



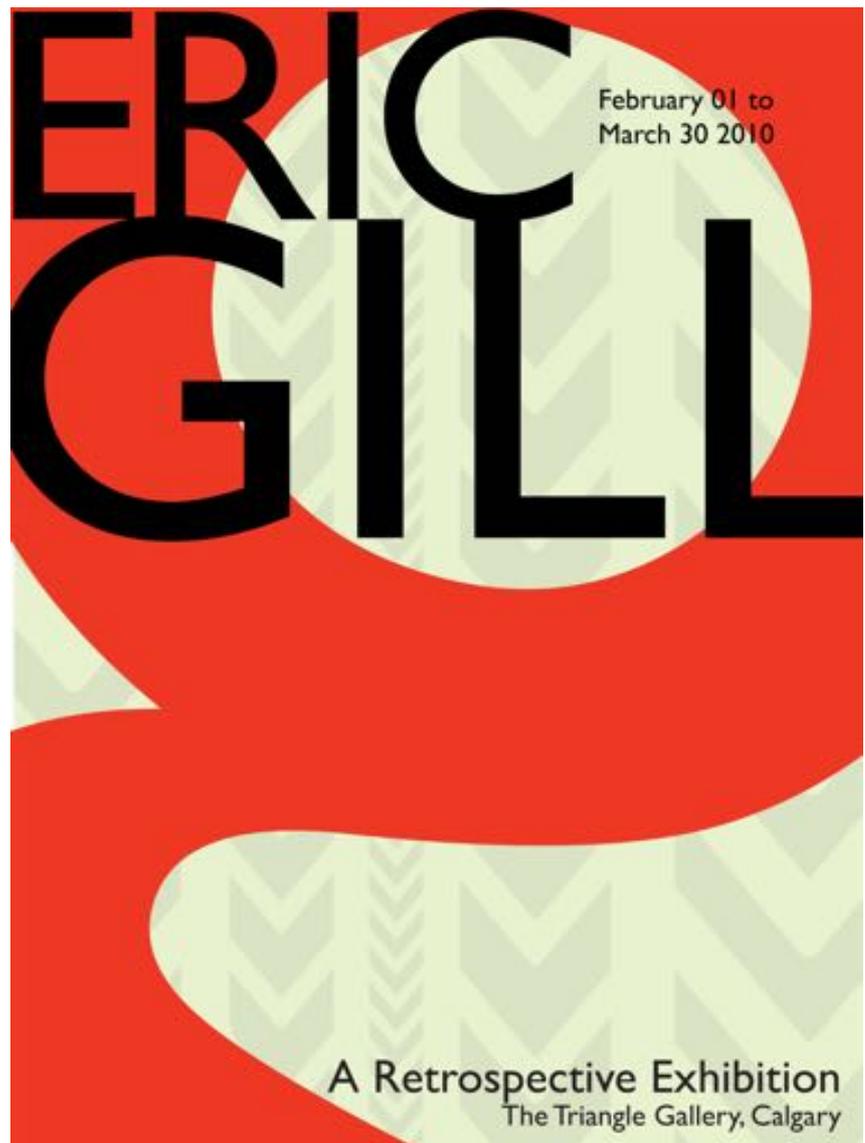
Issue No. 33 Winter 2015

Welcome to the latest edition of the HBG newsletter. This issue covers a wide range of topics – from the new plans for Park Royal and Old Oak in the north of the borough through digs in Ravenscourt Park to the recovery of long-lost metal type from the river below Hammersmith Bridge.

The latter is a continuation of the Arts & Crafts theme we highlighted in our last number. So also is the article on Eric Gill in Hammersmith kindly provided by the artist's great-niece Caroline Walker. In the next issue Caroline will be writing about Eric's less well known brother Max, who also had Hammersmith connections.

