



## No. 16 Spring 2007

**W**elcome to the latest edition of our newsletter. The main significance of 2007, of course, is that this year we mark the 200th anniversary of the act of parliament abolishing the slave trade. We have various local links with slavery in our borough and in this newsletter we have three articles exploring the most important of them – one on Granville Sharp, the father of the abolitionist movement, one on the Crafts, runaway slaves from America, and one on Sir Nicholas Crisp, who seems to have made glass beads at Hammersmith which were subsequently used to purchase West African slaves – see page 7. We also have the usual wide variety of articles covering all sorts of local subjects, from cemeteries and crossovers to the old CAV works in Acton and work in the walled garden at Fulham Palace. Finally, may I draw your attention to the back page where you will find details of two HBG events this summer: John Goodier's Social Housing walk on 16 June and our treasure hunt on 14 July. Both will contribute towards HBG funds, so please support them.

### *Chairman's Update*

#### **Fulham Palace**

The first phase of the restoration work on Fulham Palace is now complete. The palace was re-opened on 9 November by the bishop of London. Bishop Sherlock's room is spectacular with the ceiling restored and the details of the rest of the room elegantly and painstakingly re-constructed. The great hall, the oldest part of the present palace, built at the end of the 15th century is spruced up, the suite of rooms on the south side is an exhibition space, and the bishop's drawing room is now a welcoming and elegant café with views across the lawns to All Saints church. The next phase of the restoration work, which will need further lottery funding, will include the restoration of the outbuildings and work on the grounds. It is planned that the walled garden will be brought back to productive use as an organic working kitchen garden, though this will take some years (*see below, page 3*). The museum is due to re-open in April. Altogether the restoration is something to celebrate. The palace is open to the public for part of the week but the café is open every day. A visit is recommended.

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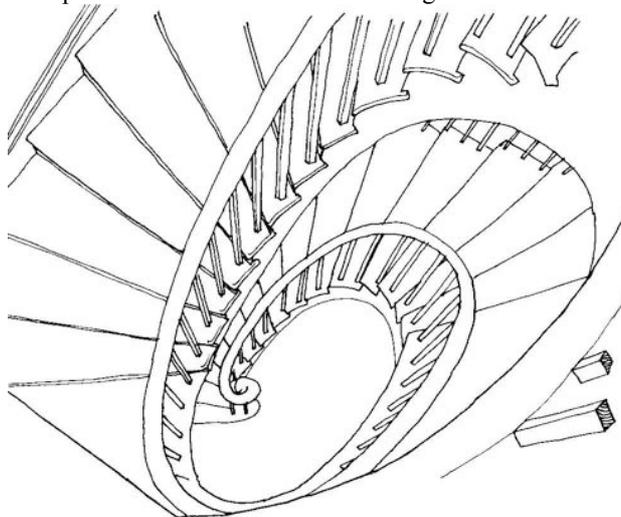
#### **Allied Carpets Site**

Something else to celebrate is refusal on appeal of the proposal for a dense development including a 10-storey building on the Allied Carpets site in Goldhawk Road, in the Ravenscourt conservation area. This was opposed by all the local groups and both political parties but supported by the mayor of London. Represented by the chairman, the Group appeared at the

inquiry and gave detailed evidence on the damage this building would cause to the historic character of the surrounding area, which is largely two- and three-storey. The inspector agreed that the proposal was out of keeping with the conservation area.

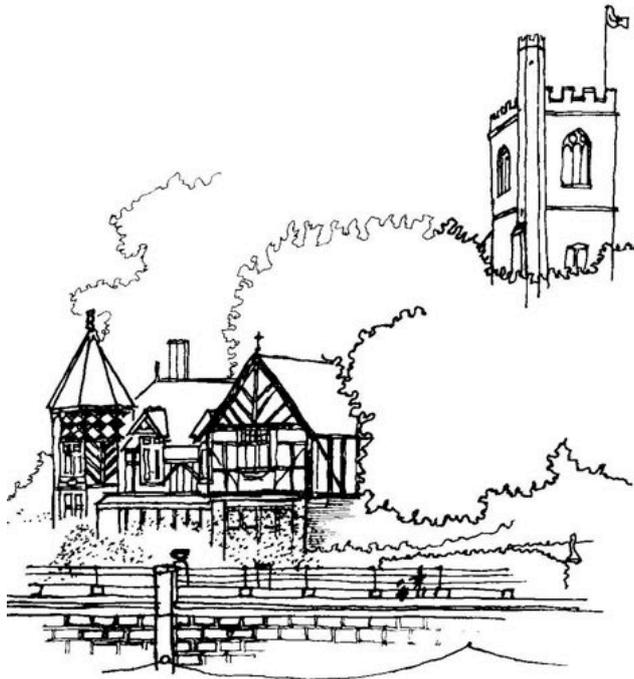
#### **Bishop's Park**

We reported on the Bishop's Park Stakeholders Advisory Group in the last newsletter. The borough is now in the



*A new feature in the restored Fulham Palace is this hand-made twisting staircase complete with hardwood balustrade.*

process of applying to the Heritage Lottery Fund for a grant. We welcome this and hope that it will lead to the restoration of historic structures in the park, for example Pryor's Bank (*see below*) and the ceramic balustrading, and lead to a satisfactory solution to the problem of the former boating lake.



*Built in 1900, Pryor's Bank is a picturesque, detached, half-timbered park lodge standing in ornamental gardens laid out in 1853 between All Saints Fulham church and the river.*

### Planning

You may have seen in the press that the mayor is seeking additional powers to be able to decide some larger planning applications. The Group has opposed this extension of the mayor's powers – along, we understand, with every London borough! If he gets these powers, he will be able to dictate to local councils and insist on large developments against local wishes – as at Allied Carpets.

The mayor has published *Further Alterations to the London Plan*. The Group has suggested that the policies related to the historic environment should be strengthened. Sadly, the alterations to the Blue Ribbon Network policies for the river and other waterways weaken the existing position rather than strengthen it. We continue to oppose the reduction of protection for strategic views and to urge the inclusion of river views in our area.

### Churches

Three of our listed churches are planning extensions: St Paul's Hammersmith, St Stephen and St Thomas Uxbridge Road and All Saints Fulham. St Paul's Hammersmith has applied for planning permission for a revised scheme for an extension at the west end of the church which would mean the demolition of the listed churchyard wall. The whole subject of historic churches and their alteration and extension was explored at our annual meeting last September (*see page 11*).

