

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1936 to promote and foster interest in local history in
Edmonton Enfield Potters Bar Southgate South Mimms Tottenham Wood Green Monken Hadley



March 2023

Newsletter

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 15th March**
8pm at Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ

Doors open at 7.30 pm.

Annual General Meeting and One Hundred Years of Radio and Television Broadcasting

by Dr Jim Lewis

As is usual after our AGM, the talk will be given by our President, Dr Jim Lewis. As is also usual Jim will put a new slant on old material, as the short description he has sent will show:

"It's a sad fact that the history of technology has shown that man's drive for power has resulted in countless deaths on the world's killing fields. World War One is a good example of this when two pieces of technology, the aeroplane and the wireless, came together for the first time. By today's standards these two technologies were extremely crude, but surprisingly one of them, namely wireless, was responsible for the founding of our BBC, now a respected public service broadcaster."



*Building the tower at Alexandra Palace.
Pathe News film on Youtube.*

Sounds interesting. Don't miss it.
Rachael Macdonald

The Chairman

Unfortunately as this newsletter goes to press our Chairman, Howard Whisker, is once again in hospital and he will not be able to make it to our annual general meeting. Business will be conducted by our Vice Chair Robert Musgrove.

We hope that Howard will be able to join us again soon.

Visit to Winchmore Hill Quaker Burial Ground Tuesday 21 March at 2pm

Members who attended our February talk on Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites will remember that our speaker Margaret Burr also runs Tottenham Clouds, celebrating the life and work of Luke Howard 'Namer of Clouds' (28 November 1771 - 21 March 1864).

Margaret is bringing a group from Tottenham to Winchmore Hill, where Luke and his wife Mariabella are buried, on 21 March, the date of his death in 1864. I shall explain how the grave was identified and the headstone replaced. Members of EHHS are welcome to join us in the tranquil surroundings of the Meeting



Friends Meeting House, Winchmore Hill

Rachael Macdonald ©



Rachael Macdonald

House where Quakers have worshipped since 1688. Our late President Graham Dalling is also buried there.

There is no charge for this visit but if by then refreshments have been arranged then donations will be appreciated. Please do let me know if you will be attending, or contact me with any queries by email to edmontonhundredevents@gmail.com or call/text 0734 1212 813.

Rachael Macdonald

Diary Dates - talks and events arranged by other organisations

Sunday 12th March. Meet 11am. Outside Costa Coffee, 261 Tottenham High Road, N15
Tottenham Women's History Walk – High Road to Bruce Castle. Avril Nanton
Free. **Booking essential** via **Avril's website**. avrilswalksandtalks.co.uk *Bruce Castle Museum*

Tuesday 14th March. 2-4 pm. Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU.
Reminiscence Café. From PE knickers and plimsolls – to designer shorts and trainers. Women's sport has come a long way. Women athletes are up there with the best as our football team has shown. What sports did you do at school and did you carry on afterwards? *Bruce Castle Museum*

Tuesday 14th March. Online only. 8pm. Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ
The Peasants Revolt of 1381: some New Insights. Non members £2.
Professor Andrew Prescott *Historical Association*

Saturday 18th March. Meet 11am. Outside Hornsey Library, Haringey Park, Crouch End, N8 9JA
Haringey Women's History Walk – Pioneers and Pleasure: Crouch End Women. Oonagh Gay
Free. **Booking essential** via **Eventbrite** *Bruce Castle Museum*

Monday 20th March. 8pm. Doors Open 7.30. Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ
The World of Art Nouveau. Non members £1
Mark Lewis *The Enfield Society*

Thursday 23rd March. 3pm to 4pm. Bruce Castle Museum. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**.
Bite-size Gallery Talk: Sister, Siren or Saint ? Beatrice Offor's Art
Annabel Gee *Bruce Castle Museum*

Saturday 25th March. Online only. 11am to 5pm.
LAMAS 59th Annual Conference of London Archaeologists. Roman Towns.
£15. Tickets via **Eventbrite** *London & Middlesex Archaeological Society*

Sunday 26th March. Meet 11am. Old Well, junction Philip La and Tottenham High Rd, N15 4JN. History Walk: Kings, Crooks & Coffin Makers – Philip Lane in Tottenham. Oona Kelly
Free. **Booking essential** via **Eventbrite** *Bruce Castle Museum*

Monday 27th March. 12 noon for 12:15. Bruce Castle Museum. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**
Munch & Listen: Sarah, Tottenham's only Duchess, 1631-1692. Arthur Evans *Bruce Castle Museum*

Thursday 30th March. 3pm to 4pm. Bruce Castle Museum. Free. **Book** via **Eventbrite**.
Bite-size Gallery Talk: Outcast, Foreigner and Artist – the Lady of the Manor, Henrietta Townsend of Bruce Castle. Deborah Hedgecock *Bruce Castle Museum*

Letters and Emails

The Fire Station in Winchmore Hill

In his article Stuart Delvin states that in the 1914/15 local directory the fire station was listed as Southgate Urban District Council Fire Brigade Station, but that by the 1928 edition of the directory the fire station had disappeared. It's likely that by that time the fire station at Winchmore Hill had closed and moved to the new building in Palmers Green at the rear of Southgate Town Hall.