Our successful blue plaque scheme continues. Several new ones have appeared around the borough and two are featured in this newsletter: one on the former high master's house at St Paul's School, now a boutique hotel, and the other on a new building in Askew Road commemorating the former Sun pub. Before and after pictures show the Sun around September 1940 when it was completely destroyed by a Second World War bomb.

Finally, for those of you who missed it, we have a report of our AGM in November. This was held at the Polish church of St Andrew Bobola with its magnificent stained glass windows (see page 3). The highlight of the evening was a masterly exposition by our own Charles Wagner, formerly head of planning and urban advice at English Heritage,



Poster for Calgary's 2010 Eric Gill exhibition designed by Calgary-based illustrator Samantha Lucy. See page 6 for Eric Gill in Hammersmith.

of recent changes to the planning system and the opportunities local groups now have to be more involved in looking after their heritage and influencing decisions. We hope to publish Charles's thoughts in more detail in due course.

PLANNING MATTERS

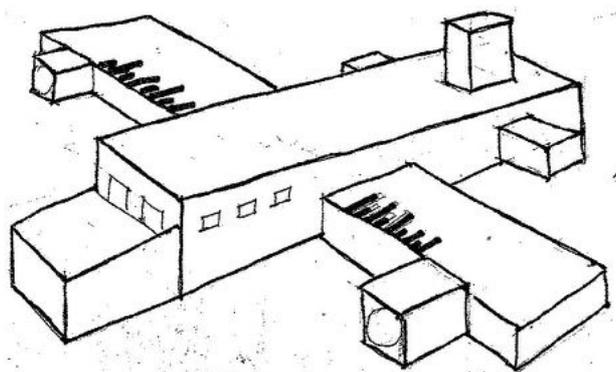
Members received a planning report prior to the Group's AGM. What follows is a brief update since then.

The Walkabout We attended a presentation of the latest proposals. At this pre-application stage, a new scheme by the same architects responsible for the award-winning Dorsett Hotel adjacent appears to have taken a more sympathetic approach. Consideration is being given to the retention of the front and side elevations of the Walkabout building with an eight storey block of serviced apartments rising above it.

The Triangle Site Following an earlier refusal, a new application has been submitted. To date, the application has not yet been validated due to some important documents not having been lodged. We hope that the comments submitted by this group, the Hammersmith Society and other groups have been heeded and that a more acceptable scheme will be forthcoming.

62a Lillie Road We have twice objected to proposals to extend the listed garden folly at this former home of Lillie Langtry. Officers also recommended the latest application for refusal. Sadly, the Council planning committee overturned their recommendation.

Cambridge House Built in the 1890s as a piano factory, converted to aircraft production in the First World War and now an office building, Cambridge House in Cambridge Grove is scheduled for redevelopment. Committee members have attended two presentations to date and given their views on the proposals. We are still a little concerned about the way in which the extension links with the existing building, and with the colour of the mass of render.

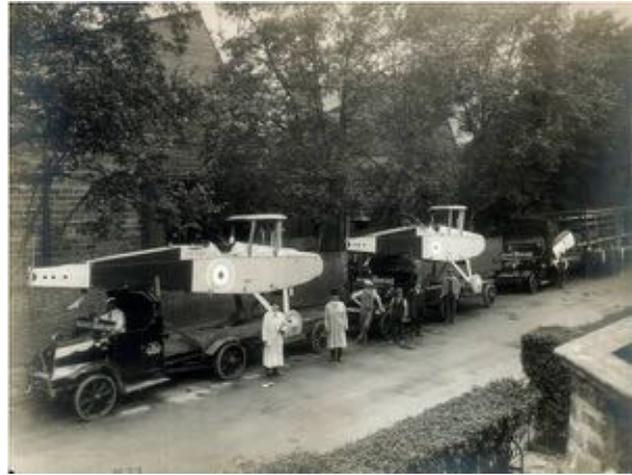


Apparently the designers of the scheme wanted to reflect the site's historical connections!