### Fulham Football Club

Fulham Football Club has applied for an extension to the Hammersmith End stand which would add 1100 extra seats, a restaurant overlooking the river and Stevenage Park, and office space. The club has a permission for changes to the stand which increased its height at the back by some three metres. The Group is concerned about the height, the new boundary wall and the overshadowing of Stevenage Park and will be looking for improvements to the boundary with the park and the riverside walk and to the planting in the park.

### CAV DISAPPEARS

For almost all of the 20th century CAV was one of the biggest and best-known businesses in our borough. Now its last remaining site in Larden Road, Acton, has been demolished and new housing scheduled to replace it. Time, therefore, to shed a little light on the company's long and distinguished history.

In 1892 Charles Anthony Vandervell (*pictured here*)

started a small portable battery business in North Kensington. He also made lamps for horse transport. Expansion led to relocation, first to Willesden and then, in 1904, into our borough at Warple Way, Acton. By this time C.A. Vandervell & Co's much-expanded range of products included x-ray sets,



ammeters, voltmeters, car coils and lights, switchboards and portable fluorescent lighting. New multi-storey buildings – traces of which are still visible – were opened in 1913 and 1915. As well as being a technical leader, the factory was also a 'model' works, having its own welfare department, sanatorium, fire brigade, men's and women's canteens, and even its own vegetable garden (the former Beeches Farm).



*The CAV works in Warple Way, Acton, as they looked in 1918.*

During World War I the company produced hand grenades and mortar fuses, plus the starters, magnetos, dynamos and lights used in the lorries and buses required for troop transport. After the war 'CAV' went public. By the mid 1920s it had 1400 staff and a range of big customers including Austin, AEC, Leyland, Thornycroft and the London & General Omnibus Company. But in 1925, with the factory already mortgaged, the company

was sold to Joseph Lucas Ltd, a larger competitor and admirer of CAV products and people. The businesses were quickly rationalised. Acton, trading as CAV Ltd, made heavy electrics for commercial vehicles, while Lucas in Birmingham produced those for cars, motorbikes and cycles. To exploit the burgeoning diesel market, an Anglo-German joint company was set up in 1931 alongside the electrical works at Acton. CAV-Bosch Ltd exploited German technical experience and British engineering skills until 1938 when the Germans pulled out. However, CAV now had a well-trained workforce and the engineering cadre capable of creating a wholly British diesel pump and injector business.

During World War II CAV, with 4,000 staff, produced most of Britain's diesel fuel systems, mainly for ships, generators and pumps. CAV also played a key part in building the fuel systems for Meteors, the Allies' only operational jet fighters of the war. The main output, however, was the electrical equipment of fighting vehicles and military lorries. Astonishingly, Acton suffered very little bomb war damage. When extra space was needed, converted buildings in Burnley (Lancs) and Sudbury (Suffolk) were opened as 'shadow' factories. Post-war, CAV continued to open new factories around the country as markets developed for military, commercial and agricultural vehicles of all sorts, at home and overseas. The Acton works itself also expanded, notably into the Bronley Soap Factory in Warple Way and, later, into part of the adjoining Napier Engine works.

CAV were great technical innovators. Electric motors for fork-lift platforms and wheelchairs, turbochargers, the first 'commercial' alternators, micro nozzles, whole families of diesel pumps – this short list gives just a flavour of the CAV range of new products. They also developed heavy braking systems, later transferred to the Lucas Girling subsidiary. CAV were also extremely proactive, high quality and successful production engineers. The largely robotic 1970 Sudbury factory, for example, could make over 100,000 nozzles a year, all to manufacturing tolerances measured in microns (thousandths of a millimetre).

From the 1950s to the 1980s, CAV and subsidiaries such as Bryce Berger and Simms dominated the UK market. They also flourished overseas, exporting 70% of UK production and winning two Queen's Awards for Industry. In addition, CAV had wholly-owned subsidiaries or joint companies in Brazil, Spain, the USA and France, with licensing agreements elsewhere. The payroll peaked at 14,000 in 1975, about half of it being in Acton and Shepherds Bush.

From such a powerful position, how did CAV Acton come to disappear? Well, the 1980s and early 1990s saw changing trading conditions. First, globalisation and consolidation of the world's vehicle makers led to suppliers needing to be large and global too. Second, the general economic growth of preceding decades slowed, culminating in recession in the early 1990s. Parent company Lucas, recognising the need for greater scale,

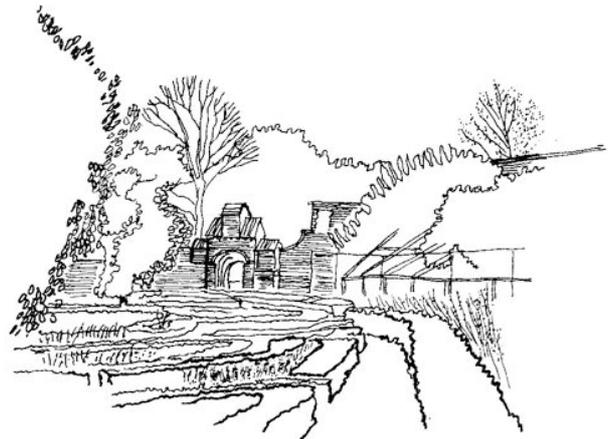
sought a big-playing partner and in 1996 merged into Lucas Varity, based initially in the UK but eventually domiciled in the US.

In the late 1990s, Lucas Varity was itself sold to US giant, TRW. Later TRW sold the whole diesel business to another US company, Delphi Automotive Systems. Delphi still operates most of the former CAV business. This does not include the Acton works however. The last surviving Larden Road workshops were closed in 2005. In their place the Genesis Housing Group is building 453 residential units with a mixture of low cost rented homes, shared ownership and market housing.

*Richard Scott, Historic Buildings Group*

## **PALACE GARDEN**

Anyone who has ventured down to the far end of the Fulham Palace estate recently will have found a surprising but sorry sight. Hidden behind a wall, which in places dates back to Tudor times, are the remains of a walled kitchen garden, though it is hard to tell that now. The vinery and bothies are in a state of near dereliction and the knot garden, which dates back to at least 1820, is in desperate need of some care and attention. Little else remains of the gardens which once fed the bishops of London and their household.



*The old walled garden at Fulham Palace, due to be restored by Garden Organic, the national organic growing charity.*

However, moves are beginning to change this sorry picture. Garden Organic, the national charity for organic growing and restorer of the walled kitchen garden at Audley End in Essex, has been asked to restore the garden at Fulham. The plan is to take the garden back to its productive height in the 1860s using modern methods of organic horticulture. The vinery and bothies will be restored, the knot garden will be renewed and the rest of the site will be turned into a vegetable and fruit garden.