The Palmers Green Fire Station lasted till 1962 when it was closed by the then Middlesex County Council. At the same time Wood Green Fire Station (Bounds Green) was also closed and a new combined station opened in Southgate near the tube station.

Enfield Local Studies Library & Archive have a photograph of the Palmers Green Fire Station taken in the 1930s. Chris Whippe

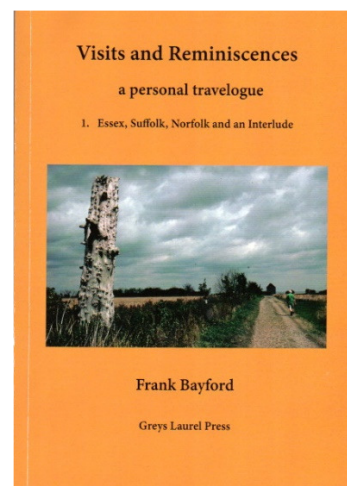
Books

Visits and Reminiscences a personal travelogue Essex, Suffolk, Norfolk and an Interlude by Frank Bayford

Grey Laurels Press. 2022. ISBN. 978-1-9996811-3-5

Based on Frank Bayford's talks. A delightful collection of anecdotes, reminiscences and history of places off the beaten track.

Available from the author.
(Please let him know, if you would like your copy signed.)
21 Canonbury Road, Enfield. Middlesex. EN1 3LW.
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One Hundred Years Ago in the Edmonton Hundred

Open Air Swimming Baths

The Parks Committee recommended that no action be taken at present in regard to the suggestion of the local secretary of the National Unemployed Workers' Committee Movement that an open-air swimming bath be provided in Hilly Fields, Seaford-road, or any other suitable place.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 2nd March 1923

Unemployed Marchers

On Monday afternoon about 150 unemployed marched from Ponders End to the Edmonton House, where the Finance Committee had a special sitting to consider the question of granting Poor Law relief to single men and women. The special meeting was the outcome of the Guardians' refusal to receive a deputation on the subject at last week's meeting of the Board. The ground for refusal

was a resolution some time since to the effect that the Board should not receive deputations of the kind. The Finance Committee, however, received a deputation on Monday afternoon, and the interview lasted till 5 o'clock.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 2nd March 1923

Another 'Bus Service. Enfield to Watford

Following our recent announcement of the London General Omnibus Company's intention to incorporate Enfield in one of the Company's routes, we are now officially informed that the National Omnibus and Transport Company intend to inaugurate a service between Enfield Town and Watford Junction.

The route touches the following points: Enfield Town, Chase Cottage, Cockfosters-road corner, New Barnet Station, High Barnet Church, Arkley Post Office, Boreham Wood Station, Red Lion, Elstree, Bushey Heath, Watford Junction.

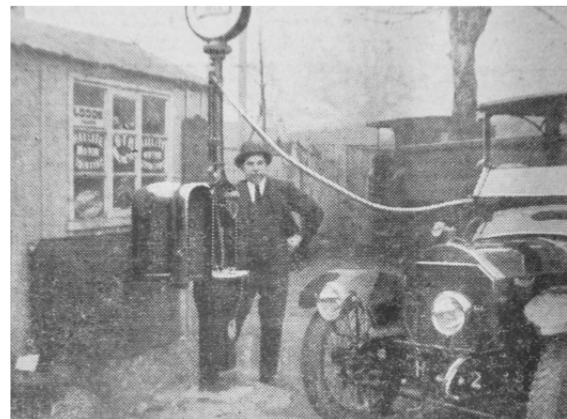
The service, an hourly one for the greater part, will be on the road next Monday, the first 'bus leaving Enfield Town at 8.30 and being timed to reach Watford Junction at 10.10. Timetable and fares will be found in our advertisement column.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 16th March 1923

