



Woodford Times

Woodford Historical Society

Founded 1932

Newsletter Spring 2011

EDITORIAL

In a little over a year, the Society will be celebrating its 80th Anniversary and to mark this occasion, it is intended to publish a 'Commemorative Book' taking a personal view of Woodford over the last 80 years as seen through the eyes of local people, clubs and organisations. Hopefully, the book will include some of the major changes that have taken place and put them into a wider context of national and world events.

We will need to have the book ready for final editing and printing by September 2011 at the very latest.

May I thank those members who have already given me pieces for inclusion in the book and urge **every member** to let me have a brief personal recollection of bygone days in Woodford or of some major local or national event such as a visit to Woodford by Churchill or the Queen, Coronations, Jubilees, Woodford during the War, local hospital provision, Epping Forest, Barnardos, the Great Storm of 1987, clubs and societies, local schools, local Churches, local "characters", Guide Dogs for the Blind, building developments, shops and restaurants

..... and, any photographs that you can lend to us – we will scan the image electronically and return the original to you within a couple of days – would be really useful.

Please contact John Lovell (020 8505 3640 or lovell.john@sky.com) about your contributions. **If every member provided a short piece and a photograph, I know that we would be able to produce a book which would be 'owned' by members of the Society and would be a credit to the Society.**

If you feel unable to put your contributions in writing, we can arrange for someone to see you, either at a meeting or at home, to record your memories.

Do not forget, your contributions for inclusion in Woodford Times are always welcome.

I look forward to hearing from you.

John Lovell

FROM THE CHAIRMAN - PETER LAWRENCE **END OF AN ERA - THE BEGINNING OF AN EXCITING NEW ONE**

Most of you will now be aware that subject to the sale of our house, Linda and I will be moving to Norfolk. Therefore at the forthcoming AGM and with the agreement of the membership, there will be changes. I will not be seeking re-election as Chairman but will continue to actively support the Committee and attend at least two Society meetings each year. There is work to be done in order to prepare for our 80th anniversary in 2012 and Norfolk is only two hours away. The wonders of the internet and email mean that keeping in touch is now so easy, as I have experienced living in Abridge over the last ten years.

A lot has changed since I joined our Society in 1984. The membership was much smaller than it is today and was still suffering from the loss of its secretary, Miss Margery Smith, as she was also the keeper of the Society's collection. After her death the collection had been handed over to the Passmore Edwards Museum

at Stratford, making the archive difficult to access. Later, when Ilford Central Library opened, that was the cue to transfer the collection and there it remains for all to see.

Of course the existence of the internet means that access to the Essex Record Office and other archives are now available via a home computer, but I have to say that nothing can replace the thrill of handling an old document or book. The result of research into archives and the Society's collection has seen some fine publications over the years and perhaps with the use of modern printing methods many of these can again be shared with the membership.

I've been Chairman for about a quarter of a century and, although very proud of that fact, I believe it's now time for a change. Making the Committee changes at the AGM will mean a smooth transition. Not only will Linda and I be leaving the area but Sue Ralph, who has been on the Committee for almost as long as I have, has given notice that she will be leaving the Committee but has assured us of her continuing support to help out with tasks, as and when required. The catering side of her help over the years has been handed over to a very able successor.

Our Society is very lucky to have had the services of John Lovell on the Committee. He has brought some new ideas and ways of making meetings a little different in the future, so I'm very pleased to announce that he has agreed to take over from me, subject to your approval at the AGM. As a former political colleague and Mayor of Redbridge, he is well versed in chairing committees. He will also be bringing a new person on to the Committee to assist with secretarial work.

More of all that at the AGM. I thought that a few words of information in advance may be of use and also to inform those who will not be at the meeting.

Hope to see as many of you as possible.

Peter Lawrence

ELECTIONS – 1830s STYLE

For those of you who sometimes feel angry and frustrated with the behaviour of our elected Members of Parliament, do not concern yourselves, as there is nothing new on this earth.....

In February 1830 the M. P. for Essex, Admiral Sir Eliab Harvey died. Eliab had lived at Rolls Park, Chigwell, was a member of a famous family who had established themselves in Essex during the 18th century and became a folk hero himself as captain of HMS Temeraire, Nelson's support ship at the Battle of Trafalgar. Many years later his ship was immortalised in Turner's painting of "The Fighting Temeraire".

The subsequent by-election was won by Thomas Bramston of Roxwell, having defeated John Conyers of Copped Hall, who loved hunting and apparently barked like a dog on the hustings and yelled "Tally Ho".