To help in its work at Fulham, Garden Organic will be using seeds from its heritage seed library. This contains over 800 varieties of vegetable seed – seed which would otherwise be extinct. Included in the library are varieties which are known to have come from London seed companies such as Carters and Veitch, or which have a London link, for example the London Market carrot and the Kew Blue French bean.

A feature of the restored garden at Fulham will be sequential cropping. Today, the norm for commercial growers is crops which have to be harvested all at once. But in the old days, when clamping and bottling were the only methods of preservation, gardeners wanted plants that would crop over time, or which offered an early crop, a main crop or a late crop. Garden Organic will be able to show this traditional form of gardening to full advantage in Fulham's large-scale kitchen garden.

However, actually achieving this vision will take time. First, we have to apply for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund to help in the restoration of the unusual concave vinery and the bothies, and to pay for some archaeological research into the garden and the hard landscaped areas. Second, Garden Organic will need to raise funds for the restoration of the garden itself. The total cost will be around £1 million. Then, before restoration work actually starts, there will need to be a lot of preparation: inappropriate modern planting will have to be removed, new beds and paths will need to be created and a gardeners' working area will have to be built.

So, it is likely to be a work in progress for some time, with a full opening not before 2010. A lot of the early work will be behind the scenes so it may not even seem that much is happening. As work moves forward, we will keep visitors informed – and there may even be opportunities for some volunteers to come and help at various stages of the development.

When it is completed the restored garden at Fulham will be a wonderful place to visit and Garden Organic will be able to offer a wide range of courses for children and adults, using the walled kitchen garden as the source and inspiration for its work. For more information about Garden Organic, please visit [www.gardenorganic.org.uk](http://www.gardenorganic.org.uk).

*Dr Susan Kay-Williams, Garden Organic*

### **HAMMERSMITH AND FULHAM CEMETERIES**

Burying the dead has been the practice of Christians and other religions for centuries. In early times burials were simple with no coffin and probably no grave marker. In Britain funeral practices developed in the Middle Ages, at least for the rich and famous, and by Georgian and Victorian times for all. They have left a heritage of burial grounds and monuments.

Burials for important or wealthy people often took place inside churches: the burial might be commemorated by a monument or by a brass plaque on the floor or wall. These do not necessarily mark the actual burial site. Old churches like All Saints Fulham may have many of these; more recent churches will have fewer although where the church, like St Paul's Hammersmith, has been rebuilt, some of the monuments from the old church will have been preserved in the new one.

There was usually a burial ground around or near to the church. A tradition of marking the graves grew up, and by the 18th and 19th centuries this practice was carried

out for all but the very poor. The churchyard of All Saints Fulham still looks like a burial ground, but the old burial ground at St Paul's Hammersmith has been largely cleared and converted into an open space. More recent churches in towns do not usually have burial grounds, though the 1848 St Thomas of Canterbury in Rylston Road, Fulham – A W Pugin's only parish church in London – is an exception here.



*The 18th century grave of William Oliver, buried in the churchyard of All Saints, Fulham, in 1744.*

As a result of the conditions of many city churchyards, and subsequent acts of Parliament and changes in taste, there was a move in the early 19th century to follow the then new continental practice of opening commercial, purpose-built cemeteries. One of the first of these in London was All Souls Kensal Green, laid out by the General Cemetery Company in 1832 on land straddling the boundary between Hammersmith and Kensington. The cemetery was open to both Anglicans and dissenters and was equipped with separate chapels for both groups. In 1858 St Mary's Roman Catholic cemetery was opened next door to Kensal Green on the Hammersmith side.

Later, and partly because of the bankruptcy of the cemetery at Brompton, local authorities were allowed to set up cemeteries. Two public cemeteries were developed, Fulham on the Fulham Palace Road in 1865 and Hammersmith in Margravine Road four years later. Since then a policy of removing monuments has been followed which has resulted in the destruction of much valuable historical information. In 1926 both boroughs acquired new cemeteries either side of the south circular between Kew and Mortlake. North Sheen, for Fulham, has many headstones and looks like a 19th century churchyard. The new Hammersmith cemetery is mainly of the raised platform type and very different in feel.

Another development in the early 20th century was the growing preference for cremation over burial. In 1938 Edward White designed a crematorium at Kensal Green featuring two chapels joined by a glazed atrium. Mortlake

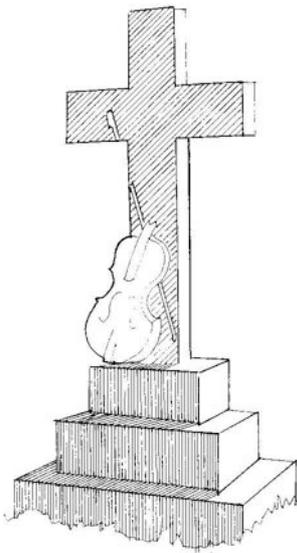
Crematorium was opened in 1939 within the grounds of Hammersmith New Cemetery. Enclosed by a tall hedge, it is a red brick Italianate art deco gem with an excellent, very formal, garden of remembrance. The designer was F Douglas Barton, an employee of Hammersmith council though apparently not a qualified architect.

Today, Hammersmith and Fulham burials and cremations still take place in the new cemeteries opened in 1926 and there is space for them to continue to do so for the next 20 years or so. There is also still space by the way at Kensal Green after nearly 200 years of burials.

*John Goodier, Historic Buildings Group*

### MARGRAVINE CEMETERY UPDATE

After several meetings, tree walks and bat surveys, the Friends of Margravine Cemetery is now properly established as a registered company with officers and a bank account and it is looking to obtain charitable status. All are welcome to join this flourishing local group, particularly those who live close to the cemetery or who use it regularly. The annual subscription is a very modest £6.



*Bandmaster Tom Brown, who died in 1921 aged 32, is commemorated by this memorial in Hammersmith cemetery in Margravine Road.*

Encouraged by the biodiversity officer and the tree officer at the council, the FOMC has applied for a Breathing Places grant which, if successful, will enable it to plant more trees, plant hedge whips to fill gaps along the southern boundary, carry out species surveys, develop walks and produce an information leaflet for local distribution. A decision on the application is expected in May 2007. For more information or to join the Friends, please contact Ruth or Tigg Savery on 020 8748 2927.

*Charles Wagner, Friends of Margravine Cemetery*

### GRANVILLE SHARP

It is probably fair to say that the name of Granville Sharp is not well known to the general public. But he was the key figure behind William Wilberforce's act to abolish the slave trade, passed in 1807. And he had close Fulham connections.