Fulham Town Hall The submitted scheme is still under review by the Council and we eagerly await the outcome of this somewhat controversial proposal. **STOP PRESS:** application refused.

Latymer School Boat House The school are proposing to extend their existing boathouse on Hammersmith

Upper Mall. It is currently a modern structure adjacent to the former headmaster's house, a Building of Merit. Much discussion centres on the juxtaposition of the extension with this building, and the extent of the new glass facade facing the river. Overall we consider it an acceptable addition subject to some relatively minor amendments.



First World War aircraft from the Alliance Aeroplane Factory, at the time an occupant of Cambridge House in Cambridge Grove, W6.

Former Mission Hall, 41 Iffley Road We are delighted to note that the facade of this Gothic-style building designed by H.R Gough in 1882 has been listed Grade II.

Citroën Building, 174-184 Shepherds Bush Road The barrel-vaulted roof extension has now been completed. We consider it an exceptional example of how to blend modern architecture with an historic building.

The Old Treacle Factory, 28-40 Goodwin Road This is adjacent to the listed Greenside School. A new calmer and more sympathetic scheme has now been given approval.

We continue to support the Council's planning department in their attempt to rid the borough of the rash of high-profile **advertising hoardings** within conservation areas. We are currently responding to four appeals against discontinuance notices and refusals.

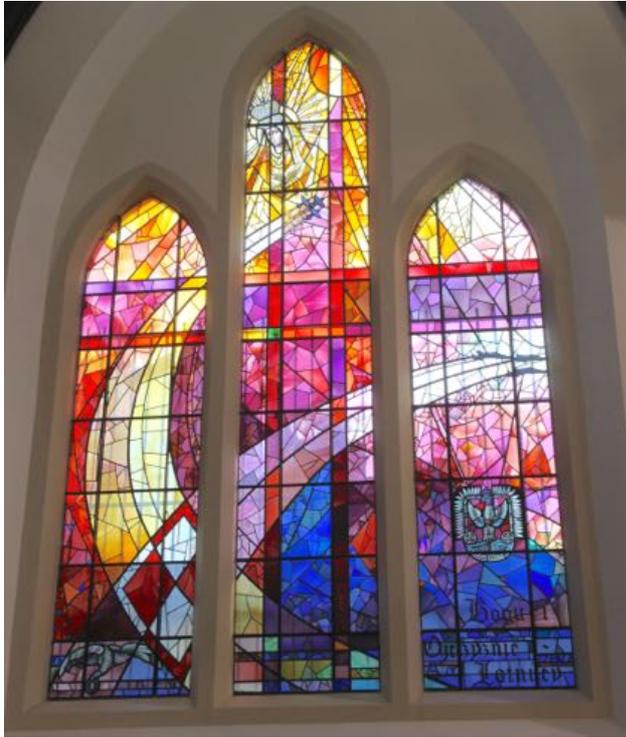
We rely on members to report their concerns to us, and we will always do our best to respond.

Nicolas Fernley, chairman, HBG planning sub-committee

OUR AGM

We held our 27th AGM on Tuesday 10 November 2015 in the church hall of St Andrew Bobola, the Polish church in Leysfield Road, W12. Before the meeting Paul Pastuszek (on behalf of the church) took members and guests on a fascinating tour of the building. A highlight was viewing from the outside the magnificent stained glass windows

lit from within the church. These windows have been skilfully integrated into the original Victorian structure. Inside the church itself, the Katyn memorial was very striking and moving. Its centrepiece is a painted wooden relief of Christ, carved by Polish prisoners of war from a door or panel and transported to England across war-torn Europe. (For a full account of Polish art in the church, see the HBG's *Newsletter 21*, published Autumn 2009.)