The summer of 1830 brought the news of a general election and Mr Bramston made it clear that he would not seek re-election. The three candidates seeking to win two seats in Parliament made their way to Chelmsford for the hustings. They were a Whig (Liberal) Mr Charles Western of Felix Hall, Kelvedon, Col. John Tyrell of Boreham House (Tory) and, surprise, surprise, an Independent, Mr William Pole-Tydney-Long-Wellesley of London and Wanstead. The same W. P. T. L. W. who five years before, having run through his wife's fortune, was so much in debt that the magnificent Palladian styled Wanstead House was demolished for building material. So after two affairs, his wife's death, temporary exile in Paris and his children being made wards of Court, he was back in the spotlight. Let's use my nickname for him; the Wicked William.

On 26th July Col. Tyrell issued a policy statement that included reduced taxation and public expenditure and extinction of slavery in the Colonies. Wicked William's policy statement included increasing taxation on luxuries (too late for him) and the extinction of slavery – a sure bet at this time. He concluded with a rousing appeal "Men of Essex – The Banner of Independence has been unfurled in your country. To vote or not to vote, that is the question. Whether 'tis nobler in a man to suffer the tricks and trimmings of a rattling Boreham.", meaning Col. Tyrell of Boreham. Col. Tyrell replied with "Fare thee well – and if forever, still for ever, fare thee well. Though you may'st abuse me, never half thy vices will I tell".

The election began on 6th August. Flags of blue, orange and yellow flew from the Church and Inns. Wagons formed a strong barricade, within which were the hustings and special constables, sworn in for the election,

were there in strength. The Wicked William arrived in a barouche drawn by four greys, followed by Tyrell and Western. The town square erupted and the High Sheriff, Mr Capel Cure of Blake Hall, Ongar read the writ for the election and the Act Against Bribery. Numerous speeches were made by all candidates to the accompaniment of boos and hisses. The day ended with a vote, which was won by William who then accused the other two of a “Whig, Tory Coalition”.

The second day’s ballot result showed William winning for a second time but now the votes were surprisingly close, namely 767, 763 and 747.

On the third day, more and more supporters poured into Chelmsford and fights broke out, necessitating the constables wading in, during which the Under-Sheriff was hit by a stone. The Sheriff’s office issued a notice stating that more constables would be deployed and persons would be arrested if there was another outbreak of violence. Voting now turned against William as Tyrell was the victor that day with 1311 and William came third with 1210.

The Saturday was the eighth day of voting. Both Col. Tyrell and Mr Western then attacked William’s family with a leaflet stating that William’s uncle, the Duke of Wellington had received money in salary and pension from the public purse to the tune of over £700,000 and other members of the Wellesley family were in receipt of pensions amounting to another £45,000. William’s reply was that it was all earned. Then another attack on William accused him of being against the Church and therefore the State. This was supported by the Rev. “Crazy” Forster of Mersea Island. William went back on the attack describing the reverend as “a notorious drunken parson”.

On the fourteenth day of the election things were so heated that William challenged one of his tormentors to a duel but both men were bound over with heavy sureties to keep the peace. Then John Conyers of Copped Hall entered the fray with a jolly crowd shouting “Tally Ho”, whereupon Conyers put his weight behind William, but it was too late and on the fifteenth day the final result read:

Col Tyrell	2657
Mr Western	2556
Wellesley	2301

The two successful candidates were carried through the streets of Chelmsford in chairs and the bands played “See The Conquering Hero Comes”. William left the town in his carriage having lost an election that cost him £23,000. Another election was required in 1831 when William easily beat Col. Tyrell but could not make an appearance at the election as he was hiding from his creditors. The words “leopard” and “spots” come to mind.

The above is taken from “Essex in Parliament” by George Caunt of Ilford printed in 1969. I picked up a hard backed copy about 15 years ago when Vestry House Museum was having a clear out.

Peter Lawrence

MEMORY LANE - NOSTALGIA

The picture and mention of Puddicombes in the Autumn Edition of Woodford Times certainly sparked a memory.

In the August of 1959 I began my career, with Lloyds Bank, in their Leytonstone Branch. Fifty one years ago amongst the good quality shops, next door to the bank, was 'Puddicombes' (Leytonstone branch) selling fur coats and accessories.

