. If you recognise any names, contact him at dseeley@museumoflondon.org.uk



Peters	Thomas	male	1849	iron	18 Nov	2 Suffolk St, Pentonville
Phillips	John	male	1852	iron	25 Jul	13 St John Street Road, Clerkenwell
Phillips	Katherine	female	1832	iron	30 Dec	16 Owens Row, Goswell Road
Pidd(ingto)n	Caroline	female	184.?	iron	23 Nov	Chapel Street, Pentonville
Piddington	Temperance	female	1849	iron	24 Jul	5 Noels Buildings, Islington
Pigg	Richard	male	1846	iron	8 Feb	Milton Place, Holloway
Piggot	Dorothy	female	1848	iron	5 Jun	Noble Street, Spa Fields
Pike	James	male	1846	iron	30 Aug	James Place, Chapel Street, Pentonville
Pinder?	Charlotte Sarah	female	1821	iron		
Piper	Richard	male	1833	iron	23 Apr	Tonbridge Street, Battle Bridge, St Pancras
Pitkeathley	Robert	male	1821	iron		
Pl(att)	James	male	1851	iron	23 Mar	South Street, Islington
Pl(um)ley	(James) William	male	1850	iron	5 Mar	16 West Street, Somers Town
Plester	John	male	1827	iron		
Plowright	Hannah	female	1829	iron		
Pollard	George	male	1832	iron	11 Mar	South Street, Islington
Polle(y)	Mary	female	1847	iron	18 Apr	10 Wilson Street, Grays Inn Road

Spiral pioneer

The world's first spiral escalator, unearthed in an Islington tube station, was extraordinary – but abandoned and forgotten. Mark Smulian reports

Imagine being able to descend from street to track level at Holloway Road station by means of something a little like an unpolished helter-skelter.

For one day only in 1906 this was possible when an experimental spiral escalator was tested at the station.

It was roughly one person's width wide and had no steps. Passengers stepped onto it and held onto the side as it curled up or down, leaping off at the top or bottom.

The spiral was shaped like a double helix, moved continuously, and must have been a startling innovation in its day. Yet it was abandoned and forgotten, and no one knows for certain why.

It had been installed in a spare lift shaft at the station and was left there in disuse until it was dismantled when a conventional lift was installed.

The lower portion of the spiral was left under the floor of the current lift shaft. It must have been deemed too difficult to move and was simply concreted over, where it remained for some 80 years before being rediscovered during a lift refurbishment.

Tim Shields, a curator at the

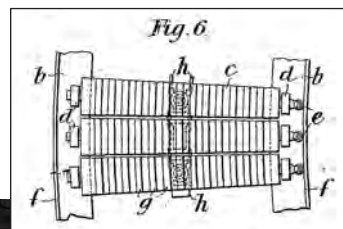
London Transport Museum's depot in Acton, has reassembled a short section of the spiral and has found the original patent. But even he is uncertain as to how exactly it worked and why it was scrapped.

He surmises: "They must have concluded it did not work and was not safe as it would have juddered and been uncomfortable to use as it had no steps.

"You can see that it was experimental as some of the pieces that were found and cut out at Holloway Road have been precision cast, but some of the wood is just joinery." Some of the metal plates are thin, and clearly not designed for long-term use.

Mr Shields knows from the patent that the spiral had a double helix shape in which a walkway moved round a central core with two helical coils running counter clockwise.

The spiral was intended to combine a traditional escalator's speed of moving people with the small space required for a lift.



The rebuilt section of the spiral escalator in the London Transport Museum's depot in Acton

The Holloway spiral stood some 35 feet high and was 22½ inches wide. The rebuilt section is about six feet long; some other components are in the depot.

"Very little is known about it, no contemporary newspaper reports have been traced and we only have one photograph of it while it was being built," Mr Shields says.

It is known that the spiral was devised by Jesse Reno, inventor of the moving escalator, and William Henry Aston held the patent.

The only other spiral escalator in London that Mr Shields has traced was an amusement attraction at Earl's Court, also in the 1900s, called "Ballooning", in which passengers ascended through scenes depicting various parts of the world.

To see the spiral escalator, join a guided tour or attend an open day at the depot near Acton Town station.

The depot houses the heritage of TfL and its predecessors that cannot be exhibited in the main museum at Covent Garden because of space. Exhibits from the depot go to Covent Garden

Moving walkway, pictures and patent: wooden treads are moved by a chain system; wheels at the end of the treads fit between rail flanges

for special events, but are not rotated there as a matter of course.

Inside the depot are horse buses, trolleybuses, trams, buses from the 1920s through to the Routemaster (including the second Routemaster built), underground trains, posters, signs, engineering components and almost every imaginable kind of memorabilia.

Heritage valued early on

“London Transport and its predecessors realised the value of heritage early on and made an effort to acquire materials, something that became a statutory obligation in the 1950s,” Mr Shields explains.

There are Islington links to the exhibits. The depot boasts a number 29 bus dating from 1927, whose route sign shows it followed almost its present route, although it continued to Victoria. A 1930s number 38 shows it too running more or less its current route, though continuing to Chingford Mount.

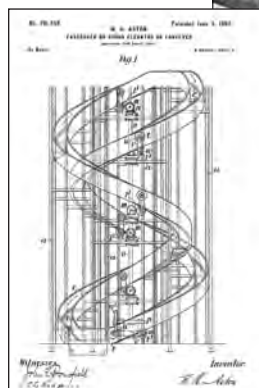
One loving restoration is a single-decker number 236, a 1931 bus found badly rusted in a field in Buckinghamshire, having been used as a holiday chalet. It was recreated correctly, right down to the fabric and the fare table.

“That needed careful research as there would otherwise be someone contacting us who disputed what the fare was,” Mr Shields says. The table shows it cost 9d to travel from Finsbury Park to Leyton, again along a longer version of a route very similar to the current one.

There are also Metropolitan Line carriages dating from 1887, which, like the 236 bus, had been left in a field, in this case used as farm sheds.

“Uses like that saved them,” Mr Shields says. “Because they

Right: in 1906 – note the steep slope; below: Aston’s 1902 patent



were used for other purposes and not scrapped, we still have them and can restore them.”

Islington’s Underground lines are represented by a Victoria Line carriage of the kind that has only just gone out of service – the Queen travelled in this carriage at the line’s opening in 1967.

There is also a Piccadilly Line train with single sliding door intended for a fast service from Heathrow, but which did not work well as the single door was slow to let passengers out.

The depot also houses transport memorabilia that was too small or commonplace to attract much attention

when it was in place.

Want to see an old “light box” ticket machine showing 40p destinations, maps dating from before the current line colours were settled, pre-internet travel enquiry machines or station signs with the old bull’s-eye logo? Head to Acton. ■

Mark Smulian is a freelance journalist: www.marksmulian.co.uk

● Guided depot tours take place on the last Friday and Saturday of each month. The next open weekend is on 8-9 October. Book at www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call 020 7565 7298. See Events, page 26



Also at the depot: a 1930s no 38 shows Islington as a destination; this 236 bus was restored accurately, right down to the fabric and the fare table

Spiral memories sought

Do you remember anyone reminiscing about the spiral escalator at Holloway Road, or the one at Earl’s Court? If so, Tim Shields at the London Transport Museum would be interested to hear from you. Contact him on 020 7379 6344 or tim.shields@ltmuseum.co.uk

A murder draws the crowds

The killing of one of London's first police officers caused a public frenzy, with both the murder scene and the courtrooms attracting crowds. Anne Carwardine describes the events that led to a hanging – and an outcry in the coroner's court

Only two people were executed in London in 1842. One of these was 23-year-old bricklayer Thomas Cooper from Clerkenwell who, on 5 May, murdered policeman Timothy Daly near to Highbury Barn. His crime and its aftermath attracted great public interest.

A criminal chased...

A footpad, feared to be heavily armed, had carried out several robberies over two or three weeks in April of that year. Superintendent Johnson of the Metropolitan Police N Division circulated a description and posted additional men to watch out for him.

On the afternoon of 5 May, police constable Charles Moss was on duty near the Hornsey Wood House – where Finsbury Park is today – when he saw a thin man with long brown hair, a shabby blue coat, fustian trousers and bare feet who fitted the description.

Moss gave chase. He got within a few yards of the man, who raised two long-barrelled cavalry pistols and fired one of

them, hitting the policeman in the arm. After a brief struggle, he ran off.

Hearing Moss's calls of "Murder!", waiter John Young and baker John Howard set off in pursuit, calling others to join them as they went.

They chased the man across fields, over hedges and along the backs of houses, towards Highbury.

...then cornered

Finally, he was cornered by a large crowd against a fence on Highbury Park South. Police Constable Timothy Daly, convinced the pistols were not loaded, demanded that he surrender and Charles Mott – another baker – tried to disarm him.

The man fired at Mott, hitting him in the shoulder, then at the constable, who fell to the ground dead.

The others overpowered the assailant, took away the pistols and bound his hands.

Surrounded by a large mob, he was led to the station house on Islington Green, where he gave his name as Thomas Cooper and his address as 1 Rawstone Street in Clerkenwell.