This remarkable stained glass window in the north transept of St Andrew Bobola commemorates Polish airmen who fought in the Battle of Britain. Designed by the painter Janina Baranowska and made by the firm of Goddard & Gibbs, the three lancet windows cleverly integrate the Cross with two swooping plane trails. Little details (such as the one reproduced below) enliven the composition, which is surmounted by the icon of Our Lady of Ostrobrama. The window was inaugurated by Cardinal Rubin on 3 April 1980.

During the meeting, our chairman, John Goodier, drew the attention of the meeting to the redevelopment of Old Oak/ Park Royal. He also said that the group's *Local List* was now available on a standard database so could be relatively easily updated. The meeting elected two new committee members: Niel Redpath (treasurer) and Sheena Barbour (membership secretary). Neil's predecessor, Jo Brock, was warmly thanked for her hard work and dedication as treasurer over the past 15 years. The motion to increase the annual subscription cost for individual members from £5 to £10 p.a. was carried.



Detail of three Spitfires from the St Andrew Bobola window above.

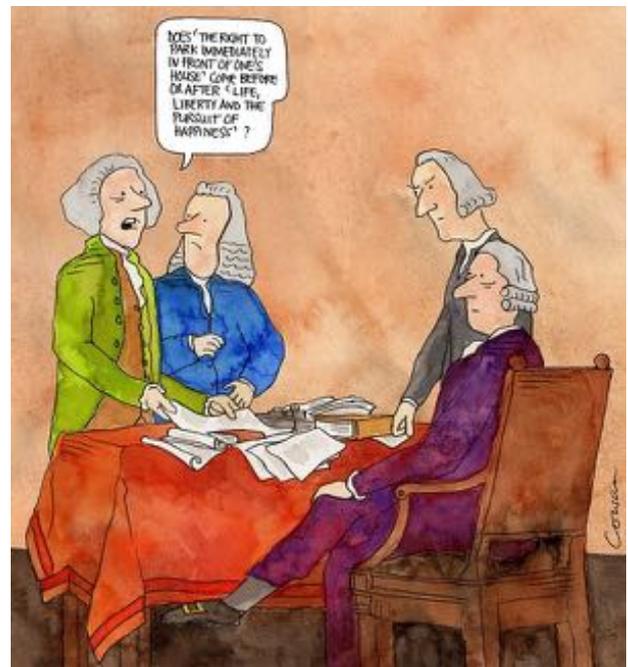
Questions from the floor included a request that the

HBG support the idea of historical information boards in addition to their blue plaques. The need to strengthen and enlarge conservation areas was also stressed.

Planning changes and heritage

Charles Wagner, head of planning and urban advice at English Heritage until April this year, gave a most illuminating talk on the changes to the planning system over recent years and opportunities for local groups to be more involved in looking after their heritage and influencing decisions. Since 2010, planning policy has been streamlined from over 1,000 pages down to 60 pages of the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF). In it there are 12 planning principles which include 'seeking high quality design' and 'conserving heritage assets in a manner appropriate to their significance, so that they can be enjoyed for their contribution to the quality of life of this and future generations'.

The NPPF has a good section on 'conserving and enhancing the historic environment' in paragraphs 126-141 and local groups should refer to it when making their case commenting on planning and heritage applications. Groups should seek early engagement with the developer and planning officer, as the NPPF advises, and they should try to ensure that the NPPF assessment has been properly followed through in coming to a decision on an application. The courts have been helpful here in stressing the need for councils to follow their duties under the 1990 Planning Act.