A Petrol Economiser

Our picture shows Mr Beaumont, with an Anglo-Golden Pump which has been erected in the yard of Messrs. Beaumont and Co. Ltd., motor proprietors, Silver Street, Enfield. The pump is connected with an underground tank, containing 500 gallons. It measures accurately from one pint to one gallon, and registers each gallon that is extracted. It is claimed that the pump will deliver 20 gallons of Pratt's spirit – pure and filtered, and without waste – in one minute. Mr Beaumont says he finds it is a great saving of time.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 16th March 1923



Developing the Town

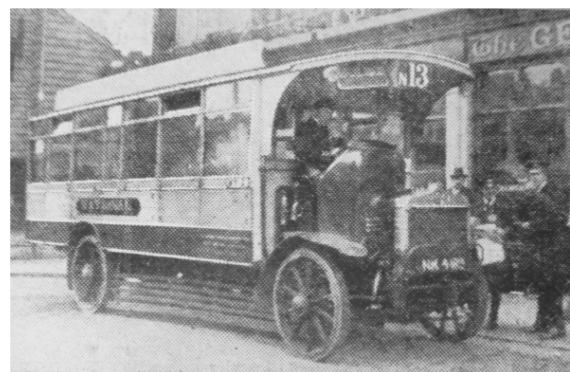
Indication of the intention to make Enfield Town a still more attractive shopping centre is forthcoming in the announcement that Mr F A Fountain's motor body building works are being removed this week to Sydney-road. Messrs. Warren's coal office is also being transferred to the same thoroughfare. Though no definite information is at present forthcoming, it is understood that the old premises, which have stood for upwards of a hundred years, are to be replaced by a row of handsome shops. London-road bears witness also to the progress of the Enfield Highway Co-operative Society, which is enlarging its sphere of business operations by the erection of new premises as grocery and butchery departments. The Society hopes to have the building completed in about three months from now.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 23rd March 1923

Enfield to Watford

Our picture shows the inauguration of the National Service from Enfield Town to Watford Junction. The first 'bus covered the new route on Monday morning, the first ticket being taken by Mr. F.F. Smith of St. Andrew's Road, Enfield. The Enfield Town starting point is from the "George Inn", Enfield Town.

Enfield Gazette & Observer 23rd March 1923



Graham Frost

The Water Babies of Enfield by Ian Jones continued

Tragic accidents inevitably continued in part because there were so many areas of open water in the district with flooded gravel and brickearth digging pits being the most dangerous because of their depth and vertical sides.



North London Gravel pit at Montagu Road, Edmonton

On **August 12th 1882** the Observer reported just such an accident and, unusually, described the resultant inquest in considerable detail.

SAD DROWNING FATALITY AT BUSH HILL PARK

About noon on Sunday a sad bathing accident happened at Bush Hill Park, the victim being a boy 12 years of age residing with his mother at Gloucester Place, Chase Side, Enfield. It appears that deceased and two other boys named Slade and Reid went to a gravel pit in the park and the first and last named undressed and walked into the water for the purpose of bathing, Slade remaining on the bank. The pit contained some six or seven feet of water in the centre and the two boys got out of their depth. Read [sic] being a swimmer succeeded in saving his life but Dearman was drowned. The body was recovered about ten minutes afterwards but life was extinct.

AN INQUEST

was held in the Assembly Rooms at the King's Head on Thursday before J. Payne Esq. Coroner and a jury of which Mr. J.H. Meyers was foreman. The following evidence was taken:- Sarah Wiseman, who seemed greatly affected, said I live at Gloucester Place, Chase Side. Deceased was my son, Frederick William Dearman. He was 12 years and 3 months old and was the son of John Newman Dearman, baker. Deceased was in good health when he left home. He was not in the habit of bathing except in a low brook. I do not believe he knew the place where he was drowned; he was decoyed away. Thomas Slade, aged 11 said, I knew little of Dearman. On Sunday I went with him to Bush Hill Park, to a gravel pit. Charley Reid was with us and [with] the deceased undressed and went into the water to bathe; they took hold of hands. Deceased went into the water too far and, being out of his depth, could not get back again. Reid managed to get out. I went and told two men about deceased being in the water and they immediately attempted to get him out with a long iron pipe. A doctor was sent for.

-The Coroner: Is it a place where boys go to bathe?

-Witness: Yes Sir

-Is it a large place?. - Yes

-Is the water very deep? - Yes

-Is there any notice stuck up warning people from bathing?. - No Sir

-Is there any railing or fence round it? - No Sir

-I suppose Reid and the Deceased were good friends? - Yes

-The Foreman: Before Reid got out of the water did he make any attempt to rescue Dearman?

-Yes Sir.