His attitude remained sullen and indifferent, until Inspector Thatcher charged him with murder, upon which he turned pale and became agitated. It emerged that he was already well known to the police, having been arrested on a number of occasions for theft and for assaulting their officers.

At noon the following day, Cooper stood before magistrate John Greenwood in the dock of the new Clerkenwell police court on Bagnigge Wells Road (later King's Cross Road). The court house had opened the previous December, replacing the Hatton Garden court.

Crowded courtroom

A crowd of people waited outside, hoping to catch a glimpse of him. They yelled and hissed as he arrived. Others crowded into the courtroom and listened avidly as witnesses to the murder and to the earlier robberies gave evidence.

They enjoyed a further moment of drama when Cooper fell violently ill, vomiting and appearing to be in great pain. He admitted to taking arsenic and laudanum during the pursuit and proceedings had to be suspended.

He was taken ill again at a further court session the next day. However, at a third session the following week, he was



Thomas Wakley, a surgeon, MP and founder of *The Lancet*: believed Islington magistrates were showing contempt for the coroner's role

The crowd in the courtroom enjoyed a further moment of drama when Cooper fell violently ill, vomiting and appearing to be in great pain



Highbury Barn, circa 1819: Thomas Cooper was chased by a large crowd from what is now Finsbury Park to Highbury Park South. The Highbury Barn Tavern and other inns did a roaring trade from people visiting the site of the murder

finally committed for trial at the Old Bailey. Crowds followed the van that took him to Newgate prison to await trial.

At the same time as the court hearings, an inquest was being held into Daly's death in the dining hall of the Highbury Barn Tavern in front of a jury of 14 ratepayers from the parish of St Mary's Islington. Presiding was Middlesex coroner Thomas Wakley, a surgeon, MP and founder of *The Lancet*.

He had an ongoing dispute with the Islington magistrates, believing that they were showing contempt for the role of coroner. In his view, the inquest was the correct process for committing a person accused of murder to trial, and Cooper's case was a prime example.

Hundreds attend inquest

Wakley was incandescent at the police's failure to bring the accused or witnesses to appear before the inquest and at the magistrates for interviewing

them in the police court. He even raised the matter with home secretary James Graham.

The inquest was finally concluded at the third attempt, in front of around 600 observers – including a number of respectably dressed women in the gallery.

The accused had still not been brought before the coroner's court but had already been committed for trial by the magistrate. The jury of ratepayers, nevertheless, pronounced a verdict of wilful murder against Thomas Cooper.

They also issued a lengthy statement, complaining that they had been treated discourteously and disrespectfully because the accused had not been brought before them.

It was estimated that as many as 15,000 people visited the location of the killing in the days that followed it – the exact spot had been helpfully marked with chalk

The Old Bailey trial took place on 18 June. There was clear evidence of Cooper's guilt and of his criminal past. His lawyer presented a defence on the basis of insanity, with supporting evidence from family members and acquaintances.

After hearing contradictory opinions from other witnesses, the jury was not convinced and found him guilty. (It was not until the following year that the M'Naghten Rules set tests for establishing insanity as the ground for a "not guilty" verdict.)

Cooper was hanged on 4 July outside Newgate prison, in front of a noisy and inebriated crowd. By the time of his trial and execution, public interest had tailed off from the pitch of excitement shortly after the murder. His hanging did not attract the same attention as that a few weeks earlier of the notorious Daniel Good, who had killed and dismembered his lover.

At the time it was committed, the Highbury murder was reported in great detail by the press and attracted huge public interest. It was estimated that as many as 15,000 people visited the location of the killing in the days that followed it. (The exact spot had been helpfully marked with chalk.)

An original policeman

The proprietors of Highbury Barn Tavern and similar local establishments were said to have "reaped a plentiful harvest" from this interest.

The victim, Timothy Daly, a 42-year-old Irishman who had been a policeman since the Metropolitan Police was set up in 1829, was well thought of locally and several thousand people attended his funeral at St John's Holloway. ●

Anne Carwardine has been interested in history ever since studying it in the 1970s. She is researching and writing a book about London in 1842

Islington's Disraeli mystery

Benjamin Disraeli had a wide circle of close and distant relatives in Islington, spanning several generations. Could he have been born in Upper Street? Petra Laidlaw investigates

A plaque at 22 Theobalds Road records Benjamin Disraeli's birth in 1804. It has also been suggested, for at least a century, that he was born in Upper Street and that he went to school in Colebrooke Row.

Parents and grandparents

Disraeli's grandfather, Benjamin Israel (1730-1816) – who changed his name to D'Israeli – emigrated to London from Italy when he was about 18. He married twice. In 1756, he married Rebecca Furtado, who died in 1765. Later in the same year, he married Sara Shiprut de Gabay; they had one child, Isaac.

Isaac D'Israeli (1766-1847), a well-known writer in his day, and father of the former prime minister, is usually said to have been born in Enfield. There is no clear evidence supporting this. The family lived there in the 1780s but, throughout the 1760s, his father is listed in rate books in Lower Street (now Essex Road) in Islington "opposite the pump". He also owned property in the City, so it is possible that Isaac was born there. Failing that, he was probably born in Essex Road, where he almost certainly spent much of his early childhood.

Isaac married Maria Basevi (1775-1848) in 1802 and they had at least five children, of whom Benjamin was the second.

At the time of Maria's marriage,

her father Naphthali Basevi (1738-1808), a widower, was probably living at 6 Highbury Place. Either he or his son George is recorded as living there during 1799-1808. It seems very likely that Maria lived there too, and that her wedding to Isaac D'Israeli took place at that address.

Cousins and others

The Basevis were connected to the cream of Sephardi (Mediterranean Jewish) society, including the Lindo family. Maria's brother George Basevi (1771-1851) married Bathsheba Lindo (?-1849) on the same day in 1791 on which their sister Sarah (1772-1814) married Bathsheba's brother, Ephraim Lindo (1763-1838).

George and Bathsheba's children would have spent several years at Highbury Place. Their second son, also called George Basevi, became a celebrated architect.

Ephraim Lindo and Sarah, meanwhile, were living at Barnsbury Place (on Upper Street) in 1798-1800. They then lived for a year in Islington Park Street, before moving to what is now the top of Alwyne Place. They stayed there for most of the rest of their lives. These locations have been established from Dent's 1805 *Map and Register of Islington*.

There was a small but not insignificant colony in the centre of the Islington at the time, mainly of wealthy Sephardim.

Many were connected by marriage to the D'Israelis. Benjamin D'Israeli senior's brothers-in-law Isaac and Jacob Furtado and their families lived in Upper Street in the 1770s.



Benjamin Disraeli: had relatives in Islington's Jewish community

Both Benjamin senior and Isaac (?-1801) ended up in Stoke Newington. Jacob (?-1799) and his wife Clara (?-1813) lived at Paradise Row (now part of Islington Green) for the rest of their lives. Clara's sister Sarah, who married Samuel De Castro, lived in Canonbury Lane in the 1770s then, after she was widowed, for many years at 28 Highbury Place.

Ephraim and Bathsheba Lindo were second cousins twice removed of Ephraim Lopez Pereira, the eccentric second Baron D'Aguilar. He was notorious for the conditions in which he kept animals – and indeed his servants – at "Starvation Farm" as it was dubbed, close to Islington Green.

Baron D'Aguilar and a Dr Isaac Henriques Sequeira (1738-1816) are among the few people in this community who feature in readily available histories of Islington. D'Aguilar's sister Esther (1739-91) was married to Sequeira, an eminent physician, and they lived just behind Upper Street for many years. A portrait of Sequeira by Thomas Gainsborough hangs in the Museo del Prado in Madrid.

Isaac Sequeira's sister Rebecca was the grandmother of economist David Ricardo (1772-1823). While David may

Disraeli spun many myths about his origins, claiming various London birthplaces at different times

not have lived in Islington, his widowed father Abraham (c1733-1812) spent the last years of his life in Canonbury Lane, near his relatives the Lindos.

Rumours over birthplace

Disraeli spun many myths about his origins, claiming various London birthplaces at different times, though never Islington. His contemporaries added to the fog of rumour, which reached a peak around the time of his death, and carried on for some decades.