Granville Sharp was born into a church family in Durham in 1735. His father was archdeacon of Northumberland and his grandfather archbishop of York. Sharp's family were not wealthy, so in 1750 he was apprenticed in London to a linen-draper at Tower Hill. Eight years later

he took employment with the Army Ordnance Department.

He became interested in the slave trade and other injustices and in 1765 he took up the case of Jonathan Strong.

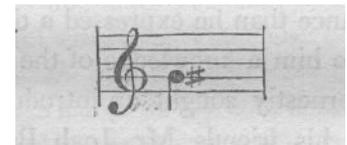


*Granville Sharp (1735-1813), the father of the abolitionist movement, often stayed in Fulham and is buried in the churchyard of the old parish church of All Saints.*

Strong had been brought to England by a lawyer called David Lisle, and cast off as useless following a severe beating. Sharp met Strong in his surgeon brother's surgery in Mincing Lane, which was open every morning to give free treatment to the poor. The Sharps took care of Strong and found him work. Two years later Lisle saw the recovered Strong in the street and had him thrown into gaol pending shipment back to Barbados. Sharp intervened and the case was brought before the Lord Mayor of London, who set Strong free.

Thus the question arose of whether or not a slave in the colonies was still a slave in England or a free man. There was an opportunity to test this in 1772. Another slave, James Somerset, had been brought to England by his master, Charles Stewart. He escaped but was recaptured and placed on a ship bound for Jamaica to be re-sold.

Sharp heard about this and brought a court case to test the legality of Stewart's action. For more than two years, though not a lawyer, he had been studying all the relevant statutes to see whether a person, after setting foot on English soil, could still be a slave. The case came before Lord Mansfield, the lord chief justice, with Sharp briefing the lawyers, whom he had employed at his own expense. After much deliberation, the judges ruled that a slave setting foot in England was a free man. The effect was that thousands of other slaves received their liberty and Sharp was fêted as the leading national figure in the cause for liberty.



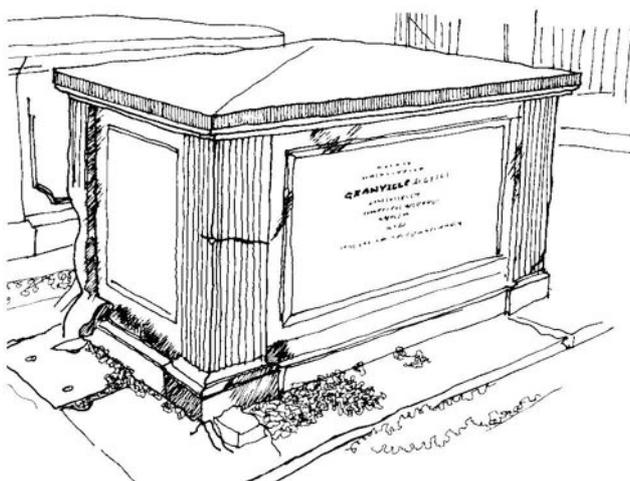
*G sharp – the witty signature adopted by anti-slavery campaigner Granville Sharp.*

In 1776 the American colonies revolted against their British masters. Sharp supported the Americans and so resigned from the Ordnance Department, after 18 years. He also began campaigning against the press-ganging of seamen into the navy. His next great interest was in the founding of the colony of Sierra Leone on the African coast as a settlement for freed slaves in 1787. In the same

year he helped to found the Committee for the Abolition of the African Slave Trade and was appointed chairman as a mark of respect by his fellow committee members.

In 1804 the British and Foreign Bible Society was set up with Sharp's help and his name caught the attention of the Reverend Thomas Owen, chaplain to Beilby Porteous, Bishop of London at Fulham Palace. Sharp became chairman of this organisation too, with the bishop of London agreeing to be vice-president. (The bishop had a particular interest in this as he was responsible for the Anglican church outside England, including America and the West Indies).

Granville Sharp died at his brother's house in Fulham High Street, where he frequently stayed, in 1813. He was buried nearby in the churchyard of All Saints, Fulham, and a memorial plaque was erected to him in Poet's Corner, Westminster Abbey, by the African Institution, the organisation founded by Sharp in 1807 to oversee the implementation of the slave trade act.



*Granville Sharp's grave in All Saints Fulham churchyard is in a poor state of repair. However, it should be restored this year if a local campaign led by the Historic Buildings Group succeeds in raising the necessary funds.*

The Sharp family tomb – his brother and sister are also buried here – can still be seen in the churchyard of All Saints next to Bishops Park. However, it is in poor condition. To mark this year's 200th anniversary of the passing of the slave trade act, various local organisations including the Historic Buildings Group are combining with All Saints church to raise money to renovate this important piece of our heritage. It is hoped that the work will be completed in time for a commemorative event on or close to the date of Sharp's death in July (*see back page*). If you would like to support the restoration, please contact John Sheppard on 020 7736 3718 or [john@shep89.freeuk.com](mailto:john@shep89.freeuk.com).

*Keith Whitehouse, Historic Buildings Group*

## **RUNAWAYS**

Having been the part-time home and last resting place of the father of the abolitionist movement, our borough later became the home of two well-known runaway slaves

from the southern states of America who continued the struggle for emancipation. They were William Craft and his wife Ellen.

Ellen was born in Georgia, USA, in 1826. Her mother Maria was the slave of her white father Major James Smith. At the age of eleven Ellen was given away as a wedding present to Major and Mrs Smith's daughter. Her new owner was therefore her half sister although it is not likely that the Smith family introduced Ellen as such to any of their white friends. In this new household she met another servant, William, whom she later married. William had conceived an overwhelming desire to throw off his bonds and to run away to the North. After William overcame Ellen's initial reluctance they formed a plan and Christmas was the time they decided to put it into action.



*Ellen Craft, a runaway slave from America who settled in Hammersmith.*

William had an outside job as a cabinet-maker which gave him the opportunity to earn and save a small amount of money. With this they bought the necessary materials for Ellen to make a costume for her disguise. The idea was that Ellen, who had a very pale skin, would play the part of an elderly and infirm white male slave owner travelling to the north for medical treatment accompanied by his faithful and devoted servant, William.

They chose Christmas as a good time to make their escape because slaves usually got permission to visit their families for the holiday and this gave them a period during which they would not be missed. As soon as they were safely into Pennsylvania, William and Ellen abandoned their disguises and settled in Boston. Their fame spread rapidly when the story of their audacious escape was recounted in the newspapers. The romantic nature of the plan and their courage in its execution turned them into celebrities. Much in demand, they were popular speakers at many abolitionist rallies and meetings.

