Chairman's Report

By now you should all have received a copy of the Centenary Souvenir Brochure setting out the programme of events and activities for 2003. This is the end result of many months of hard work by the Centenary team and I am sure you will all agree that the programme and souvenir brochure are a very significant achievement which will make our Centenary both memorable and enjoyable.

Please give the team your full support by attending as many meetings as you can and do not miss the opportunity to let your friends and neighbours know what the Society has to offer! Society membership this year offers particularly good value and don’t forget that further information and membership application forms etc. are available from the Society.
extremely good value so why not consider making up a table with your friends for our celebrations on 1 May?

Finally, may I remind you of the important work of the Planning Committee. Because of its many attractions Wimbledon is now under unprecedented pressure for new development and the Committee is very keen to have your input and any new ideas for projects (environmental studies, design awards, restoration/enhancement projects etc.). If you have any thoughts on this please contact Pat Keith, our Chairman of Planning, on 8946 5501.

Martyn Harman

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**Museum**

The Museum’s collection of artefacts was originally founded purely on chance and comprises an oddly diverse assemblage. When the idea of setting up a Museum was first discussed members were asked to contribute items that might be suitable. That was some years before the Museum actually opened in 1915, which seems an extraordinary event to happen in the middle of the Great War. At that time there was no collections policy and almost anything was welcome. Now only items of local interest or things connected with a Wimbledon personality are added and some early gifts, such as a miner’s lamp and a collection of birds’ eggs collected in Malta have been relocated to other museums.

Many of these early items have fitted happily into our current displays, such as the beautiful cross-stitch sampler worked by the 11-year-old Maria Wright when she was a pupil at Mrs Marryat’s needlework classes in Church Road in 1837, and the 18th century tin glazed bin label for claret found in the cellar of ‘The Keir’ which was given by the then owner, Richardson Evans. Another early gift, which we do not often display as we do not have suitable facilities, is a relic of the suffragette movement. It is a large green and purple banner inscribed ‘Deputation to Mr Asquith at the House of Commons June 29th at 8 p.m.’ This was in 1908. The banner was carried by Mrs Lamartine Yates of Dorset Hall, who went to prison for the cause.

The Museum has some attractive horse trappings. Sir Charles Tyrrell Giles who lived at Copse Hill House and was Chairman of the Board of Wimbledon and Putney Commons Conservators from 1892 to 1940, gave three of his crested silver pieces and ‘Jack’ the trace horse, who stood patiently at the base of the hill awaiting his next load, earned another two at a cart horse parade in 1913 and was presented with a cup in the same year, which is also in the collection. Our Dumb Friends League supported a trace horse to assist cart horses with heavy loads on the pull up Wimbledon Hill until 1939. Over the years there were several trace horses, each called ‘Jack’, and some years they helped pull more than 5,000 loads up the hill. Recently we were given a delightful ceramic model of the last ‘Jack’, which awaits a case before going on display.

The National Rifle Association held many events on the Common until moving to Bisley in 1889, most famously when Queen Victoria visited the competitions and scored a bull. The Museum has a number of items from that time, including cartridges, silk purses for prize money and commemorative pottery. The costume display case was added in 1994, when the Museum was refurbished. We had previously owned a Victorian pelisse, which had been found in the attic of the Study School and a Victoria sunshade, but an appeal at the time brought in several typical dresses from the 1920s and a wind up gramophone to accompany them. At the same time we appealed for wartime memorabilia to augment our wartime display which also had a wonderfully generous response, producing everything from gas masks, both adult and a baby’s, to ration and identity cards.

Prudence Craddock-Hartopp
Formerly Curator of Artefacts
**Planning**

**Proposed New Legislation: Planning Policy Guidance – Consultation**

The Society has responded to consultation on possible changes to planning enforcement measures with the following proposals:

No work on sites should take place unless a copy of a formal notice of authorisation is displayed, or a letter from the planning authority confirming that planning permission is not required for the works. (This is already the practice in some other countries).

There should be a doubling of fees for retrospective applications.

Planning application drawings have to be to a proper standard. It is proposed that a checklist is required which spells out what drawings and information are required. (The Society has already provided suggestions for such a list to Merton Planning Department.)

There should be simplification of the rules governing permitted development and control of advertisements.