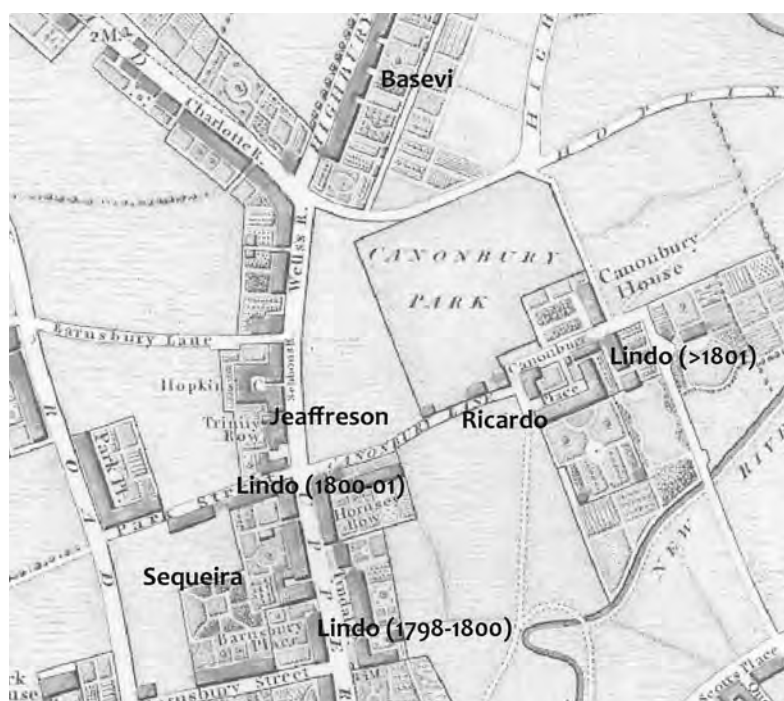
One version that demands attention comes from the grandson of a Dr John Jeaffreson. Jeaffreson lived in Trinity Row, Upper Street, from about 1797 onwards. The grandson said that the D'Israelis lived "behind Canonbury Tower", but had moved "for a twelvemonth" to Trinity Row while their house was being refurbished. It was here, allegedly, that Benjamin was born, Dr Jeaffreson himself delivering him.

This could be true. Rate books show Isaac D'Israeli living at King's Road (now Theobald's Road) in Holborn throughout 1802-1815. However, it is possible that Maria, whose mother had died by then, stayed with her elder sister Sarah Lindo in Canonbury when one or more of her babies was due. It is just as likely, though, that the story has become distorted down the generations. The story may be about Sarah herself.

The Lindos, having left Barnsbury Place in 1800, stayed for about a year (during which time daughter Olivia was born) in Islington Park Street, just around the corner from Dr Jeaffreson, before settling in Canonbury – behind the tower – around 1801.

Questions over schooling

A number of biographers have picked up John Gough Nichols' assertion that he was at school with Benjamin Disraeli at Miss Roper's Academy in Colebrooke Row in the early 1810s. There was a Miss Roper in Colebrooke Row at the time, and it would have been possible to get there



Above: where several families related to Benjamin Disraeli lived; left: Benjamin's father Isaac D'Israeli; far left: the notorious Baron D'Aguilar at Starvation Farm, near Islington Green



whether from Canonbury or Theobald's Road.

Another supposed former fellow pupil has said Benjamin's first school was Mr Potticary's in Blackheath. Benjamin went on to Higham Hall School in Walthamstow in 1817. He may have attended all three. It is unlikely that any documentary evidence will surface to settle the question.

Local claim to Disraeli

Extensive searching has yielded no convincing evidence for claims about the prime minister's birth and schooling in Islington.

However, both of his paternal grandparents and his maternal grandfather lived here. His father, Isaac, may have been born in Essex Road and spent some of his childhood there. His mother probably lived and got married

in Highbury Place. A wide circle of uncles, aunts, cousins and more distant relations all lived in the area. Disraeli mentions the Canonbury Tavern in his novel *Endymion* – it is little wonder that he knew it. ■

Petra Laidlaw has been researching the 19th century Anglo-Jewish community for some years, and is now focusing on the Jewish community in Islington 1730-1880.

Sources include rate books, maps, letters and publications: email 1851@jsgsb.org.uk for information.

The author would like to thank: Miriam Rodrigues-Pereira, honorary archivist of the Congregation of Spanish and Portuguese Jews; Mary Cosh; and staff at Enfield Local History Library, the National Library of Scotland and Islington Local History Centre, where Ben Smith deserves special mention.



An earlier stage

The Almeida Theatre used to show very different kinds of productions from today's – it started out as home to a society that promoted the arts and sciences, says Isobel Watson

1832 at a public meeting in the Canonbury Tavern, having grown out of an primarily literary circle involving Charles Woodward FRS of 10 Compton Terrace, who became the first president.

Society starts work

There were two main classes of members: proprietors, who could own £10 shares; and subscribers. With the annual subscription set at two guineas (£2.10), membership was very middle class.

From the beginning, a small number of women participated as proprietors and subscribers, but were not expected to take an active part in business meetings and had to exercise their votes by proxy. The largest female contingent were so-called "resident" members – relatives of other members who paid a subscription of one guinea.

Lectures and other meetings were first held at Mr Edgeworth's Academy, which was at 107 Upper Street (before Upper Street was renumbered).

Early lectures were on subjects as diverse as electromagnetism, French literature, botany and the poor laws. Only politics and "theology" were off limits. The latter was later to cause controversy with local clergy, but the society stoutly defended its prohibition which, it maintained, "is salutary and indispensable and consults the honour of religion".

The society quickly built up a substantial library for reference and circulation, and established a museum to which members donated a miscellany of objects – art works, items of historical

interest, and geological and natural history specimens. The society also provided "philosophical apparatus" for scientific experiments.

Within two years the membership – the majority of whom were proprietors – had outgrown Mr Edgeworth's premises, and a special subscription was raised to purchase land and build.

The first, abortive negotiation was for a plot in Islington High Street that had been run as a nursery. The site eventually acquired, behind the gardens of High Street houses, probably disappointed the purchasers as being less prominent, and its "disadvantageous" location later occasioned some rather supercilious press comment.

Wild optimism

An architectural competition was mounted, with a specified budget.

The design accepted, out of a field of 13, was by CH Hill, who assured the institution's building committee that his plans could be executed for £1,900. When tendering proved this to be wildly overoptimistic, the proprietors raised an additional £1,000 and the previously unsuccessful architects were invited to resubmit.

The design chosen this time was by AD Gough. With his partner RL Roumieu, with whom he later designed Milner Square, Gough went on to oversee the construction. The first stone was laid in April 1837, followed by a fundraising dinner at the Canonbury Tavern.

An "inaugural lecture" was held in the new 550-seater theatre in

An insurance policy recently discovered by the Place in the Sun indexing project takes us back to the earliest days of the building that is now the Almeida Theatre. It was first insured against fire by the Sun Fire Office (LMA reference Ms 11936/563/1278784).

The building was created to be the permanent home of the Islington Literary and Scientific Society – the sort of society formed to "promote the cultivation of the arts and sciences" and for "the diffusion of useful knowledge" that was a must for every mid-19th century community with intellectual pretensions.

The society was launched in

The Almeida Theatre is open for this year's London Open House. See page 23

January. By March 1838, the management committee were desperate to move in to their new building. They seem to have achieved this, though the full fitting out was effected gradually over that summer.

Opening ‘conversazione’

Final completion was celebrated with a “conversazione” in October, to which each proprietor and subscribing member was entitled to bring one lady guest. The institution was decked out with paintings, engravings and sculpture for the occasion, coffee and tea were served, the president gave a lecture on the structure of plants, and the company was entertained by the band of the Grenadier Guards.

On the following two evenings, the building was thrown open for public viewing, and attracted an estimated 700 visitors.

The insurance policy doesn’t tell us much about the building except its main material of construction (brick) and its value (£3,000 – less than the cost of construction and fittings), though the fire risk of the “laboratory in the basement story” [sic] was clearly of concern. The basement also held a room for a porter or housekeeper, and upstairs were the reading room – at the front below the museum – the library, classrooms and the committee room.

The imposing though austere building seems to have proved a success for the society. Membership climbed steeply until, in 1841, there were a few more members than would have fitted into the theatre, double the number when building began – not that they would have been comfortable had they all assembled; there were early complaints to the architects about “want of space between the seats”.

Lectures, experiments, literary, language and musical classes, and the growth of the collections continued. “Few occurrences... have excited so much attention as the unrolling in the Theatre of a Mummy...” the society

reported for 1840. However, this proved to be an anticlimax; the artefacts uncovered, alongside the remains identified as those of a priest’s daughter, consisted of a handful of “common beads”.

The society took its lecture programme seriously, declining offers of lectures on insufficiently elevated subjects. Yet it was not too serious to host, for example, “a lecture on lecturing and lecturers” by comic writer and actor George Grossmith, who lived in Barnsbury Square.

By the early 1870s, the society had run its course. This may have been in part the result of wider social or demographic factors or, more prosaically, a failure to renew the leadership required.

The books were sold and the building became a social club, then a Salvation Army citadel, then a factory-cum-showroom, before being claimed for its new life as a theatre.