In 1850 the Fugitive Slave Act, a federal law applying throughout the United States, was strengthened, making it the duty of the Massachusetts authorities to return any runaways back to their previous masters in the south. Due to their fame, William and Ellen were prime targets. Like many escapees, they had to flee again, first of all to Canada. Later they decided to move to England. After a brief stay in Liverpool, they came to live in Hammersmith at 12 (now 26) Cambridge Grove. Here they raised a bustling family of five children. Their house became one of the centres of the abolitionist movement in Britain. William and Ellen became well known as

speakers and made several tours around the country to publicise the inhumanity of the slavery system.

William spent some time in Dahomey in West Africa where his ancestors had originated. He hoped that Dahomey – today the Republic of Benin and one of the world's poorest nations – would be able to provide a weapon in the fight to eradicate American slavery once and for all. His plan was to set up a cotton industry with the King of Dahomey that would surpass that of the southern states of the USA. The theory was that if it had a serious challenge from abroad, the notoriously inefficient slave-supported Southern agriculture would collapse, taking slavery with it. Unfortunately, William, the house-servant and cabinet-maker turned orator and writer, just did not have the necessary farming experience and knowledge to make it work. This was to become a recurring problem for William later in his life.

Their five children and William and Ellen lived in their Cambridge Grove house until after the American civil war and the abolition of slavery. In 1868 Ellen was



*William Craft, the runaway slave from America who settled in Cambridge Grove.*

relieved to find that her mother had survived the upheavals of the war and they were reunited at Kings Cross station when the old lady came to visit her daughter whom she had not seen for 17 years. That year William and Ellen decided to return to America. They went first to Boston and then, funded by donations and investment from British and New England abolitionists, they set up a new project in their old home state of Georgia. This was a combined school and farm where

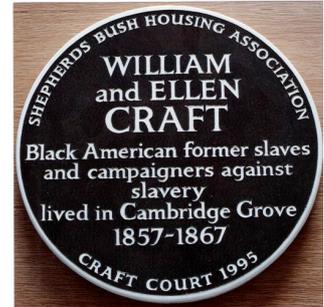
their pupils, all freed slaves, studied agriculture for part of the day and worked the farm during the rest of the time. It was the first school for black people in the state and it gave a hint of their family's later destiny as many of their descendants themselves became teachers at all levels of the education system from primary schools to universities.

Although their plantation had periods of prosperity, the long-term success of their courageous experiment was in jeopardy from two directions. Firstly, it was constantly threatened by attacks organised by the Klu Klux Klan. The Crafts' first venture was burned out and they moved to the Woodville plantation in Bryan County. Here, once again, William's lack of agricultural experience proved to be the second and fundamental problem to this courageous couple's struggle for their people's freedom and dignity. After a long and almost soul-destroying battle with adversity, the banks foreclosed and William died shortly after, a broken and disappointed man. Ellen

lived the remainder of her life in poverty and died at the age of 71.

On their return to the USA, William and Ellen took two of their children with them. One of their sons who remained in Britain later married an Irish woman.

Notting Hill Housing Trust have named their area office at the corner of Cambridge Grove and Glenthorne Road as Craft Court in honour of the couple and a commemorative plaque can be seen on the side wall. In 1997 the Hammersmith Society organised a meeting in Cambridge Grove with two of their great granddaughters, Mrs Jean Nicholson of Camberley, Surrey and Mrs Virginia Craft Rose of Oakland, California. Despite one lady being black and the other white, their family likeness was plain for all to see.



*Michael McDermott*

### **BEADY EYE ON CRISP**

Over the past seven years the Museum of London archaeology service has carried out a series of excavations in and around the former site of Brandenburgh House on Winslow Road, where the Hammersmith Embankment office development is being built. The excavations have provided a rare opportunity to examine some of the most interesting aspects of the area's history and archaeology.

Initially, archaeological trial trenching was carried out with the intention of increasing our knowledge and understanding of the Early Saxon settlement excavated to the south of the site in 1990, where the remains of up to six sunken-featured buildings, two post-built structures (one possibly a fence), nine pits, a gully and a ditch were recovered, dating to the early to middle 6th century. These trenches revealed a key-shaped drying oven of unknown date and as a result excavations were carried out in 2001 and 2005. Further evidence for Early Saxon activity was recorded during these excavations, including two sunken-featured buildings, three ovens, numerous pits and post-hole structures and what is believed to be a boundary ditch toward the east of the site. Interestingly, some of these features contained late Roman coins and artefacts suggesting that they may in fact represent an earlier precursor to the settlement excavated in 1990. It has been suggested that this change in settlement focus was a result of rising river levels in the centuries after the Roman period pushing occupants to the slightly higher ground 100m to the south of the site.

Arguably, however, the most surprising and interesting finds from the site were not related to these undoubtedly important Saxon remains, but to an occupant of the site over 1000 years later – Sir Nicholas Crisp. Born into a wealthy London family in 1599, Crisp inherited land at

Hammersmith from his mother, Lady Katherine Pye, along with her house known as ‘Le Lady Pye’s’. In the early years of Charles I reign Crisp built a brick mansion on the site costing the large sum for the day of £23,000. At the early age of 26 he was already regarded as the chief protagonist of the African trade and perhaps the biggest general trader of his time.

Crisp’s business ventures seem to be represented in the archaeological record at Hammersmith. During the 2001 excavation, part of a brick-built cellar infilled with successive deposits was discovered. The earliest deposit was glass-working debris dating to the first half of the 17th century. This was overlain by deposits of demolition rubble dating to around 1820 when the final Brandenburg House was demolished. However, the truly extraordinary finds during the excavation were two glass furnaces containing a large amount of glass bead waste. These are potentially unique in the British archaeological record and therefore very exciting.

The furnaces are believed to date from around 1635 when Crisp was granted a patent for ‘the making and vending of Glass beads and Beugles [cylindrical beads]’ (see left).



Numerous examples of both were recovered from the site. Three years earlier Crisp and his business partners had been granted exclusive rights for 31 years to trade on the Guinea coast between the Cape of

Good Hope and Cape Blanco. The company principally traded in tusks, hide, gold and redwood – and also slaves. It would seem highly likely, therefore, that these bead furnaces produced glass beads which were shipped out to Africa and used as currency to purchase slaves.

This African link with the site is further strengthened by documents dating from the time of the Civil War which reveal that in 1643 Parliament seized and sold 80 tons of African redwood from Crisp’s house in Hammersmith. Redwood was an important cloth dye at this period and evidence from Hammersmith in the form of a number of brick-lined tanks suggests that, as well as bead manufacture, Crisp was undertaking cloth dyeing on the site. In addition, the remains of clamp kilns and brick wasters indicate that this restless entrepreneur was also making bricks at Hammersmith. These bricks were used to build Crisp’s own house and related buildings, and also Hammersmith’s first church – the chapel of ease that later became St Paul’s parish church.