**Planning Bill: Local Development Frameworks**

A new Planning Bill has been introduced into Parliament. The basic proposals are said to be: replacing the current Unitary Development Plans with Local Development Frameworks speeding up the handling of major infrastructure projects; promoting ‘sustainable development’ via the planning process; introducing ‘Business Planning Zones’; and reforming the procedures used in Compulsory Purchase.

**White Paper Proposals for Reform of Liquor Licensing Laws**

Proposals to permit 24 hour trading of licensed premises is causing concern to many communities. It would appear that local licensing committees will only be able to assess an application in terms of its licensing objectives to prevent crime, disorder or nuisance which takes place within the premises of its immediate curtilage. The Society’s response has been to request changes to proposed legislation to permit consideration of local circumstances. Decisions should be based on proximity and potential disturbance to neighbouring residential properties; the number of premises already in the area and resources of police and other agencies. The licensing authorities should be able to add conditions to licences to control noise both in the premises, and from patrons leaving them. The burden of proof, that the licensing objectives will not be breached, should lie with the applicant. The possible needs of the licensing trade to extend hours of operation must be judged against their duty to act as a good neighbour to other users of town centres and the thrust of Government policy to increase residential occupation of brown field sites in town centres.

**Proposed New Development: 120 Wimbledon Hill Road**

This important site at the junction of Wimbledon Hill Road and Ridgeway will shortly be the subject of a planning application for demolition of the former car showroom and redevelopment as retail premises with two storeys of flats above. Architects commissioned for the project provided sketch designs for the benefit of the Society, WURA and the Belvedere Estate RA.

The Society’s comments were based on significant increase in use of the site and aspects of the design.

Since the new premises would probably be the largest retail operation in the village, questions were raised about the impact on local resident car parking by demand for car spaces for shoppers and residents of the flats, proposed kerb-side deliveries alongside the bus stop/pedestrian crossing and possible need to increase width of the pavement to accommodate larger numbers of pedestrians.

The design incorporates strong horizontal lines, which conflict with the predominant verticality of buildings in the Village and it was felt that the proposed increase in the height at the rear of the building would not comply with daylight angle requirements for neighbouring properties. Other issues are the need to address possible visibility, noise and fume nuisance from air conditioning units (which are to be sited on the roof), escape routes for residents of the flats, the need to incorporate a canopy or blind for weather protection and that illumination and advertising should conform with Conservation Area standards.

**Raynes Park Library**

It is reported that McCarthy & Stone have purchased the library site (which comprises public hall, car
park, laundry and public lavatory block as well as the library). Designs for a replacement building were shown at a public meeting. It is proposed to construct a four-storey U-shaped building facing the railway, which is stepped back at fourth floor level, incorporating flats for the elderly. A new library and meeting space would be provided by the developer at peppercorn rent paid by Merton Council. Entry to the library would be to the side in Aston Road and there would be five parking spaces for library users. There would be no parking allocation for residents of the flats other than service parking. A planning application is expected shortly. It was felt that in the library/meeting space, more flexible use could be achieved by redesign of proposed internal kitchen/office, etc., that the impact on residential properties to the rear could be reduced by gradual reduction of the height on Clifton Park Road frontage and refenestration of one of the flats, where overlooking from the living area could arise.

**The White House, Wimbledon Hill Road**

An application has been submitted for change of use of this listed building from offices to day nursery for 61 children with ancillary use of adjoining Byron House. The applicant states that it is expected that patrons will arrive on foot. The Society’s response is that there should be no change to the internal or external fabric of the building and a request for information on how parking and an increased flow of traffic is to be managed.

Patricia Keith

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**Atkinson Morley’s Hospital Site – Important local meeting**

Following the very successful site walk and ‘Planning for Real’ exercise last year there is to be a public meeting at which the Kingston University team will present a number of possible schemes for the site’s future redevelopment. These have evolved as a result of the intense interest and input from members of the public. There will be a number of guest speakers including Richard Milward, Tony Drakeford and from the Council Ged Lawrenson and Chris Mountford.

The meeting at 8.00 p.m. on Monday 17 March is to be held in the dining hall at King’s College School Southside.

**Wimbledon Town Centre – Cycling and Walking Project**

The Council is considering the installation of two-way cycle tracks along the Broadway one way system and parts of Hartfield Road, apparently to facilitate pedestrian access and the use of cycles. This follows the identification of Wimbledon town centre by Transport for London (TfL) as a suitable location for them to demonstrate how improved access to the station can be achieved by encouraging short walking and cycling trips instead of car travel.