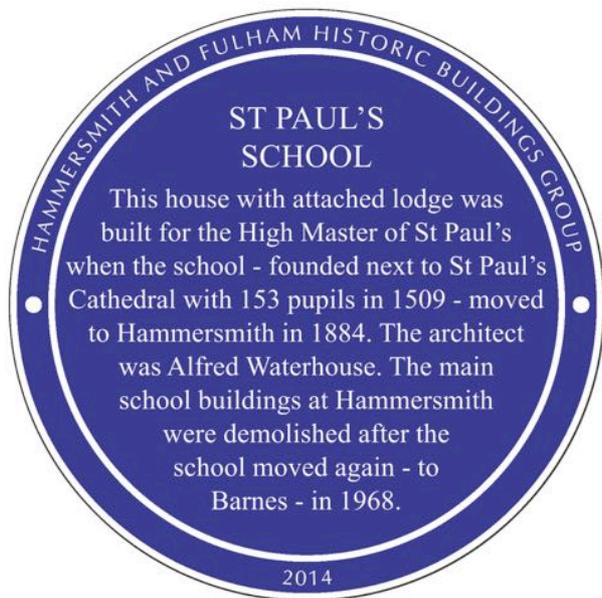


Charles Wagner's talk at our AGM was illustrated with cartoons by urban designer Rob Cowan of Urban Design Skills.

Charles went on to discuss the Localism Act and the opportunities for communities and local groups to be involved in planning their area with neighbourhood planning and an event was taking place in the Town Hall

to try to encourage this in the borough. He also considered the opportunities to use the *Local List*, as produced by the Historic Buildings Group and endorsed by the Council, and to get more community buildings added to the Council's list of Assets of Community Value, ACVs. We heard about The Ivy House in Nunhead, where a local group saved their pub by getting it made an ACV, then a listed building and finally buying it off the 'pubco' and running it themselves. Questions included why developers had to sell to overseas investors (because it is only way to fund major projects) and what was the position regarding demolition of buildings of merit or locally listed buildings (they should only be demolished if the public benefits outweigh the harm of their loss, according to the NPPF, paragraph 135). Charles was warmly applauded for his instructive talk.

Annabel Clarke, secretary, Historic Buildings Group



An HBG blue plaque now adorns the former St Paul's School high master's house on Hammersmith Road, next to the St Paul's open space which already features our D-Day plaque. The house has been converted into a boutique hotel.

OLD OAK & PARK ROYAL

Since we reported in the last newsletter, things have continued to move fast on the Mayoral Development Corporation. The Old Oak and Park Royal Development Corporation (OPDC) was only formally set up last April, but is likely to exist for about 30 years until the development is complete. The corporation, which is effectively being set up by the mayor's office at the GLA, is having to do catch up – appointing staff and so on.

There were two major consultations in September/October. The first concerned the terms of community engagement. The second was an initial scoping exercise as a forerunner to the draft local plan for the area, which will be published for consultation early in the new year.

The Opportunity Area Planning Framework (OAPF) was originally prepared by the Mayor of London two years ago. It has now been formally adopted and establishes some important principles. But the OPDC planning team has a lot to do to assemble the formal local plan with all its statutory framework and consultations, including a public enquiry. It will therefore be 2017 before the local plan can be adopted.

Human scale

This huge project, based around the intersection of Crossrail-HS2 and other railway lines (and the Grand Union Canal) is set to be London's next biggest development project, involving around 25,000 new homes and up to 65,000 new jobs. The questions are: can it provide the massive new transport interchange, housing and employment targets at a human scale – and be an exciting, rewarding and original place for those that will live and work there or just visit; and can it be done sympathetically to the existing local communities (in the three boroughs of Hammersmith & Fulham, Brent and Ealing)? Initial meetings and discussions with the planning team are encouraging. We should also ask: can the developers be kept under control and what are the implications for the historic environment? There is a lot of good will and energy coming from the community and a wish to overcome some of the disasters in other Mayoral Development Areas in order to create a great place.

Meanwhile, updated proposals by Car Giant and QPR are being presented over the forthcoming weeks, and the parliamentary select committee for HS2 is continuing its enquiries as part of the finalising of the HS2 bill (although they seem hidebound by parliamentary procedure and protocols).



Map of the Old Oak & Park Royal Opportunity Area. The red line is the Opportunity Area boundary. The green line is the proposed Old Oak Neighbourhood Area.