Another interesting feature which may have influenced the location of both the Saxon settlement and Nicholas Crisp’s industrial activities is an ancient river channel called – in its lower reaches at least – Parr’s Ditch. This watercourse flowed down from Shepherds Bush and under Hammersmith Road before turning west towards the Thames. Here it formed the historic boundary between Hammersmith and Fulham and later the

boundary between the new 19th century parish of Hammersmith and the original parish of All Saints Fulham to the south.

There are a number of medieval and Tudor references to Parr’s Ditch and bridge. The earliest known is (*le Perre* (1270). It subsequently appears as both ditch and bridge name in various forms including *Perredich* (1407), *Pardyche* (1587), *Pirybrigge* (1383) and *Perbrigge* (1503). During the 2005 excavation Parr’s Ditch was identified as an east–west aligned palaeo-channel over three metres deep and about one metre below modern ground level. It is unclear whether the channel was natural or specially dug. The steepness of the southern edge suggests that it was at least re-cut at some stage in the past, perhaps during water management works in the 17th century. An east–west aligned brick culvert was identified within Parr’s Ditch. The culvert was arched with a flat base and measured 0.65m wide by 11.73m long and 0.58m high. It was constructed of bricks dating from 1666 to 1900, indicating that at some point in this period the ditch was infilled and replaced with this culvert. The now infilled culvert can still be seen in the modern river wall directly beneath a 19th century parish boundary stone (see below). The course of Parr’s Ditch is likely to approximate to the southern side of Chancellor’s Road and the northern part of the site including the Thames Water pumping station.

*Dave Jamieson, MoLAS*



*This 1865 parish boundary stone dividing the parishes of Hammersmith and Fulham is fixed in the embankment wall at the Hammersmith Embankment site, directly above the bricked-in culvert mouth of Parr’s Ditch.*

### **CURSE OF CROSSOVERS**

Hard surfacing of front gardens is an ever-increasing problem in London. Recently the Ealing Agenda 21 group carried out a survey in its borough and found that a quarter of Ealing’s 74,300 front gardens are completely hard surfaced and well over half have 70% or more of their area under hard surfacing.

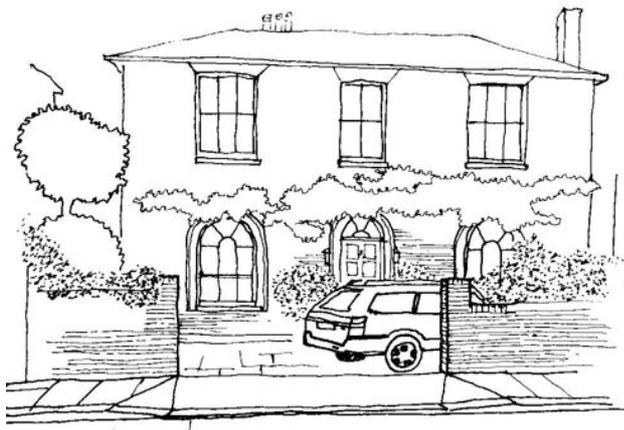
Hard surfacing of front gardens causes many problems for the environment and for local communities. The Ealing survey identified several major groups of problems.

Firstly, impermeable and artificial hard surfacing causes increased run off, increased pressure on the drainage system and risk of sudden flooding. Instead of being neutralised by slowly percolating through soil, oil and other surface pollutants go straight into streams and rivers. Sudden increases in flow scour riverbanks and cause damage to habitats.

Secondly, using front gardens for parking is dangerous for pedestrians, especially children, as cars drive and reverse across pavements, overhang them when parked and reduce visibility. Crossovers make pavements uneven and difficult to walk on, particularly for the elderly and people with buggies. They also reduce the amount of parking space on the road, leading to more pressure for parking, tensions between neighbours, yet more front gardens converted to parking (the domino effect) and faster through-traffic on roads widened by lack of parked cars.

Thirdly, loss of vegetation means less CO2 absorption, contributing to global warming, and less cooling from shade and transpiration. Fewer flowers, berries and seeds support fewer birds and pollinating insects. Street trees, important for absorbing air pollutants, can mysteriously disappear when crossovers are applied for. Grass verges turn into more hard surfaces.

Fourthly, the loss of front gardens produces negative aesthetic and societal effects. The disappearance of attractive green areas and traditional boundary structures such as garden gates, walls, hedges and fences diminishes the character and aesthetic appeal of a neighbourhood. By eliminating gardening, an important means of contact between neighbours disappears. The unappealing, uninviting environment leads to alienated neighbourhoods and reduced property values.



*141 Dalling Road W6, a charming mid 19th century villa where the front garden wall was removed and a crossover formed in the pavement to enable parking on the front garden.*

Can anything be done about hard surfacing? Well, sadly, government policy still favours crossovers, which are 'permitted development' under the Town & Country Planning (General Permitted Development) Order 1995. Recently the environment committee of the London

assembly recommended that this should change to requiring planning permission. However, local councils already have powers which they can use to stop the kind of destruction that is happening in Ealing and elsewhere. They can withdraw permitted development status and require planning permission for crossovers in conservation areas using 'Article 4 directions'. They can use the legal precedent established by Kensington & Chelsea – invoking the Highways Act 1980 to refuse crossover applications on the grounds of removal of on-road parking. They can use controlled parking zone mechanisms to increase charges for households owning multiple vehicles (as recently proposed by Richmond upon Thames). They can take enforcement measures on illegal front garden parking. And lastly, they can write the prohibition of front garden hard surfacing into tenancy agreements.

Community organisations and residents associations can also help tackle the hard surfacing epidemic. They can raise awareness of the problems it causes. They can lobby councils for action, report illegalities, promote low maintenance garden designs, garden competitions and community gardening services for people having difficulty with garden maintenance. And they can organise plant sales, exchanges and advice, and support home zone and 'returning roads to residents' initiatives.

Our front gardens are crucial to the character of our residential areas and to the country's traditions and heritage. Let's not cover them with cars and concrete!

*Christine Eborall, Ealing's Local Agenda 21 Front Gardens Project*

## **MESSING ABOUT**

As Ratty remarked in *The Wind in the Willows*: 'There is nothing – absolutely nothing – half so much worth doing as simply messing about in boats'. Taking Ratty's advice on a sunny day in September 2006, members of the Hammersmith Society and the Hammersmith & Fulham Historic Buildings Group took their picnics and went for a trip on the *Wind in the Willows* narrowboat along the Grand Union Canal to enjoy the 'secret' waterway in the north of the borough. The canal is a conservation area in our borough and the canal itself, built in 1801, is our borough's oldest industrial monument.