-Charles Bannister deposed: I live about 200 yards from the gravel pit. At half past 12 on Sunday my attention was attracted by seeing two men fishing about in the pond with an iron pipe. I asked them what they were after and they said there was a boy in the water. I immediately plunged in and after diving two or three times, in about five minutes pulled the body out. We attempted to restore him but failed and on the doctor coming he certified life extinct. It was 6½ feet deep where I found the body.

-The Coroner: What sort of a place is it?

-Witness: I think it is a most dangerous place. The banks go perfectly straight down to the water. The earth is crumbling away and in some parts the top overhangs the bank.

-The Coroner: I suppose it is not a bathing place, but boys will go there. Is there a notice to say they shall not go there?

-Witness: None at all. It strikes me that if the two men who were fishing about with the iron pipe had raised an alarm the life might have been saved. The men had been there some time before I heard of it and no alarm was raised. It seems a great pity. I deeply regret that I was not there five minutes earlier.

-Dr. Cubitt Lucey of The Elms, Bush Hill Park said that as he was returning home from church on Sunday he was informed of the accident and on going to the spot found the boy quite dead having been drowned.

-The Coroner, in summing up, spoke of the advantages of people being able to swim and said that everyone should make up their minds to learn. Boys would be boys and tumble about the water when they had the opportunity. In that case it struck him that a notice ought to be placed near the pit stating that it is dangerous for people to bathe there

. -The jury returned a verdict of "Accidentally drowned" and made the following presentment:-

-The jury are of the opinion that the proprietors of Bush Hill Park should immediately take steps to close the gravel pit. Situated as it is so closely to the houses on the state it must continue to be a source of danger so long as it is left in its present condition.

By a strange coincidence I began writing about this event the day after the tragic drowning of the four young boys in Solihull during the pre-Christmas freeze. In Enfield over the preceding years there were several fatal bathing incidents involving children but this was, as far as I know, the first to have its inquest covered in such detail.

Occasional discussions on the establishment of bathing facilities in the Borough took place but these suddenly increased in intensity beginning when in

1884, on the 2nd April, "A Swimmer" wrote to the paper at considerable length and in purple prose to call for either a gift from a wealthy philanthropist or else for a commercial concern to be formed to provide such a facility. Such a facility could be used for swimming in the summer months, an ice rink in the winter and a general washing facility throughout the year. After, inevitably putting cleanliness next to godliness and morality he eventually goes on to ask that:-

I trust this subject will have your editorial support and that like another Moses you may strike the rock-of public opinion-with satisfactory results; that you will ring on the anvil with no uncertain sound and that the sparks therefrom will result in-not smoke-but water and lead to a veritable Enfield "wash."

The letter as published, takes up an entire column but amongst all the other reasons for a swimming bath including attracting the "right people" to fill up the many empty houses in the town there is no mention of the safety aspects. In its editorial in that same edition, the paper commented; *We trust he will create a spark that will kindle a flame and continue to burn till the desired object is accomplished.*

On the 19th "Another Swimmer" wrote giving his full hearted support while pointing out that there was an equal lack in Edmonton and Tottenham. He also commented on the many lives that would be saved if both men and women could swim referring to:- *That touching episode in connection with the sinking of the "Princess Alice" in which a young lady swam to shore, bearing her sweetheart on her back.*

[This pleasure steamer was rammed and sunk on the Thames in 1878 with the loss of over 650 lives. This remains the worst individual tragedy on the Thames.]

He called for a public meeting to discuss the idea but nothing seems to have happened. Ironically the same edition of the Observer published a letter from Mr. Toombs describing a near-tragedy in this same flooded quarry in Bush Hill Park showing nothing there had changed.

On **May 31st** the need was further underlined by a report of a **near drowning at Bush Hill Park**. A young girl playing with friends fell into the pond and was only saved by a passing man jumping in, grabbing her clothes and pulling her out.

Two further letters in the **July of 1884**, from A Resident of Enfield and a Mr. Frank Roberts both referred to the baths at Hoddesdon feeling that the much more populous Enfield could surely support such an institution. **On August 16th** "**A Swimmer**" responded with what he himself called *my rambling and discursive remarks*. He later hoped they would *not descend into the waters of oblivion*. Unfortunately, his prose did not ascend to the heights of clarity and brevity either and he spent the rest of the column indulging in a chaotic, sarcastic and somewhat confused rant including such irrelevancies as Henry VIII, the city of Rome and the river Jordan. In it he offered no new ideas and certainly no money, while making no reference to the safety aspects of the matter.