Obviously, the HBG's main interest in the area is the preservation of the key historic environment. This is principally the canal (completed in 1801 and recently designated as a conservation area) and Wormwood Scrubs (designated and protected by statute as

Metropolitan Open Land over 100 years ago). There are, however, also some buildings of historic interest which could be worth retaining (*see comment added below this article*).

Old Oak neighbourhood area

A group of residents convened by Henry Peterson, former assistant chief executive of Hammersmith & Fulham council, Hans Haenlein and the Hammersmith Society are considering the possibility of a neighbourhood plan for the Old Oak area, involving residential communities within and around the OPDC area, and based upon the ‘community rights’ introduced by the Localism Act. An initial introductory meeting was held recently in Hammersmith town hall. Henry has successfully secured a neighbourhood plan for the nearby St Quintin and Woodlands area, where the plan has now been ‘examined’ and its main proposals supported by the government’s planning inspector.

If you would like more information on this subject, please contact HBG committee member Tom Ryland at tomryland@cparchitects.com. For information on the OPDC generally visit: <https://www.london.gov.uk/priorities/planning/old-oak-park-royal/planning-authority/>

Tom Ryland, Historic Buildings Group and chairman, Hammersmith Society

John Goodier, chairman of the HBG, adds:

The OPDC has proposed designating the Cumberland Park factory at 69-91 Scrubs Lane a conservation area. The factory site is an important survival of c1900 industrial buildings backing onto St Mary’s Cemetery. I have led a walk around the North Acton area for the Grand Union Alliance, where we looked for buildings worth retaining in the redevelopment of Park Royal. The best are in Park Royal Road. Unfortunately there is not much worth retaining on the Hythe Road site, where Rolls Royce once had a presence.

RAVENSCOURT PARK

Ravenscourt Park is what remains of what was once a much larger medieval estate and for a couple of years the Park Friends have been working in partnership with experts from the Museum of London (MOL) on a three-stage project to discover its hidden history.

In April 2014 our geophysical survey of the mound beside the lake and part of the land adjoining the Grade II listed Tea House café – once the 18th century stables – revealed the footprint of the successive houses and outbuildings that had stood in that area for over 800 years. It also confirmed the presence of the vaults, known to be the ground floor of an earlier dwelling. Using ground-penetrating radar, the same survey tracked two lost arms of the moat that we now know surrounded the Georgian manor until the beginning of the 19th century. That was stage one. (*Continued on top of page 6.*)

THE SHEPHERDS BUSH EMPIRE



Nick Charlesworth has kindly allowed us to use his drawing of the Shepherd's Bush Empire from his book Variety at Night is Good for You. The book covers 92 variety theatres still standing in the 1930s and 1940s, even if then used for other purposes.



Time was when Hammersmith and Fulham had six theatres: the Granville at Walham Green, the Fulham Grand, the original Hammersmith Lyric, the Hammersmith Palace of Varieties, the Hammersmith King’s and the Shepherd's Bush Empire. The Empire is the only one remaining. Designed by Frank Matcham, the Empire was built in 1903 by Oswald (later Sir Oswald) Stoll, as part of his variety circuit. His other London theatres included his flagship, the London Coliseum. Locally, the Shepherd's Bush Empire was known as ‘The Coliseum of West London’. This drawing shows a typical variety bill at the Empire for the week of 5 December 1927. Variety finished in September 1953 and the Empire became the BBC Television Theatre. It was the first studio for the BBC’s television series ‘Strictly Come Dancing’. It still has a fine interior, in a mixture of neo-classical and art nouveau styles. It is well worth a visit. Long may it last.

Angela Dixon, Historic Buildings Group
STOP PRESS: the Empire has shut unexpectedly for the rest of the year for maintenance and repairs.