When it was built, the street was so new that it didn’t have a name, so the building’s address was merely “near the Upper Street”. Soon the new street became Wellington Street, presumably after the elder statesman. His lordship being popular in street naming,

Early lectures were on subjects as diverse as electromagnetism, French literature, botany and the poor laws. Politics and theology were off limits

in 1890, it was renamed Almeida Street. This was an odd choice – although it refers to the Iron Duke’s Peninsular War campaign of the early 1800s, the siege of Almeida in Portugal was a French, not a British success. ■

Isobel Watson is project co-ordinator, A Place in the Sun

References and sources

The Islington Literary and Scientific Society records are at the Islington Local History Centre

Other sources include: Jim Connell (1989) *An Illustrated History of Upper Street, Islington*, The Times Digital Archive; and *The Mirror*, 12 May 1838

For more on the Place in the Sun indexing project at the London Metropolitan Archives, and how to use it, see the spring issue of this journal, page 14

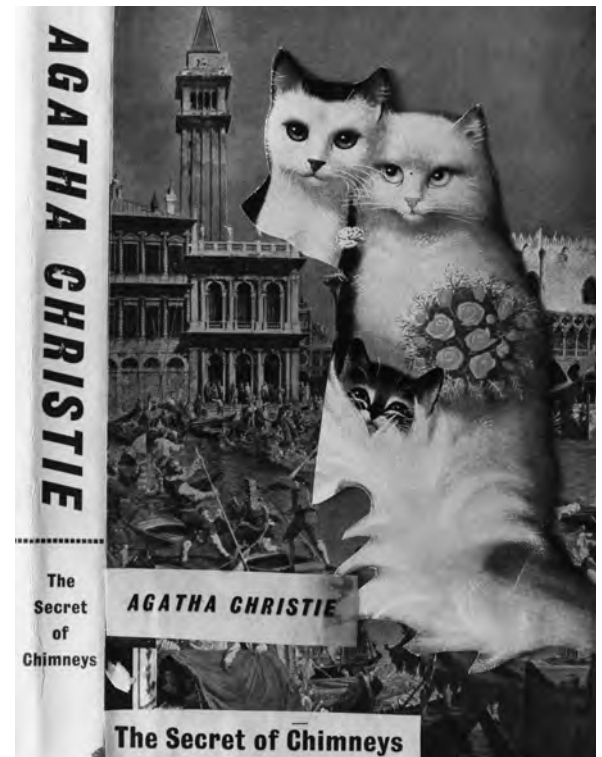
The Place in the Sun project has created a digitised index of 154 fire insurance policy registers with details of more than 250,000 policies, mainly issued on London property, for 1790-1839. Search it on www.nationalarchives.gov.uk/a2a

The “laboratory in the basement” concerned the fire insurers



Borrowed books to guerilla artwork

Playwright Joe Orton and his partner Kenneth Halliwell were sent to prison for defacing Islington library books. Why did they do this? Mark Aston looks at the couple's short and influential time in Islington



In 1962, aspiring writer Joe Orton and his partner Kenneth Halliwell were each sentenced to six months' imprisonment for "malicious damage" to Islington Public Library books.

They were found guilty of theft and defacing library book covers by adding images, text and narrative to the jackets' blurb.

In the process, Orton and Halliwell produced what would now be called guerrilla artwork, motivated by what they saw as the "endless shelves of rubbish"

in Islington's public libraries.

Their collage work began after Orton and Halliwell moved to Islington in 1959. The couple also removed illustrations from library art books to wallpaper their bedsit flat at 25 Noel Road, not far from the Angel.

Imprisonment proved difficult for Kenneth Halliwell and he tried to commit suicide while inside. Joe Orton's incarceration, however, proved inspirational and he embarked upon what was to be a successful but all too brief writing career, cut short by

his murder at the hand of his jealous partner in 1967.

The now infamous doctored book covers form the Joe Orton Collection at Islington Local History Centre. It was fortunate that they survived after the court case. They are among the most viewed items at the centre and will be on the major feature of the *Malicious Damage* exhibition.

Life in Islington

Aged 18, John "Joe" Orton met his long-term partner Kenneth Halliwell, seven years his senior, in May 1951. Both were students at the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art in London. They later abandoned their acting careers to devote their energies to becoming writers.

By 1959, they had moved to the tiny flat on Noel Road to concentrate on their writing. The two men spent much of their time using their local public library service – but not for the usual reasons.

Enraged by library bookshelves weighed down by "so many rubbishy novels and rubbishy books" and lacking "good taste", Orton and Halliwell embarked upon an unusual and creative form of protest.



Above: a mischievous collage inflicted on a murder mystery by Orton and Halliwell, 1959-1962; left: Joe Orton in Islington, 1964

They systematically stole books from their local public libraries – Essex Road Library (now South Library) and the larger Central Library on Holloway Road – then, at home, “doctored” the library book covers.

Anonymously returning the altered covers with their books to the libraries, they enjoyed observing the reaction of readers when they selected a title with a defaced jacket.

Joe Orton later recalled: “I used to stand in the corners after I’d smuggled the doctored books back into the library and then watch people read them. It was very fun, very interesting.”

Eventually, Orton and Halliwell were arrested and, on Tuesday 15 May 1962 at Old Street Magistrates’ Court, they pleaded guilty to a total of seven charges, including theft and malicious damage. This included the removal of over 1,600 plates from library art books.

When later asked why he thought they had been given such harsh sentences, Orton replied: “Because we were queers.” Homosexuality was never mentioned during the trial – only “childishness”. The pair returned to Noel Road after completing their sentences.

Success and jealousy

Success came shortly after for Orton. From May 1964, his award-winning play *Entertaining Mr Sloane* enjoyed a popular run in London’s West End and, in August the same year, the BBC broadcasted his radio play *The Ruffian on the Stair*. In 1966, his next play, *Loot*, won the Evening Standard Award for Best Play; the film rights later were sold for £25,000.

Joe Orton had established himself as a significant writer but this put a terrible strain on his relationship with Halliwell, who was becoming increasingly jealous of his partner. Halliwell also suffered from a sense of inadequacy resulting from Orton’s sexual promiscuity with other men.

On 9 August 1967, unable to

“I used to stand in the corners after I’d smuggled the doctored books back into the library and then watch people read them. It was very fun, very interesting”

carry on and not wanting his partner to carry on without him, Halliwell bludgeoned Orton to death with several hammer blows to the head then took his own life with an overdose of barbiturate pills.

Orton’s public life lasted barely four years but his influence as an innovative playwright of international standing remains to this day. The same cannot be said of Halliwell, whose life was regrettably unfulfilled.

Orton’s unique literary work is his legacy but, in typical

Ortonesque fashion, the guerrilla artwork that he and his partner-in-crime created when resident in Noel Road is key to that legacy.

The surviving doctored library book covers go far beyond being simply historical items that were subjected to malicious damage. They are the catalysts that launched an extraordinary playwright’s career and a lasting reminder of the life and crimes of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell in Islington. ■

Mark Aston is Local History Manager at the Islington Local History Centre

● *Malicious Damage: the Life and Crimes of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell in Islington* runs from Friday 14 October 2011 until Saturday 21 January 2012 at Islington Museum. Admission free. See Events, page 27

Orton and Halliwell’s Islington flat after the police raid in April 1962: the couple stole over 1,600 art book plates and used them as wallpaper



Islington Local History Centre

Holloway's pioneering clinic

Marie Stopes and her husband set up the first free birth control clinic in the British Empire 90 years ago, saying: "Our dreams and hopes have materialised in our simple little clinic in Holloway." Christy Lawrance looks back at what was a shocking move

When Marie Stopes and her husband Humphrey Roe founded

the Mothers' Clinic for Constructive Birth Control at 61 Marlborough Road, birth control was extremely controversial. It was not even taught to medical students.

The Medical Officer of Health "entirely and utterly" disapproved of the clinic. Unsurprisingly, the Catholic Church was fiercely opposed. The president of the Mothers' Union, meanwhile, feared for the "moral tone of the whole nation".

The clinic opened in 1921 in an impoverished area, between a confectioner's and a grocer's. Its design was simple, to show that providing services to poor women need not be expensive. Photographs of babies hung on walls decorated with blue paint and white distemper. Windows had bright blue curtains; a jar of flowers sat on a Jacobean table.

Female nurses, not male doctors

Convinced that women would rather talk to female nurses than male doctors, Stopes staffed the clinic with women, including a midwife. A woman doctor in Harley Street acted as an honorary medical consultant.

At a meeting held two months after the clinic opened, attended by over 2,000 people, Roe said he had been converted to birth control after seeing slums in Manchester. He said: "At last, our dreams and hopes have materialised in our simple little clinic in Holloway."

By August 1924, 5,000 women had attended the clinic.

Dr Marie Stopes was a pioneer of sex education. The failure of her first marriage led to her study of sex and contraception and her writing her best-selling book, *Married Love*, in 1918.

While best known for its sexual content, the book was clear that birth control was essential for the health and even survival of mothers and children.

Having a child every year, she wrote, "generally lowers the vitality of each succeeding child, and surely even if slowly may murder the woman who bears them".

Scientific basis

Stopes cited research showing "while the death-rate of first-born infants is about 200 per thousand, the death-rate of the seventh-born is about 330, and of the twelfth-born is 597 per thousand. So that when 'Nature' has its way... nearly 60 per cent of those later ones die. What a waste of vitality! What a hideous orgy of agony for the mothers to produce in anguish, death-doomed, suffering infants!"

She condensed her next book, *Wise Parenthood*, which was about contraception, into a 16-page pamphlet in plain language. Her publisher was horrified, so she published it herself in 1919.