In **June 1885 yet another child drowned at Bush Hill Park**, Claude Clement-Foley, the four years and three months old second son of Captain Augustus Foley of the Royal Militia. Captain Foley stated, *On Wednesday the 3rd June he was out to play and about half past eleven I heard the servant cry out, "Little Claude is in the water." I at once rushed out to the gravel pit which contains about nine feet of water. I saw no traces of the child and went in for him. The water was so dirty I could not see at first but eventually I found him and got him out. Dr. Lucey came at once, examined the body and pronounced the child dead. I don't know how long he had been in the water, but I should say about 20 minutes.*

- The Coroner:- *Is the gravel pit open and unenclosed?*
- Captain Foley: *It is railed off from the road that is all and there are two or three gaps in the railing; any child can get in without the slightest trouble.*
- A Juryman: *Is there a rail around the pit?*
- Captain Foley: *There is a railing in front of the field but the pit itself is unprotected.*
- The Coroner: *I suppose that pit is always filled with water?*
- Captain Foley: *Yes, I have never seen it otherwise.*
- A Juryman stated *notice boards were once placed there but boys knocked them down.....*
- A Juryman said *he was on the jury when a boy named Dearman was drowned at the same place. It was time the thing was seen to.*
- Another Juryman said *he knew five had been in the water.*
- Another Juryman that *they were not all drowned.*
- Inspector Richardson: *One was drowned there in August 1882.*

An animated, not to say angry discussion ensued,.....*It would not cost much to enclose the pit.....Thirty yards open space between the open tiling by the side of the road and the water. I have often seen children sitting at the edge of the pit.*

- The Foreman: *I think.....there was a recommendation of the jury that the pit should be enclosed to avoid further accidents. Was nothing done after that?*
- A Juryman: *a recommendation was then made by the jury that the Park Company should fence this pond but nothing appears to have been done.....Cannot we do something to compel the company....to protect life?*
- The Foreman: *I fear the jury have no power to enforce anything. It is private property*
- The Coroner: *If the local authorities have no control over the property we might make the request rather stronger this time.....A verdict of accidental death was returned and the Coroner was asked to forward the following to Mr. T. Taylor Smith, Bush Hill: "We strongly recommend that with a view of protecting the lives of children and preventing similar accidents, the North London Land Company should be urged to enclose the gravel pit, right round, without delay."*

Nothing more was heard for the next few years, so perhaps something effective was finally done.

The fatalities continued in other places. On July 20th 1887 a youth Thomas Wootton from Ponders End was bathing in the Lea near the jute factory when he had an attack of cramp and drowned, his body not being recovered until the next morning by the lock keeper. A few days later 17 year old Arthur Burgess got trapped in the water bathing in the fish ponds at Burnt Farm. Despite the efforts of his friends and two men, he was dead when finally brought to land.

Responding to the recent drownings at Ponders End a Mr. John Mullett contacted the Royal Humane Society who, as he wrote to the Observer on the 23rd :- *At once forwarded to me a set of life saving apparatus of most approved pattern and that it now hangs upon the riverside wall of my house and is immediately obtainable night or day. For the safekeeping of it I have made myself personally responsible. I wish to add that my boat is likewise always available for the same purpose.*

In 1888, the year after the founding of the Victoria Swimming Club, serious fundraising for the **proposed swimming baths in Enfield Lock** got underway stimulated by the case reported in the Observer on the 17th August of Walter Darney, the 7 year old *son of David Darney an employee at the Royal Small Arms Factory of 35, Standard Road, Enfield Lock, went with two other children to play around a gravel pit at the end of the above road. There was about six feet of water in the pit at the time. About a quarter of an hour after the child had left home a workman named George Gordon of 64 Standard Road who happened to be engaged close by heard one of the children exclaim that Walter Darney had fallen into the water. He at once proceeded to the spot and entered the water, the deceased having then disappeared. With the assistance of Robert Walker of 41 Standard Road, he recovered the body in the space of a quarter of an hour. He promptly applied artificial means to restore animation but without success...*

On the 20th October 1888 a concert was held at Albany Hall in Enfield Highway which raised some £200 towards the cost of the proposed baths in Enfield Wash. This was added to the £300 already raised towards the estimated total of £2000. Amongst the contributors to date were 1600 men from the Royal Small Arms Factory. The Observer further reported on an event held at the Sheridan Theatre in Enfield Lock to raise additional funds.

I am impressed by the sheer amount of often very detailed information that local papers at this period can provide on a surprisingly wide range of topics and only wish their modern successors were a fraction as good.

Ian Jones, 29th December 2022.



Photo: Enfield Local Studies

The baths in Bradley Road, Enfield Lock, were opened in 1893

Registered Charity No. 299073.

Please send contributions to the newsletter to Kate Godfrey, 69 Margaret Road, New Barnet.
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