Their basement was chilled to store furs during the summer. At the back of the bank’s building (708 High Road) the flank wall of Puddicombes (710 High Road) had windows which were boarded and barred. For the fact of this encroachment, Puddicombes paid an annual easement of £1/0/0. Soon after joining the bank staff, as a very timid 16 year old I was given the duty of collecting the pound. I remember entering Puddicombes shop and immediately sinking into a thick pile carpet. The gloomy interior had several large potted palms and was quite unique. Soon afterwards the shop became Harveys toys and gifts and remained so until the nineteen nineties. I served my whole career at Lloyds Bank Leytonstone and retired in 1997 by which time the face of Leytonstone had changed completely.

Eileen Duffus

'THE EAST INDIA COMPANY & REDBRIDGE'
AN EXHIBITION AT THE REDBRIDGE MUSEUM (ending 26 February 2011)

On entering the exhibition, I was greeted by Indian music, a depiction of a cloth merchant in Tanjore (south India) from about 1800 and the voice of our Chairman in the background - all will be revealed.....

The exhibition illustrated the history of the development and decline of the East India Company, whilst identifying personalities linked to specific areas of the London Borough of Redbridge, with displays relating to the individual areas of Woodford, Wanstead and Ilford - areas which provided easy access to the City of London and the docks.



The East India Company's Leadenhall Street headquarters, as rebuilt/enlarged in 1799-1800 to reflect the Company's increased prestige.



The East Indiaman 'Repulse'

East India Company - Woodford Links

Sir Thomas Roe (1580-1644) was sent to India by King James I in 1615 as English Ambassador to the Indian Mughal Court of Emperor Jahangir. He continued in this role until 1619. Due to his amicable relationship with the Emperor, the Company gained permission to begin trading at Surat (west India).

Sir Thomas Roe purchased the Manor of Woodford in 1640. He died in 1644 and was buried at St Mary's Church, South Woodford. His grave was near the altar.

Peter Godfrey (1695-1769) became a Director of the Company, having been chief of the Canton Council

Peter Godfrey, having lived at The Rookery, George Lane, is buried at St Mary's Church. A column in the churchyard commemorates the family.

Thomas Braddyll (died 1747) served as President of Bengal (1739-1746)

Thoms Braddyll is buried at St Mary's Church, South Woodford

Richard Warner (1713-1775) was a shareholder of the Company and became a Director

Richard Warner – a resident of Harts House from 1723 until his death, created the botanical garden at the House

Captain Charles Foulis (1714-1783) was initially a Captain and then an owner of ships of the East India Company.

Captain Charles Foulis lived next to Harts House. He is buried at St Mary's Church, South Woodford, where his memorial is displayed.

William Hornby was Governor of Bombay from 1771-1784.

*William Hornby owned the property Higham Hills from 1785-1790
(part of Woodford County High School)*

Jeffrey Jackson (1730-1802) was a Captain, prior to becoming a ship owner.

Jeffrey Jackson lived at Woodford Bridge

Sir Robert Preston (1740-1834) was initially a captain with the Company, then managed 16 ships before becoming a Director. Two of the ships were named 'Woodford'. (See note at foot of article)

Sir Robert Preston was resident at Harts House in 1799

Captain William Hunt Micklefield (1743-1826) captained the Company's ship 'Rochford'

Captain Micklefield rebuilt Woodford Hall in 1771, where he lived until 1801. He is buried in his family tomb in the churchyard at St Mary's Church, South Woodford

William Mellish (1774-1834) supplied ships' provisions to the Company and then became a ship owner.

William Mellish purchased Harts House in 1815

Charles Raikes (1812-1885) served in the Bengal Civil Service for 30 years.

Charles Raikes owned The Rookery, George Lane. His family's memorial tomb is in St Mary's churchyard, South Woodford

A stunning recreation of a 1770's dress of chintz had been commissioned by the Museum and examples of original textiles were also displayed, together with exquisitely worked caskets made for export to Europe. Documents, coins, porcelain, glass, textile printing blocks, portraits, weapons, examples of spices, clear written explanations..... all provided a fascinating, balanced picture of our area's links to the Company's trading and influence.

Oh, and our Chairman's voice..... the video 'Wanstead Park – the Legacy of the East India Company 2009 (Stuart Monro, Wanstead Parklands Community Project) was playing on a loop and I happened to enter the exhibition as Peter Lawrence was talking about the Thames area!

Linked to the exhibition is an excellent printed guide, produced by Redbridge Museum, to which I am greatly indebted. Amongst others, the booklet also acknowledges Georgina Green's research into many of the local connections to the East India Company.

Footnote: The first (1206 tons) was in service between 1790 and 1811. The second, a chartered vessel, (544 tons) was in service for the Company between 1820 and 1821.

Janet Lovell.