In the 1930s, she opened clinics in Aberdeen, Cardiff, Leeds and Belfast. Marie Stopes International – the descendant of the first clinic – now runs clinics around the world. In 1925, the Holloway clinic moved to Whitfield Street in Fitzrovia, W1.

Dr Marie Stopes had an impressive academic career. She was a fossil expert, leading a fossil-hunting expedition in Japan and studying carboniferous



Above: Marie Stopes with nurses at the first Mothers' Clinic; below: 61 Marlborough Road now, with Islington council green plaque



flora in Canada. She coauthored a paper identifying the constituents of coal. She was also a writer, poet and playwright.

She died in 1958 aged 78. At funeral, her friend Dr Adam Fox said: "It fell to her... to espouse a cause which was strange to most and shocking to many, and to see it at last generally accepted without protest and widely adopted as a matter of practice." ■

Sources

Main source: Rose J (1992) *Marie Stopes and the Sexual Revolution*. London: Faber and Faber
Stopes, MC (1995) *Married Love. A New Contribution to the Solution of Sex Difficulties*. 29th edition. London: Victor Gollancz. First published 1918 by AC Fifield
Islington council
Women's History Network
Both books are available from Islington libraries

"What a waste of vitality! What a hideous orgy of agony for the mothers to produce in anguish, death-doomed, suffering infants!"

London opens its doors

A huge range of buildings, many normally closed to the public, throw their doors open for London Open House on 17-18 September

Buildings open this year in Islington for London Open House run from the Victorian grandeur of Finsbury Town Hall and the Union Chapel to modern homes with clean lines full of natural light and more.

Ornate carving attributed to Grinling Gibbons can be seen at the 1697 Oak Room in the New River Head on Rosebery Avenue, while the Grade II listed W Plumb Family Butchers in Hornsey Road displays art nouveau tiling, a geometric tiled floor, scrolled meat rails and a mahogany cashier's booth with etched and brilliant cut glass.

The Almeida Theatre (page 18) will be open, as will Kings Place in York Way. Places of worship, architects' practices, schools, colleges, community centres and



workplaces all feature. Museums opening include the Marx Memorial Museum, the London Canal Museum and the Museum and Library of the Order of St John (spring issue, page 18).

There will be exhibitions, walks, talks and children's activities.

Next door to Islington, St Pancras Chambers will be open in Camden, and Tottenham Civic Society and the Hornsey Historical Society are organising architectural walks.

● Check the Open House brochure or go to www.openhouselondon.org for full details of what's open.



Open this year: clockwise from above: W Plumb Family Butchers, N19; Finsbury Town Hall, EC1; Express building, Fleet Street, EC4; City Hall, SE1; Limehouse Accumulator Tower, E14; Markfield Beam Engine, N15; St Thomas's Old Operating Theatre and Herb Garret, SE1



Publications and bookshop

Little Italy, 20th century cities, New River walks and a look at Hornsey's Historical Society – plus our own publications

A Better Life. A History of London's Italian Immigrant Families in Clerkenwell's Little Italy in the 19th and 20th Centuries

Olive Besagni

Review by Peter Fuller

This delightful book is a collection of around 40 oral histories illustrated with precious family photographs. It tells the stories of the Italian families who emigrated to the slums of Clerkenwell from the early 19th century, in search of a better life than they had in the poverty-stricken rural hamlets of northern and later southern Italy.

It vividly describes their courage in the face of hardship, childhood memories and family loyalties, teachers and mentors, and the trades and



careers in which they endeavoured to gain a livelihood. It looks at the devastating effects of two world wars on these families as well as their sicknesses, tragedies and triumphs.

It also tells of marriages within and outside the community together with, of course, how the Catholic

faith held them firm. The dominant influence of St Peter's Italian Church on Clerkenwell Road and its associated schools is clear.

The family histories are preceded by a historical overview of the migrations and the development of the Italian Quarter. A map at the front helps readers to piece together the "territory" and its relationship to today's local authority boundaries.

An excellent piece of local history and a must for your bookshelf.

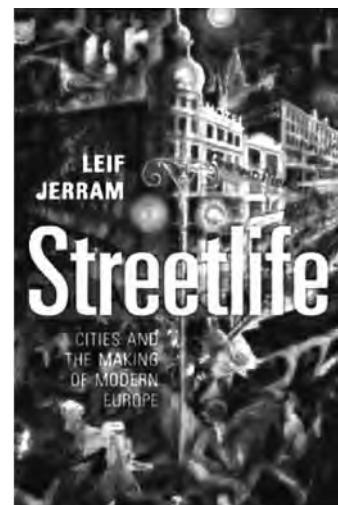
Published by The Camden History Society. ISBN 978 0 904491 83 8. Price £7.50

Little Italy. The Story of London's Italian Quarter

Tudor Allen

The stories of Little Italy's "ice cream, organ grinders and monkeys, hokey-pokey men, murder, gangsters and spectacular processions".

Published by Camden Local Studies and Archive Centre. Available from the IAHS. Call 020 7833 1541 for price



Streetlife

Leif Jerram

Streetlife looks at Europe's 20th century and the influence of city life.

Across Europe, between 1890 and 1990, huge changes occurred as many people left the fields to work in factories and offices.

The central focus of these changes was the city. Social, workplace and cultural changes took place because of everyday city life.

Streetlife argues that women were not liberated by laws but by their own actions in bars, offices and homes. It says that, for most people, culture has not been about museums and galleries but dancing and clubbing, cinemas and living rooms with televisions.

It challenges familiar clichés through asking: where did women transform their position in society? When did sexual liberation come about? Who transformed European politics? Where should we look for the century's culture? Where should we look for the guiding genius of the 20th century zeitgeist? Published by Oxford University Press. ISBN 978 0 19 280707 6, 352pp. £18.99



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Autumn strolls to discover the New River

An Historical Walk Along the New River

Mary Cosh

Historical walk along the route of the New River, from the New River Head at Sadler's Wells, taking a few diversions and going through Clissold Park and past the wonderful Victorian pumping station



better known as Stoke Newington Castle.

The walk is upstream but, regardless of which way you follow the route, rest assured you'll be able to find pubs near both ends.

*Published by the Islington Archaeology & History Society
£5 + £60 p&p*

A Village in London. A Historical Walk in the New River Conservation Area in Islington

Amwell Society

This fourth edition takes the walker around much of Amwell, where the New River brought clean water to London.

It considers the area's history from rural beginnings, gardens and spas, to recent times, looking at Sadler's Wells



theatre, and, of course, the arrival of clean water in London.

The architecture runs from Georgian Squares, industrial buildings involved in water pumping, to 20th century modernism and beyond.
Special offer: £3 + free p&p from the Amwell Society

Only Bricks and Mortar

Harry Walters

A tale of boyhood in the 1930s and lives transformed by second world war, in the notorious council tenements known as The Cottages in Popham Road, which were demolished in 1978.

*Published by the Islington Archaeology & History Society
£7.99 + £1.15 p&p*

Criminal Islington. The Story of Crime and Punishment in a Victorian Suburb

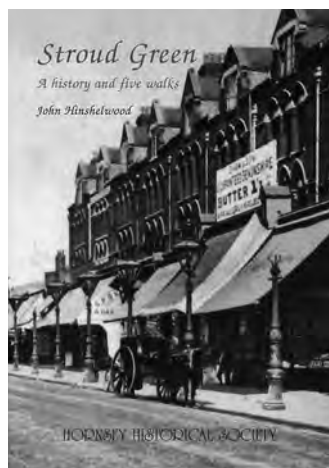
Edited by Keith Sugden

Rookeries were criminal ghettos. They were the backdrop to murder, theft and radical activism.

This history looks at crime and punishment in Islington, social breakdown and political history, and how the rookeries were defeated.
*Published by the Islington Archaeology & History Society
£5 + £1.15 p&p*

Forty years of Hornsey history

Hornsey Historical Society marks its 40th anniversary this year with photographic history and a glossy bulletin looking back at its history. And it's brought out a new history of Stroud Green. All available from the HHS at The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, N8 7EL



Stroud Green. A History and Five Walks

John Hinshelwood

Review by Peter Fuller

The fascinating history of Stroud Green is brought vividly to life by John Hinshelwood from a wide variety of sources and through five walks.

He sheds light on the people who lived in Stroud Green as it developed from a wet and marshy place in the 16th century into a 20th century London suburb.

The walks take in the historic heart of Stroud Green, which is well complemented by the diverse examples of domestic architecture in the two conservation areas.

The history and the walks together form an informative guide.

Walk one is around the Finsbury Park area; walk two is along Stroud Green Road and Crouch Hill; walk three is about the historic buildings

of Stroud Green; walk four describes Hornsey's conservation area; and walk five goes from Harringay station back to Finsbury Park. All are well illustrated with maps, old photos and prints, and include detailed notes and references.