Our journey on *Wind in the Willows* started at Greenford and took us through the borough with glimpses of the Eurostar terminal and the historic cemeteries of St Mary's and All Souls. Paddington Basin was the finishing point. Everybody knows about the delights of the Thames but few know about those of the canal. In some places on the canal you could be deep in the country with trees and ducks and fishermen on the banks and a cormorant nesting on a chimneytop! At others you find yourself in an industrial area, enjoying a great view of an historic gas holder perhaps, or, away in the distance, the iconic Trellick Tower in North Kensington.

The canal is a special open space: a nature conservation area co-existing alongside its original industrial use. At

Old Oak we saw the new wharf at the waste processing plant where material will be shipped by barge, so reviving a traditional use of the canal. The Group has supported the use of the canal for transport, but has pressed for improved landscaping around the wharf.

A great moment was when our boat passed over the North Circular Road on an aqueduct and we looked down on the traffic – a surprise to most people! This is the second canal trip which the Hammersmith Society and the Historic Buildings Group have organised jointly and both have been quickly oversubscribed. We plan to do another for our members later this year, probably going down to Brentford where the canal joins the Thames.

*Angela Dixon, Historic Buildings Group*

*Steve McAndrew of Hammersmith & Fulham council adds by way of a postscript to Angela Dixon's article above:*

Ratty was not actually a rat but a water vole, a placid herbivore native to our island and now a protected species. The water vole requires soft banks in which to burrow and suitable vegetation – mainly reeds – on which to feed. Urbanisation of London's waterways, loss of wetlands and other 'improvements' to watercourses have reduced suitable habitat, fragmenting the populations. The good news is that the water vole has been successfully reintroduced to many locations in London, including the Wetland Centre in Barnes, which now supports a population of 200-plus. However, there are not believed to be any water voles in Hammersmith & Fulham at present – unless you know different! If you do, please contact either the council or the London Wildlife Trust on 020 7261 0447.



*A 19th century wood engraving of a water vole, courtesy of Anthony Eve.*

While there may not be any actual water voles living in Hammersmith and Fulham, we can at least boast a possible local link between Hammersmith and Ratty of *Wind in the Willows*. The author, Kenneth Grahame, is believed to have based his little furry friend on his real-life friend and fellow sculler, Frederick Furnivall of Furnivall Gardens and Furnivall Sculling Club fame.

Wouldn't it be nice therefore if one day local conditions were such that water voles were able to establish themselves on the riverside in Lower Mall where Ratty himself was possibly born over 100 years ago?

### **MODERNISM IN HAMMERSMITH**

If you venture north of King Street up Dalling Road you come to the Flora Gardens estate at the beginning of Paddenswick Road, on the west side. Most of the estate consists of standard 1930s blocks with stairs and balconies. But two later blocks – one four-storey and the other five-storey – are worthy of special note. Dating from 1956-7, they are by H T 'Jim' Cadbury-Brown, a modernist architect who first came to public attention with his work for the 1951 Festival of Britain – two pavilions and an illuminated fountain mixing gas flames with water spray. Cadbury-Brown was also a Royal Academician and was recently the subject of an exhibition at the RA.

Viewing Cadbury-Brown's contributions to the Flora Gardens estate from Paddenswick Road, the cleanness of line and the use of glass for the balcony walls seem to suggest something a bit more stylish than the average block of public housing flats. This is confirmed if you go into the estate and look at the great walls of windows and coated glass rising through the full height of the building. Now turn round and take a look at the block behind you. This is of the same design but with more flats per floor. It is the entrance to this block that is the great surprise, and Cadbury-Brown went for surprises. A thin porte-cochère supported by equally thin pillars projects several yards towards the road edge. You cannot actually drive under it – in 1957 few of the residents would have had cars anyway – but it does provide a grand entrance. The stair well in this block is wider than in the other so, to reduce the draft and to provide a contrast with the vertical strip of window, it is bricked in. But patterned spaces in the brickwork allow natural light into the stairwell.

The stairs in the first block also have a surprise. Decorative tile work by Stephen Sykes covers the wall behind the stairs, though the tiles do not start until the first floor. Cadbury-Brown thought buildings should be interesting in order to compensate for the ordinariness of everyday life. His two blocks on the Flora Gardens estate are important buildings and should certainly be on the Historic Building Group's *Local List*. Depending on how much internal structural alteration there has been, a good case could also be made for listing them nationally.

*John Goodier, Historic Buildings Group*

### **SIR WILLIAM POWELL'S ALMSHOUSES**

Tucked away off Church Gate by All Saints Fulham church is a range of quaint Victorian almshouses named after their founder, Sir William Powell, a leading Fulham landowner in the 17th century.

It was in 1680 that Powell left money in his will for their foundation. The first Powell almshouses, which housed twelve poor women of the parish, were situated in Back Lane, later Burlington Road. They were rebuilt in 1793

but by the 1860s they had become so dilapidated that the trustees decided to find a more suitable site.

In 1869 the vicar of Fulham laid the foundation stone for the new almshouses in Church Gate. The twelve Gothic cottages were designed by John Pollard Seddon, who was later the architect of the new church of St Paul, Hammersmith.

The sculptures on the tower, executed by the Welsh sculptor James Milo Griffith, portray the heads of Faith, Hope and Charity together with full length biblical figures of Miriam, Anna, Deborah, Dorcas, Ruth and Mary. The armorial bearings of the founder are featured over the inscription 'God's providence, our inheritance'.

*Anne Wheeldon, Hammersmith & Fulham Archives*



*Sir William Powell's almshouses in Church Gate, Fulham, founded in 1680 and rebuilt by J.P. Seddon, the architect of St Paul's Hammersmith, in 1869.*

## ANNUAL MEETING REPORT

The Group's annual meeting for 2006 was held on 21 September at Holy Innocents church, Paddenswick Road W6, a listed Grade II\* church by James Brooks. After a tour of the building and the formal business, the chairman introduced this year's theme: 'Historic Churches: their Alteration and Extension'. Two applications for extensions to listed churches in the borough had recently been refused. Another church had plans which were causing concern. Historic churches were 'witnesses in mortar' much valued by the community and, as with all listed buildings, their best use was the one for which they were built. She hoped the evening would clarify the criteria for acceptable alterations and extensions and welcomed the meeting's two distinguished guests: Timothy Jones, senior historic buildings advisor at English Heritage (and team leader south and west London), who spoke on 'Constructive Conservation', and the Venerable Stephan Welch, archdeacon of Middlesex, who spoke on 'The Church as User'

Tim Jones began his talk with a series of pictures illustrating some recent examples of new work to historic churches, both internal and external. These included a church in Wigan, successfully restored and adapted after a major fire, St James's Paddington, the subject of a major and extremely stylish adaptation and the recently restored St George's Bloomsbury. The theme uniting all these churches was that it was entirely possible to change and adapt our stock of historic churches, often in quite a radical fashion, without compromising their special and cherished architectural interest.