WOODFORD IN THE 18TH CENTURY

More recent members of our Society may not be aware that one of the most valuable items in our collection is a small leather bound book entitled "*Plantae Woodfordienses*".

Published in 1771 by the author, Richard Warner, a botanist, who proved amongst other things that the gardenia was a newly discovered specie of plant and not just another form of jasmine as other botanists seemed to have thought at the time.

Richard lived at the 17th century version of Harts House on Woodford Green, where he built hot houses to nurture the tender specimens of plant that he had transported from South Africa by ships owned by the East India Company, of which he was a director and stock holder.

"*Plantae Woodfordienses*" is a catalogue of plants and trees that he observed growing locally whilst living in Woodford during those heady days of Empire building in the second half of the 18th century. This little book goes beyond just being a botanist's handbook as he often gives the location of the plant being described. This additional information gives us a fascinating view of Woodford and the surrounding area during this period. Here are some examples with today's place names and other facts in brackets:

Sweet Smelling Flag: Found near Mr Warner's piece of water (Warner's Pond) opposite Harts, his house at Woodford Row (Green) and in the River Rhoden, Woodford Bridge, near the 8 mile stone. (Chigwell Road near Snakes Lane).

Rest Harrow: In dry fields and forest...in plenty in the footway from Woodford Row to

Woodford Church (St Mary's), under the garden wall to the house commonly called the "Naked Beauty" (Hurst House). (The rest harrow still grows and flowers every summer on the Green between Hurst House and the cricket pitch).

Spleenwort: Found on a wall in Dr Wilkinson's orchard on the side of the lane leading to The Windmill (The lane is now Fullers Road leading to the windmill which was situated at the top of Oak Hill. The open part of the forest opposite Chelmsford Road is still called Mill Plain).

The Flowering Rush: Found in many parts of the River Rhoden, in particular between Sir James Wright's Rey House (Ray Park) and Sir Edward Walpole's Luxborough House (Tottenham Hotspur's training ground in Luxborough Lane, Chigwell).

Deptford Pink: Found in the upper end of Sakes, commonly called Snakes Lane and in the lane leading from Chingford Hatch to Mr Lloyd's Friday Hill House.

Traveller's Joy: Found in hedges in Hagger Lane (Forest Road) towards Walthamstow. (This plant is wild clematis).

Black Poplar: Found in moist boggy places, in Mob's Hole (Nightingale Green, Wanstead), between the Eagle Snaresbrook and the Woodford Bridge Road (between Woodford Road and Hermon Hill).

Willow Herb: On the side of the River Rhoden and in a ditch at the lower end of Marsh Street, Walthamstow (High Street and Coppermill Lane) near Hackney Marsh.

Peter Lawrence

CAPTAIN CHARLES FOULIS (1714-1783) AND TANGENTIAL ITEMS.

Captain Charles Foulis (1714-1783) is buried at St Mary's Church in South Woodford. Not only was he Captain and owner of East India Company ships but for many years he was an active "Sun Fire Office Director" and a "Ship's Husband Marine", giving his address in numerous directories as 50 Lime Street, London and Woodford.

A **Ship's Husband**, as defined in Maritime Law, is an agent appointed by the owner of a ship, and invested with authority to make the requisite repairs, and attend to the management, equipment, and other concerns of the ship. He is usually authorised to act as the general agent of the owners, in relation to the ship in her home port.

By virtue of his agency, he is authorised to direct all proper repairs, equipments and outfits of the ship; to hire the officers and crew; to enter into contracts for the freight or charter of the ship, if that is her usual employment; and to do all other acts necessary and proper to prepare and despatch her for and on her intended voyage.

The **Sun Fire Office** originated in a business established by Charles Povey in 1708 and known as the Exchange House Fire Office. This office used the Sun symbol as its firemark and became commonly known as the Sun Fire Office. The business was taken over by the Company of London Insurers in 1710 and formally constituted as a partnership known as the Sun Fire Office.

The company has had a number of addresses within the City of London. Initially the business of the new company was conducted from a room in Causey's coffee house in St Paul's Churchyard, moving to an office in Sweetings Rents near the Royal Exchange in 1711. The city office subsequently moved to Threadneedle Street (1727 - 1763), Cornhill (1763 - 1766), Bank Street (1766 - 1843 and Bartholomew Street (1843 onwards). In 1726, the Craig's Court branch in Charing Cross was opened to deal with business in the west of London. In 1793 a separate department was set up at headquarters to deal with country policies.

The company set up its first foreign agency in 1836 and its first major overseas market was in Germany. It expanded its business outside Europe with the setting up of an agency at Smyrna in Turkey in 1863.