Well done Hornsey Historical Society – another fine publication.
*ISBN 978 0 905794 43 3,
£7.50 + £1.45 p&p*

40th Anniversary Bulletin 52

This 48-page glossy bulletin looks back over HHS's lectures, its books and research, plus its stalwarts and unsung heroes, and political and social change.

Illustrated throughout with drawings, maps and photographs, it tells stories of both the area and its people. Starting with Hornsey in 1971, its chapters include town twinning, art collections, Quaker history and a vivid personal

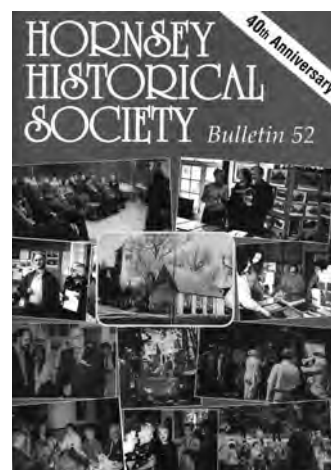
history of the building trade over 50 years.
£6 + £1.50 p&p

A Vision of Middlesex

Janet Owen and John Hinshelwood

A book of more than 120 photographs by the North Middlesex Photographic Society in the 19th and early 20th centuries of Haringey and further afield.

*Review in the next issue.
124pp, A4, £15.00 + £2 p&p*



What's on

Events, exhibitions, study days, walks and more. Information on organisers can be found on our directory, page 29. Islington Archaeology & History Society events are listed on the inside back page

Events can change so please confirm details with event organisers. To have your event listed here, email: news@iahs.org.uk

Thursday 15 September **An Introduction to Family History**

Heather Gower
7.30pm, Trinity United Reformed Church, 58 Orford Road, E17 4PS
walthamstowwalks@mz48.myzen.co.uk, www.walthamstowhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Thursday 15 September
Victorian Working Horse and Horse World of London
Camden History Society.
7:30pm, Burgh House, New End Square, NW3.
020 7586 4436, www.camdenhistorysociety.org

Friday 16 September
Archaeology Up Close
Object handling session
12pm-2pm, free, Museum of London Docklands.
www.museumindocklands.org.uk

Friday 16 September 2011
The Shoreditch Theatre

Talk by Heather Knight of the Museum of London Archaeology.
Organised by City of London Archaeological Society
6.30pm for 7pm, St Olave's Church Hall, Mark Lane, EC3R 7BB, free/£2.
www.colas.org.uk

18 September 2011
Summer Tunnel Boat Trips
Boat trips from London Canal Museum through Islington Tunnel and back, with a guide to explain the tunnel's history.
Trips at 11am, 12pm, 2pm, 3pm and 4pm, lasting 50 minutes. Book in advance through the museum.
020 7713 0836,
www.canalmuseum.org.uk

Friday 23 and Saturday 24 September
London Transport Museum Depot Guided Tours
11am and 2pm, depot at Acton. £10.00/£8.50.
Booking in advance only at www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call 020 7565 7298

Saturday 24 September
Coach Outing to Houghton

Mill and Wimpole Hall
9am, £27/£17. Book through Hornsey Historical Society

Tuesday 20 September 2011
Signs and the City
Talks at London Transport Museum with London Design Festival.
6.30pm-8pm, £8/£6/£4.
Call 020 7565 7298 or go to www.ltmuseum.co.uk

Saturday 24 September
Pirates Study Day
Academics discuss the history and cultural resonance of pirates and piracy. Includes entry to *Pirates: the Captain Kidd Story* exhibition.
Various charges, Museum of London Docklands

25 September 2011
Summer Tunnel Boat Trips
Boat trips from London Canal Museum. Details as for 18 September.
020 7713 0836,
www.canalmuseum.org.uk

Wednesday 28 September
Human Osteology
Meet expert Jelena Beklavac
2pm-3pm, free, Museum of London

Saturday 1 October
Brixton Windmill open
Exterior and first floors, plus prebooked tours to all floors
2-4pm, Windmill Gardens, off Blenheim Gardens, SW2
020 7926 6056, lrigg@lambeth.gov.uk
www.brixtonwindmill.org/

Wednesday 5 October
Imagining a Soundscape for the Earlier West

India Docks
Chris Ellmers
Organised by the Docklands History Group
5.30pm for 6pm, Museum of London in Docklands, Hertsmere Road, E14 4AL
www.docklandshistorygroup.org.uk

Thursday 6 October
The Norfolk Broads
Talk by John Packman
7.30pm, London Canal Museum
020 7713 0836, www.canalmuseum.org.uk

Thursday 6 October
Medieval Misconceptions
Terry Jones, former Python, Churches Conservation Trust annual lecture.
6.15pm for 6.45pm, Geological Society, Burlington Place, W1J 0BG, £20 including drinks reception afterwards. Book at www.visitchurches.org.uk or call 020 7213 0673

Sunday 9 October
Brixton Windmill open
Exterior and first floors open, plus prebooked tours to all floors.
2-4pm, Windmill Gardens, off Blenheim Gardens, SW2
020 7926 6056, lrigg@lambeth.gov.uk
www.brixtonwindmill.org/

Saturday 8 and Sunday 9 October
London Transport Museum Depot Open Days
11am-5pm (last entry 4pm), depot at Acton.
Booking in advance only at www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call 020 7565 7298

London Transport Museum Friends: invitation

IAHS members are invited to attend one of the London Transport Museum Friends' talks free of charge:

3 October Crossrail
31 October London's Docks
28 November Lost London
6.30pm, Cubic Theatre
London Transport Museum.

If you would like to go to another meeting, you'll be asked to join the London Transport Museum Friends.

If you would like to attend a meeting, please email Guy Marriott in advance on Guy.Marriott@ltmuseum.co.uk

Tuesday 11 October

Fossils

Talk organised by the
Amateur Geological Society.
7.30pm, The Parlour,
St Margaret's United Reform
Church, Victoria Avenue, N3.

Tuesday 11 October

Silchester: the Revelation of an Iron Age and Roman City

Dr John Creighton
Organised by Hendon and
District Archaeological
Society

8pm, Avenue House, 17 East
End Road, N3 8QE
020 8449 7076, hadas.org.uk

Tuesday 11 October

Industries of Barking and Dagenham

Chris Foord
Organised by the Greenwich
Industrial History Society
7.30pm, the Old Bakehouse,
rear of Age Exchange
Centre, 11 Blackheath
Village, SE3

Saturday 15 October 2011

Local History Workshop: Guide to the 1911 Census for Local Historians

Led by John Hanson, author
of *Getting the Best from the
1911 Census*.
Organised by the London
and Middlesex Archaeology
Society.

10am-1pm, Museum of
London. See Local History
Committee pages at www.lamas.org.uk, or contact c/o
9 Umfreville Road, N4 1RY,
email: johnhinshelwood@btinternet.com

Sunday 16 October

The Georgian and Victorian Development of Peckham

Stephen Humphrey
Organised by the Peckham
Society
3pm, Goose Green Centre,
St John's Church, East
Dulwich Road, SE22
www.peckhamsociety.org.uk

Saturday 17 September

Walking on Water

Walk led by Dr David Green,

tracing EC1's hidden rivers,
wells and water features.
Free, 2pm, book through
Islington Museum

Thursday 20 October

The Bricks that Built Victorian London

Camden History Society
7.30pm, Charlie Ratchford
Centre, Belmont Street, NW1
020 7586 4436, www.camdenhistorysociety.org

Friday 21 October

Archaeology Up Close

Object handling session
12pm-2pm, free, Museum of
London Docklands

Friday 21 October 2011

A Roman Landscape Revealed: Excavations at Syon Park

Bob Cowie
Organised by the City of
London Archaeological
Society
6.30pm for 7pm, St Olave's
Church Hall, Mark Lane,
EC3R 7BB, free/£2
www.colas.org.uk

Wednesday 26 October

Archaeology Collections and Archive

Meet expert Adam Corsini
2pm-3pm, free, Museum of
London Docklands

Friday 28 and Saturday

29 September

London Transport Museum Depot Guided Tours

11am and 2pm, depot at
Acton. £10.00/£8.50.
Booking in advance only at
www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call
020 7565 7298.

Saturday 29 and Sunday
30 October

Hauntings and Hangings

Walk organised by Museum
of London Docklands.
Charges vary, book in
advance.

Wednesday 2 November

Maritime Greenhithe

David Challis
Organised by the Docklands

Malicious Damage: the Life and Crimes of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell in Islington

Friday 14 October
until Saturday
21 January, free

This exhibition tells the story of the creative and
mischievous talents of playwright Joe Orton and his
partner Kenneth Halliwell when they lived in Islington.

For the first time, it shows all the surviving doctored book
covers, as well as other material reflecting the life and
work of Orton and Halliwell

Islington Museum, 245 John Street, London EC1V 4NB
020 7527 2837, islington.museum@islington.gov.uk

See feature, page 20, and talks listed here on
17 November and 1 December



History Group.
5.30pm for 6pm, Museum of
London in Docklands,
Hertsmer Road, E14 4AL.
www.docklands-historygroup.org.uk

Thursday 3 November

The Wilts and Berks Canal

Talk by Chris Coyle
7.30pm, London Canal
Museum
020 7713 0836, www.canalmuseum.org.uk

Tuesday 8 November

Minerals and the Microscope

David Greenwood
Organised by the Amateur
Geological Society.
7.30pm, The Parlour,
St Margaret's United Reform
Church, Victoria Avenue, N3.