With the support of a small grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, the Friends and the MOL then embarked on stage two: planning the first ever trial archaeological excavation of the site of the manor house, the moat and causeway. Archaeology South-East (ASE), part of University College London, was contracted to carry out the dig between 28 September and 1 October this year. The three trial trenches attracted enormous public interest, and in a thankfully dry and sunny week around 950 people visited our nearby information stalls and enjoyed the exhibitions. These included MOL's trays of 'finds' and portraits of a few of the many distinguished individuals who had owned Palingswick, later Ravenscourt, down the centuries: lawyers, MPs and courtiers, including two Lord Mayors of London, a Speaker of the House of Commons and a Lord Chancellor.

Something unexpected

Early on, our search for the moat encountered problems in the form of trees on the site, and it was soon clear that we would have to angle our medium-sized trench away from their canopies to avoid damaging the roots. So this time we missed the arm of the moat, but found something unexpected instead: some centuries-old brickwork in the shape of what seemed to be two substantial foundations with adjacent vaulting. These structures aligned with the main avenue, the former carriage drive leading towards the Brentford Turnpike (King Street), so it is possible that this was some form of gatehouse to the manor.

Our large trench revealed the back wall of the house on the lake side, more interesting brickwork and the location of the vaults. But as this was a trial exercise, we could only dig so far. We need to go deeper and hope to apply for a larger grant to do this. Historic England has offered their support. What we have found so far has implications for the future management of the park, and already changes some of the Council's heritage planning documents.

And on one day of our dig someone appeared who recognised the portrait of an ancestor. It was a member of the Corbett family, a descendant of the 18th century Secretary to the Admiralty who had changed the manor's name to Ravenscourt to match his coat of arms. He lives in Hammersmith. As they say, you couldn't make it up.

Annabelle May, chair, Friends of Ravenscourt Park

ERIC GILL IN HAMMERSMITH

Eric Gill is now considered one of the 20th century's greatest British sculptors. Famous works include the imposing figures of Ariel and Prospero above the BBC entrance in Portland Place, and the Stations of the Cross in Westminster Cathedral. He was also a typographer, designing such classic fonts as Gill Sans (used by the BBC) and Perpetua, and a wood engraver, creating beautiful illustrations for books such as *The Four Gospels* and *The Canterbury Tales*.

Early in his career Eric lived in Hammersmith. He had arrived in London from Sussex in 1900, aged 18, to train as an architect, but after becoming disillusioned with the profession, he enrolled in masonry and lettering evening classes. Eric's friendship with Edward Johnston, his calligraphy tutor at the Central School of Arts & Crafts, was life-changing. When he first saw Johnston writing, 'it was as though a secret of heaven were being revealed', his diary reveals. Eric's passion for lettering was thus born and from mid-1903 he embarked on a career as a full-time monumental mason and letter-cutter.



Eric Gill in a 1927 self-portrait.

This coincided with Johnston's marriage and departure from their shared lodgings in Lincoln's Inn. Eric himself married soon after and in late 1905, the Gills – with their first child – followed the Johnstons to Hammersmith, renting a cottage at 20 Black Lion Lane near the Black Lion pub. The house had a stable suitable for use as a workshop and an attic where Ethel Gill could pursue her gilding work. The rooms were simply furnished with rush mats on the floor and whitewashed walls, all somewhat plain, but practical. The area was home to many Arts & Crafts practitioners, originally attracted by the presence of the movement's founder, William Morris, who had lived until his death at Kelmscott House in the Upper Mall with his Kelmscott Press close by. The Johnstons lived at No. 3 Hammersmith Terrace, alongside several others connected to fine printing, including T J Cobden-Sanderson at No. 1 and Emery Walker at No. 7 (both founders of the Doves Press at No. 1), and newcomer Douglas (later Hilary) Pepler, at No. 14.