Tim then continued by discussing the role of English Heritage when considering works to a church. He also looked at how this role fits in with that of other interested parties, including the local planning authorities and diocesan advisory committees as well as, of course, local amenity societies. The desire and need for change in churches has a long and generally healthy tradition and Tim stressed that English Heritage took its duty of care to this particularly precious part of the historic environment very seriously. English Heritage is keen to encourage constructive conservation, balancing historic value with the particular and diverse requirements of congregations. The contribution made by congregations was stressed by English Heritage's recent major initiative, *Inspired*.

Stephan Welch said that the Church of England is acutely aware of its responsibilities towards its buildings. They represent around 60% of the built heritage of the country and the church, which is very much on a fresh 'mission' footing, is looking to develop the 'plant' so that it is better suited to its purposes for the years ahead. Stephan then spoke on the church's four 'Rs': repair, re-ordering, redevelopment and regeneration.

Taking repair first, he said the largest enemy confronted by the Church of England isn't sin, but rainwater! The repair and maintenance responsibility for heritage fabric is enormous, as is the bill. Local congregations shoulder this burden up and down the country, with advice and supervision in every diocese under the 'ecclesiastical exemption' and a welcome degree of financial support from grant giving bodies such as English Heritage.

On re-ordering, the internal provisions and arrangements of previous generations do not always suit current liturgical practice and need. The cautious and sympathetic re-ordering of sanctuary, chancel and nave is a work most parish congregations will consider at some point. In some cases this kind of work comes close to restoring the interior of a church to a previous arrangement: in others the changes may be more radical. A guiding principle is that all such changes should be ultimately reversible and that the external fabric of the building ought not to be pierced.

An increasing number of local churches are looking at more radical and wholesale redevelopment of their church site in order to create space for a range of daily uses, expanding the availability of church plant to local communities and increasing the opportunities for

interface between the church and its neighbours. This could mean the development of a crypt space, the division of the church interior or the construction of a new hall nearby.

Regeneration goes some way beyond redevelopment. Many areas of London are experiencing or planning major renewal and reconstruction involving the regeneration of entire neighbourhoods and communities. The Church of England in London is committed to remaining present in every community but, in order to fulfil this, needs to be aware of where that presence has to be focused in a fluid situation. In terms of church buildings this will have implications about change of use for some and the need to sometimes build afresh in other localities. 'Behold, I make all things new' (Rev 21:5).

The talks were followed by a lively question and answer session which showed that there was some confusion about the position of the churches in the planning system, ie the relationship of listed building consent and planning permission to ecclesiastical exemption as well as the role of the diocesan advisory committee. The discussion covered the need for early consultation with the borough and local groups about proposals before they became set in stone, disabled access to historic churches, open access to churches during the daytime, the value of churchyards as open space, and the importance of churches on island sites where they were landmarks as well as being witnesses in mortar.

*Angela Dixon, Historic Buildings Group, with contributions from Timothy Jones, English Heritage, and the Ven. Stephan Welch, Archdeacon of Middlesex*

**\*\*STOP PRESS\*\***

Granville Sharp's grave has just been listed. • The former Temperance Billiard Hall at 90 Fulham High Street, now a pub, has also been recently listed. • Emery Walker House in Hammersmith Terrace needs volunteers to help with house opening. Contact the administrator, Sue Bright, on 020 8741 4104 or 07769 573 775.

### ***In Memoriam – Allan Day***

We record with great sadness the death of Allan Day. Allan was a member of and good friend to the Group for many years. He was on the committee for some time, surveyed his local area for our *Local List* and researched in detail a number of historic buildings in his area. He campaigned for – and helped to achieve – the restoration of the listed Baron's Court underground station. And he took a passionate interest in the stewardship of St Paul's Studios where he lived. His own house was a wonderful example of historic restoration, as those who were lucky enough to have been there will know. He was an artist and designer and generously made his talents available to the Group, designing our lettering logo, the cover of our *Local List* and the original banner heading of our newsletter. He did many drawings for us over the years. We express our gratitude for all his work and support and we would like to say how much we shall miss him.

*Angela Dixon, Historic Buildings Group*

### **IHBG EVENTS**

#### **Saturday 16 June: SOCIAL HOUSING WALK**

An afternoon walk led by the Group's John Goodier exploring the various approaches to social housing design taken in Hammersmith – from garden suburb and mansion flats via towers to post-modern. The route is between East Acton and White City and will include a few other buildings in this architecturally interesting but seldom visited part of the borough. Cost £5 (includes donation to HBG) – pay on the day. For bookings (essential) and start point and time contact John Goodier 020 7230 3331 (office) or [fsslibrary@btconnect.com](mailto:fsslibrary@btconnect.com).

#### **Saturday 14 July: TREASURE HUNT**

We are planning a treasure hunt in the Fulham Palace/Fulham High Street area in order to raise much-needed funds for the HBG. It will involve walking a route, spotting clues and answering questions and will be a fun day out for all the family, with great prizes and possibly a photo opportunity in the local press for the winners. Further details will be announced in due course by email to members and to the wider public by publicity in local media. If you are not on the HBG email mailing list, please email the chairman, Angela Dixon, on [angeladixon@bulldoghome.com](mailto:angeladixon@bulldoghome.com) with ADD TO HBG MAILING LIST in the subject line.

### **OTHER EVENTS**

31 March: Head of the River Race, 3.45 pm  
7 April: University Boat Race, 4.30 pm  
9–10 June: Open Garden Squares weekend  
15–24 June: Architecture Week  
8 July: Granville Sharp commemoration (*see p. 5*)  
14–22 July: National Archaeology Week  
21 July–23 Sept: exhibition at Museum of Fulham Palace commemorating 1807 abolition of slave trade  
15-16 Sept: London Open House weekend

### **HBG PUBLICATIONS**

*Local List* £17 members, £20 non-members.  
*Bradmore House* illustrated booklet, £5.  
Both available from Group chairman: 020 8748 7416

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### **ANNUAL SUBSCRIPTIONS**

£5.00 for individuals and £15 for groups. New members always welcome. Please contact the chairman.

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