Tuesday 8 November

The Thames Discovery Programme

Natalie Cohen
Hendon and District
Archaeological Society

8pm, Avenue House, 17 East
End Road, N3 8QE
020 8449 7076, hadas.org.uk

Tuesday 15 November

Behind the Scenes at the Royal College of Surgeons

Late viewing of historical
specimens collected by John
Hunter and other 18th and
19th surgeons.
6-9pm, Hunterian Museum
Free, booking not required

Thursday 17 November

Kenneth Williams, Joe Orton and the debacle of Felicity's 21st Birthday

Christopher Stevens
Author of *Born Brilliant: the
Life of Kenneth Williams* tells
the story of the last week of
the ill-fated 1965 tour of Joe
Orton's *Loot*, which starred
Islington-born Kenneth
Williams

6.30pm, Islington Museum

Thursday 17 November

A Load of Old Cobblers

Tom White

Treasures of Heaven: Saints, Relics and Devotion in Medieval Europe

British Museum until 9 October

Exhibition of over 150 objects from places including the Vatican, church treasuries, US and European museums and the British Museum's own collection.

The ornate items, dating from the late Roman period, trace the evolution of the cult of the saints to the peak of relic veneration in late medieval Europe.

Relics featured include three thorns thought to be from the Crown of Thorns, fragments of the True Cross, the foot of St Blaise, breast milk of the Virgin Mary and hair from St John the Evangelist.

Andrew Gardner, IAHS chairman, said: "The exhibition is quite beautiful, with exquisite works of art on display, some of which have never before been shown

in England.

"There is much on 300-500AD, also on St Cuthbert and St Thomas Becket, and material from Charles I, the only saint ever created by the Church of England, though Victoria revoked it."

Above: reliquary bust of unknown female saint, South Netherlands, c1520-1530. From the Museum of Modern Art, New York

British Museum, Great Russell Street, WC1
Book at www.britishmuseum.org or 020 7323 8181



Wednesday 30 November
Fashion and Decorative Arts
Meet expert Hilary Davidson
2pm-3pm, free, Museum of London Docklands

Thursday 1 December
Malicious Collage: the Art of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell
Talk by Ilsa Colsell, author of *Malicious Damage*, a book on the crimes of Joe Orton and Kenneth Halliwell.
6.30pm, free, Islington Museum

1 December
Canal Holidays 50 Years Ago
Talk by Roger Butler
7.30pm, London Canal Museum, 020 7713 0836, www.canalmuseum.org.uk

Ongoing

Until 30 October 2011
Pirates: the Captain Kidd Story
The story of pirate Captain Kidd, how politicians and business supported piracy, and pirate myths.
Various charges, Museum of London Docklands

Wednesday 21 September and 5 October; Saturday 1 October
Historic Almshouse open
Restored 18th century almshouse, Geffrye Museum

16 September-31 December
Separation and Silence: Wandsworth Prison
Exhibition on the prison's history, its inmates and the changes in the system. Includes photos taken by prisoners in the early 1990s.
£3/£2. Wandsworth Museum

27 October- 29 January 2012
William Morris: Story, Memory, Myth
First exhibition at Two Temple Place, with the William Morris Gallery.
020 7836 3715, info@twotempleplace.org

Organised by Walthamstow Historical Society
2.30pm, Vestry House Museum, Vestry Road, E17
walthamstowwalks@mz48.myzen.co.uk, www.walthamstowhistoricalsociety.org.uk

Thursday 17 November
Anthony Heap's 1930s and 1940s Diaries
Robin Woolven
Camden History Society.
7:30pm, Burgh House, New End Square, NW3.
020 7586 4436, www.camdenhistorysociety.org

Friday 18 November 2011
The Enigma that is Shadwell

Alistair Douglas
Organised by the City of London Archaeological Society
6.30pm for 7pm, St Olave's Church Hall, Mark Lane, EC3R 7BB, free/£2
www.colas.org.uk

Friday 18 November
Archaeology Up Close
Object handling session
12pm-2pm, free, Museum of London Docklands

Saturday 19 November 2011
Sport in London
Local history conference on sport from medieval times to the present day.
10am-5pm, Museum of

London. Costs £10/£8.
See www.lamas.org.uk or contact c/o 9 Umfreville Road, N4 1RY, or email johnhinshelwood@btinternet.com

Wednesday 23 November,
A Tall Story: Unravelling the Genetics Behind Charles Byrne, 'the Irish Giant'
Professor Márta Korbonits
History of unusual height gene.
1pm, Hunterian Museum
£3, book on 020 7869 6560 or museums@rcseng.ac.uk

Friday 25 and Saturday 26 November
London Transport Museum Depot Guided Tours
11am and 2pm, depot at Acton. £10.00/£8.50.
Booking in advance only at www.ltmuseum.co.uk or call 020 7565 7298.

Saturday 26 November
Mineral and Fossil Bazaar
Organised by the Amateur Geological Society
10.15am-3.30pm, St Mary's Church Hall, Hendon Lane, N3.

Course: Looking at Finds

A 22-week course in post-excavation analysis run by Hendon and District Archaeological Society. Sessions start on 28 September at 6.30pm-8.30pm at Avenue House, East End Road, N3

Cost: £275 for 22 sessions. Contact: Don Cooper on 020 8440 4350 or chairman@hadas.org.uk; or Jacqui Pearce on 020 8203 4506 or jacquipearce@hotmail.com



Societies and museums

Here we list local history, civic, amenity and archaeology societies and a few museums. Most societies publish newsletters and organise talks and other events

Check opening times before visiting. If you would like to see your organisation listed here or update any information, email news@iahs.org.uk

Abney Park Trust Memorial Park and Nature Reserve
020 7275 7557,
www.abney-park.org.uk

Amateur Geological Society
Secretary: 25 Village Road,
Finchley, N3 1TL

The Amwell Society
Elizabeth Thornton,
020 7837 0988, info@amwellsociety.org

Association of London Pumping Heritage Attractions
<http://freespace.virgin.net/lec.orm/alpha/alpha.htm>

Bexley Archaeological Group
John Acworth, 40 The Priory,
Priory Park, SE3, jrm.acworth@sky.com, www.bag.org.uk

British Postal Museum and Archive
Freeling House, Phoenix
Place, WC1, 020 7239 2570,
www.postalheritage.org.uk

Bruce Castle museum
Grade I listed 16th century
manor house, housing local
history collections. Free.
020 8808 8772, museum.services@haringey.gov.uk

Camden Civic Society
c/o 32 Hillway, London, N6
6HJ, 020 8340 5972,
morton@btopenworld.com

Camden History Society
020 7586 4436, jsramsay@tiscali.co.uk, www.camdenhistorysociety.org

Camden New Town History Group
Chairman: John Cowley,
cowleyjohn@blueyonder.co.uk,
www.camdennewtown.info

Camden Railway Heritage Trust
www.crht1837.org

Camley Street Natural Park
12 Camley Street, NW1 0PW,
020 7833 2311, camleyst@wildlondon.org.uk

The Canonbury Society
www.canonburysociety.org.uk

The Cartoon Museum
35 Little Russell Street,
WC1, 020 7580 8155
www.cartoonmuseum.org

City of London Archaeological Society
www.colas.org.uk,
email@colas.org.uk

Clerkenwell and Islington Guides Association
07971 296731, info@ciga.org.uk, www.ciga.org.uk

The Clockmakers' Museum
www.clockmakers.org/museum-and-library

Docklands History Group
020 7537 0368 info@docklandshistorygroup.org.uk

East London History Society
mail@eastlondonhistory.org.uk

EC1 History
www.ec1history.co.uk

The Foundling Museum
40 Brunswick Square, WC1,
020 7841 3600, www.foundlingmuseum.org.uk

Freud Museum
020 7435 2002,
www.freud.org.uk

The Friends of Friendless Churches
www.friendsoffriendlesschurches.org.uk

Geffrye Museum
020 7739 9893, www.geffrye-museum.org.uk

The Georgian Group
6 Fitzroy Square, London
W1T 5DX, 0871 750 2936,
info@georgiangroup.org.uk

Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society (GLIAS)
14 Mount Road, EN4 9RL,
020 8692 8512, secretary@glias.org.uk

Guildhall Library
Aldermanbury, EC2V 7HH,
020 7332 1868, textphone
020 7332 3803, library@cityoflondon.gov.uk

Friends of Hackney Archives
Hackney Archives, 43 De
Beauvoir Road, N1 5SQ

Hackney Museum
1 Reading Lane, E8 1GQ
www.hackney.gov.uk/cm-museum.htm

The Hackney Society
Round Chapel, 1d Glenarm
Road, E5 0LY, 07771 225183,
info@hackneysociety.org