Gill, as we now know, was a man with unorthodox attitudes to sex and nudity. He was persistently unfaithful to his long-suffering wife even in the first year of marriage. In June 1906 during the last weeks of Ethel's second pregnancy, he documented several sexual encounters at Black Lion Lane with their maid Lizzie, and in early 1907 he embarked on a tempestuous affair with a Fabian Society member, Lillian Meacham, even taking her on trial as an apprentice. But in the summer of that year the Gills decided to escape from London and move to Ditchling in Sussex where, having converted to Catholicism, Eric had set up a Catholic community with Douglas Pepler. The family departed in August, although the workshop, manned by Joseph Cribb, Eric's first apprentice, was retained until the following year, when 'the whole show' was moved down to Ditchling. 20 Black Lion Lane was later demolished.

Caroline Walker, great-niece of brothers Eric and Max Gill (Max will appear in the next HBG newsletter.)

SUN GOES DOWN IN ASKEW ROAD



In September 1940 a bomb landed on the Sun at 120 Askew Road killing 20 people and completely destroying the building. Pre-war the pub looked like this:



Following the bombing it looked like this:



The post-war replacement pub was demolished in 2013. A new building now stands on the site, with an HBG blue plaque installed this year. The plaque commemorates both the loss of life in 1940 and the loss of a familiar local landmark.

DOVES TYPEFACE SURFACES

In the last number of the HBG newsletter we reported on the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith Project and on the work that would be done at Emery Walker House in Hammersmith Terrace as part of that project. Visitors to the house regularly ask whether the Doves Press typeface, famously thrown into the Thames from Hammersmith Bridge in 1916, might still be there. In reply the guides have always said that it is most unlikely due to frequent dredging and the fast tide. However, at the end of 2014 they were proved wrong.

Robert Green, a designer, became intrigued by the typeface, recreated it digitally and then decided last year to instigate a search in the mud under the bridge. Miraculously, despite the passage of nearly a century, over 100 items of the typeface were found. They have enabled him to make a more accurate digital version of the Doves typeface which is now available for purchase on the internet.

The Doves Press was set up in 1900 by two friends of William Morris – printer Emery Walker and bookbinder T J Cobden-Sanderson. Cobden-Sanderson's Doves Bindery was already operating next door to the Dove pub in Upper Mall, hence the name. They designed their unique typeface and with it produced many gorgeous books, including a beautiful and still much sought after version of the Bible, with the opening of Genesis now ranking among the most famous pages in printing. Production of this Bible also involved two of their other neighbours – Edward Johnston, whose typeface designed for London Underground is still in use today, and Eric Gill, whose Gill Sans and Perpetua typefaces are also still current. But T J Cobden-Sanderson and Emery Walker were very different characters and soon fell out. Eventually, to ensure that Walker as the younger of the two men could never inherit the typeface, Cobden-Sanderson threw it into the river from Hammersmith Bridge.



In due course it is anticipated that some of the metal type pieces recovered by Robert Green will be on permanent loan and on show at 7 Hammersmith Terrace. Now closed for work funded by the Arts & Crafts Hammersmith Project, Emery Walker House is scheduled to re-open in the spring of 2017.

Angela Clarke, Historic Buildings Group and Emery Walker Trust

MEMBERSHIP

We are always looking for new members to support our work through subscriptions and practical help. Annual individual subscription is £10; for organisations it is £15. To join, email our membership secretary, Sheena Barbour (all contact details below), or download a membership application form from the HBG website (www.hfdbg.org.uk).

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The Hammersmith and Fulham Historic Buildings Group, established in 1987, promotes the preservation and enhancement of the borough's heritage of buildings of architectural and historic interest, their settings, and of open spaces.

The Group believes in the 'Power of Place' and is concerned with all aspects of the historic environment including conservation areas and other historic areas; open spaces, historic parks, gardens and squares; the canal and the river; landscape and views; and the public realm including street furniture and signage as well as historic buildings and their settings.

The Group is consulted by the Council on planning applications for historic buildings and conservation areas. It makes representations to Government and other national bodies on matters concerning the historic environment.