Business also expanded to include India, the Far East, China, Australasia, the United States, South Africa, the West Indies, South America and Canada.

In 1891, the office changed its name to Sun Insurance Office Ltd. It merged with the Alliance Insurance Company in 1959 to become part of the Sun Alliance Group and in 1996 became part of the Royal and Sun Alliance Group plc.

At the Guildhall Library, there is a large collection of administrative and constitutional records, minutes of the committees overseeing business, policy registers, records of business transacted with overseas agents and some records of fire brigades.

John Lovell

A NEW VIEW OF LONDON – WITH A HINT OF CHURCHILL

A new view of St Paul's Cathedral is open to all. Travel by glass lift in the recently opened shopping mall, One New Change, and the reflections of the Cathedral follow you to the top floor, where the public roof terrace offers wide views of the London skyline and the Cathedral itself. Leading from the roof terrace, restaurants are planned, but at present, with just views as the lure, the area is uncrowded and provides spectacular views both during the day and after dark.



One New Change, beside St Paul's tube station, was opened on 28th October and is transforming the City of London into a seven- day-a-week destination. The shopping mall was designed by prize winning architect Jean Nouvel. 6,500 panes of glass in shades of beige, red and grey rise from floor to ceiling in the development, incorporating a gradual opaque finish to reduce reflection and solar control glazing to reduce the cooling required during the summer. Geothermal heating and cooling technology has also been incorporated into the building to further boost green credentials.

There are many restaurants within the development, but I prefer to walk across the road to St Paul's. Entering the Cathedral through the door to the restaurant/café and shop (north side, opposite Paternoster Square) provides free

access to view the magnificent Winston Churchill Memorial Screen. Unfortunately, photography is not permitted, but many views are available on computer web sites.

The Screen was unveiled in 2004 to mark the 130th anniversary of Winston Churchill's birth - the Statesman, the Duke of Wellington and Lord Nelson being the only three non-royals to have state funerals at St Paul's.

Designed by acclaimed James Horrobin, the three-tonne openwork screen is formed of textured mild steel, with patinated bronze details. Cast bronze roundels of images from the life of Winston Churchill are set on both sides of the double centre screen. 3.5 metres high and 8 metres wide, the screen spans the Crypt of the Cathedral. (The £260,000 commission was privately funded.)

This stunning piece of art could perhaps be overlooked when visiting the main areas of the Cathedral, but 'coffee in the crypt' provides an opportunity to spend time studying in detail the intricacies of the design, inspired by the life of a Statesman so closely associated with Woodford.

Janet Lovell

WOODFORD IN WORLD WAR ONE

As I sift through books and papers in readiness to transfer items into our Society's collection, I came across pictures given to me a few years ago that I had placed in a "pending" tray and somehow they had got buried. With accompanying information, the archive gives a fascinating insight into the history of a W.W.I nursing hospital in Woodford.

Some members may be aware that the country house, now used as Woodford County High for Girls was once the Lord of the Manor of "Walthamstow Highams" residence, and included the Warner family. For a short time afterwards it became the Bishop of St Albans official residence in Essex then at the outbreak of W.W.I. it was taken over by the Ministry of War and became the Woodford Auxiliary Hospital.

One local young lady who volunteered to nurse the wounded soldiers was Lucy Mary Telfer, who lived with her widowed mother and siblings at "Hawthorn Cottage", Glengall Road, Woodford Green. Her nursing title was "Voluntary Aid Detachment Nurse" or "U.A.D.". During her service in the hospital she took photographs and collected postcards produced presumably for the soldiers to buy and use for corresponding to family and friends. On 1st July 1916 the battle of the Somme began with British forces suffering their worst losses in any one day in the war. It was in this battle, at Beaumont Hamel that a 2nd Lieutenant, aged 21 and fresh out of Sandhurst, suffered a severe head wound which was to deprive him of most of his sight for the rest of his life. After life saving treatment at the London Hospital under Sir Henry Head, he was sent to Woodford to continue his treatment. The soldier's name was Basil Moring Grey and it was Lucy Telfer from Glengall Road who nursed him. They fell in love and married. My 1929 Kelly's Street Directory for Woodford shows them living at 1 Glengall Road, presumably at Lucy's family home "Hawthorn Cottage". A block of flats now occupies the site.

How lovely to reflect that from the carnage of the Somme romance should blossom in Woodford.

I am very grateful to Mrs Suzanne Oates (nee Grey) for sharing her family history with us.

Staff and Patients at Woodford Auxilliary Hoospital, Highams – 1914/8



Peter Lawrence