Hendon and District Archaeology Society
secretary@hadas.org.uk

Historical Association, Central London Branch
020 7323 1192, stay@cenlonap.co.uk

The Horniman Museum
100 London Road, SE23.
Free. 020 8699 1872,
enquiry@horniman.ac.uk

Hornsey Historical Society
The Old Schoolhouse, 136
Tottenham Lane, N8 7EL
hornseyhistorical.org.uk

Hunterian Museum
Royal College of Surgeons
of England, 35-43 Lincoln's
Inn Fields, WC2, Tuesday-
Saturday 10am-5pm, www.rcseng.ac.uk/museums

Inland Waterways Association
North-east London branch
chairman Roger Wilkinson,
roger9796@yahoo.co.uk

Islington Local History Centre
Finsbury Library, 245 St John
Street, EC1V 4NB. 9.30am-
8pm Monday and Thursday
(closes 6pm every other
Monday); 9.30am-5pm Tues,
Friday and Saturday; closed
Wednesday and Sunday;
closed 1pm-2pm; 020 7527
7988; local.history@islington.gov.uk

Islington Museum
245 St John Street, EC1V
4NB, 10am-5pm, closed
Wednesday and Sunday, 020
7527 2837, [islington.gov.uk](mailto:museum@islington.gov.uk)

Islington Society
35 Britannia Row, N1 8QH
www.islington society.org.uk

Dr Johnson's House
17 Gough Square, EC4,
Monday-Saturday, 11am-
5.30pm May-Sept, 11am-
5pm Oct-April, 020 7353 3745

Kew Bridge Steam Museum
Green Dragon Lane,
Brentford, TW8, 11am-4pm,
Tuesday-Sunday, 020 8568
4757, www.kbsm.org

Labour and Wait Brush Museum
Small museum in hardware
store, 85 Redchurch Street,
E2. www.labourandwait.co.uk

The Charles Lamb Society
28 Grove Lane, SE6 8ST

London Canal Museum
12-13 New Wharf Road, N1
9RT, 020 7713 0836
www.canalmuseum.org.uk

London Metropolitan Archives
40 Northampton Road, EC1
0HB, 020 7332 3820, ask.lma@cityoflondon.gov.uk, www.cityoflondon.gov.uk/lma

London & Middlesex Archaeological Society
020 7814 5734, secretary
Jackie Keily: jkeily@museumoflondon.org.uk,
www.lamas.org.uk

The London Museums of Health & Medicine
www.medicalmuseums.org

The London Socialist Historians Group
<http://london-socialist-historians.blogspot.com>

The London Society
Mortimer Wheeler House,
46 Eagle Wharf Road, N1 7ED,
www.londonsociety.org.uk

London Transport Museum
Covent Garden Piazza,
WC2E 7BB, 020 7379 6344,
www.ltmuseum.co.uk

London Transport Museum Friends
www.ltmuseum.co.uk/friends

Markfield Beam Engine
Markfield Road, N15 4RB,
01707 873628, info@mbeam.org

Mausolea and Monuments Trust
70 Cowcross Street, EC1M
Secretary: John St Brioc
Hooper, 020 7608 1441,
mausolea@btconnect.com

Marx Memorial Library
37a Clerkenwell Green, EC1
0DU, 020 7253 1485, info@marx-memorial-library.org

Medieval Pottery Research Group
www.medievalpottery.org.uk

The Museum of Brands
2 Colville Mews, Lonsdale
Road, W11, 020 7908 0880,
info@museumofbrands.com

V&A Museum of Childhood
10am-5.45pm, free, closed
Fridays. Cambridge Heath
Road, E2 9PA, 020 8983 5200

Museum of London
150 London Wall, EC2Y
5HN, 020 7814 5511, www.museumoflondon.org.uk

Museum of London Docklands
West India Quay, E14 4AL,
open 10am-6pm, Monday-
Sunday, 020 7001 9844,
www.museumindocklands.org.uk, info.docklands@museumoflondon.org.uk

Museum of the Order of St John
St John's Gate, EC1M 4DA,
020 7253 6644, www.museumstjohn.org.uk

The Musical Museum
11am-5.30pm Tuesday-
Sunday, www.musicalmuseum.co.uk

The National Archives,
Kew, 020 8876 3444, www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

The National Piers Society
www.piers.org.uk

Newington Green Action Group
020 7359 6027, www.newingtongreen.org.uk

New River Action Group
24 Lavender Road, EN2 0ST,
Frances Mussett 020 8363 7187

Petrie Museum of Egyptian Archaeology
University College London,
Malet Place, WC1, www.ucl.ac.uk/museums/petrie

The Peckham Society
67 Gordon Road, SE15 2AF,
www.peckhamsociety.org.uk

Railway Correspondence and Travel Society
www.rcts.org.uk

Ragged School Museum
46-50 Copperfield Road, E3
4RR, 020 8980 6405, www.raggedschoolmuseum.org.uk

Rescue – the British Archaeological Trust
www.rescue-archaeology.org.uk

The Smithfield Trust
70 Cowcross Street, EC1M
6EJ, 020 7566 0041,
smthfld@gn.apc.org

Sir John Soane's Museum
13 Lincoln's Inn Fields, WC2,
Tuesday-Saturday, 10am-5pm,
first Tuesday of each month
6-9pm, www.soane.org

Spencer House
27 St James's Place SW1,
020 7499 8620, www.spencerhouse.co.uk

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings
37 Spital Square, E1 6DY, 020
7377 1644, www.spab.org.uk

Southwark and Lambeth Archaeology Society (SLAS)
Richard Buchanan, 79
Ashridge Crescent, SE18 3EA

Sutton House
2 & 4 Homerton High
Street, E9, 020 8986 2264,
www.nationaltrust.org.uk/main/w-suttonhouse

The Streatham Society
www.streathamsociety.org.uk

Thames Discovery Programme
Mortimer Wheeler House,
46 Eagle Wharf Road, N1,
020 7566 9310, enquiries@thamesdiscovery.org

Tottenham Civic Society
www.tottenhamcivicsociety.org.uk

The Transport Trust
Lambeth Road, SE1 7JW,
020 7928 6464 202, www.transporttrust.com

Two Temple Place
2 Temple Place, WC2R 3BD,
7836 3715, info@twotempleplace.org

Union Chapel: Friends of the Union Chapel
Union Chapel, Compton
Avenue, N1 2XD,
www.unionchapel.org.uk/pages/friends.html

The Victorian Society
1 Priory Gardens, W4,
020 8994 1019, admin@victoriansociety.org.uk,
www.victoriansociety.org.uk

The Wallace Collection
Hertford House, Manchester
Square, W1M 6BN, free,, 020
7563 9500, www.wallacecollection.org

Walthamstow Historical Society
37 Chewton Road, E17
7DW, contact@walthamstowhistorical-society.org,
www.walthamstowhistoricalsociety.org

Wandsworth Museum
38 West Hill, SW18 1RZ
wandsworthmuseum.co.uk

Wellcome Collection
183 Euston Road, NW1 2BE,
020 7611 2222

John Wesley's House and Museum of Methodism
49 City Road, EC1, free,
www.wesleyschapel.org.uk/museum.htm

Events

Please check our website at www.iahs.org.uk for updates

21 September

An opportunity to meet Islington South MP

Speaker: Emily Thornberry MP

8pm, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1

Members of the Islington Archaeology & History Society will be able to listen to and ask questions of Emily Thornberry, MP for Islington South.

19 October

Islington's western shores: an armchair cruise down the Fleet

Speaker: Lester Hillman

8pm, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1

A few days off the full moon, Lester – a former coxswain – tonight steers the society down the Fleet river with a richly illustrated armchair presentation that deftly navigates past to future. Charting a course from the heady heights of Highgate through the Farringdon Valley and the Clerk's Well, he will bring us to the tidal Thames.

Lester is academic adviser to the society. He will be familiar to members as a regular speaker and he recently focused attention on the Regent's Canal, another waterway that helps define Islington.

16 November 2011

Wells and Brimtoy – toymakers of Islington

Chris Rule

8pm, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1

These two Islington firms were major UK manufacturers of tin toys in the 20th century. Chris Rule is a long-term Islington resident and a member of the Greater London Industrial Archaeology Society committee.



14 December 2011

Scotland Yard's first cases

Joan Lock

8pm, Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, London N1

Joan Lock, a former police officer, will be talking about her new book, *Scotland Yard's First Cases*, which is due out at the end of November. She is the author of eleven non-fiction police/crime books, including *Dreadful Deeds and Awful Murders: Scotland Yard's First Detectives 1829-1878* and books on the history of British women police officers, a subject on which she is an authority. She has also written radio plays.

The Islington Archaeology & History Society meets 10 times a year, on the third Wednesday of each month at 8pm, at Islington Town Hall, Upper Street, N1

The Journal of the Islington Archaeology & History Society

Back page picture



Look out for this beautiful green pomegranate tile the next time you're in Caledonian Road tube station – there is a rare frieze of them at the top of the staircase, along with original tiling. The station was listed Grade II this summer. See news, page 4