The proposals are likely to reduce the road width from two to one lane in a number of critical locations. There are to be special cycle crossings and new traffic signals on Wimbledon Hill Road, Hartfield Road and the Broadway, all designed to reduce grid-lock by controlling car access and removing traffic queues away from the central area.

In view of the problems that the Raynes Park cycle track causes for both traffic movement and safety we would urge the Council to ensure that full consultation is implemented with residents and businesses to consider all the implications of such radical changes. In addition, we are concerned at the possible impact on the economic viability of the Town Centre by reducing its attractiveness compared with competing town centres in south west London.

**Lecture at Drake House on Thursday 3 April: Major Government Planning Changes**

Last year the Government published details of possible changes to the basic planning system in England and Wales. We expect that by April this year they will have announced exactly what will be enacted in Parliament. This change in planning legislation could have extensive repercussions for those of us who are concerned about the adverse impact of excessive development pressures in London.

For the second lecture of our Centenary year we are therefore very fortunate to have Richard Rawes as our guest speaker. As the Director of Development at Merton Council, Richard is well placed to explain how these proposals are likely to affect us in Wimbledon and if our concerns are justified. Given the strong views of many residents it is likely to be a lively meeting!

Martyn Harman
Quo Vadis? We need more than good planning laws

How can the Public help the Planning Authority?

The Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment (CABE) replaced the Royal Fine Arts Commission as a watchdog for major developments, both public and private. It has a substantially wider remit than its predecessor and aims to ‘help improve people’s lives through better buildings, spaces and places’. It is widening its network to the regions and has an ambitious education programme.

At the same time we, here in Wimbledon, have our Civic Forum with its own initiatives including the Urban Design Task Force.

It would not require a great leap of imagination for our Borough to have its own Advisory Commission, where residents with expertise in Architecture and Urban design together with others drawn from many walks of life could guide the Borough’s Planning Officers and Committee on the civic and architectural merits of planning applications.

It is by a visible commitment to good design, that not only will the public’s interest be aroused, but also the quality of our places and spaces will improve, as will our awareness and appreciation of the world around us. Increased consciousness will change our design culture and one would hope, that this ‘virtuous circle’ will mean that, ultimately, approval will be sought only for well prepared and high quality designs. It may take a long time and even be a Utopian ideal – but why not try?

Sir Jack Zunz
former Chairman of ARUP
the international group of Consulting Engineers

Local History Group

At one of our recent meetings a mystery was partly solved thanks to the Barnes and Mortlake History Society. Its latest Bulletin revealed at long last that the Lordship of the Manor of Wimbledon, sold by Earl Spencer in 1996, had been bought by a man who ‘lives in Brazil, but has requested anonymity. Apparently he paid £171,000 for it, said to be the highest price yet paid for a Lordship’. The mystery deepens. Why pay so much for a title which now carries no rights if you don’t let the world know you have got it?

Not quite so mysterious were the doings of our predecessors in days when the Lordship was a title to be prized. In 1617, when Thomas, Earl of Exeter, had his Manor of Wimbledon thoroughly surveyed by Ralph Treswell, the will of a 76-year-old widow
was ‘proved’. She was Margaret Harman, who had been living in quite a substantial cottage in the High Street. Born in the final years of Henry VIII’s reign, she had seen major changes at the parish church, as well as the building of one of the country’s finest manor houses nearby. If only she had written her memories of these years, but sadly she could not write. Though comfortably off after marrying two husbands who had served the Cecil family, she was only able to sign her will with a mark.

Seventy-five years later in 1692, when the Duke of Leeds was Lord of the Manor, the congregation in St. Mary’s heard a moving appeal to their charity. They were asked to contribute to a fund for ‘the redemption of captives in Algiers, Sally, Barbary etc’. These unfortunate people were Europeans taken by so-called ‘Barbary corsairs’, fast-sailing Muslim ships, and sold into slavery in North Africa. Their fate touched the generosity of the villagers of Wimbledon and they contributed the very large sum of twelve pounds sixteen shillings. Yet only three months earlier they had given less than ten shillings to help a church in Northumberland, damaged by fire, as well as by the French. These appeals, or ‘Briefs’ as they were then known, became too frequent. Over a period of twenty-one years there were 105 at St Mary’s, 56 produced nothing at all.

Much nearer our own time in 1907 when the Spencers were the Lords of the Manor, a very controversial by-election was held in Wimbledon. The sitting Conservative MP, Charles Hambro, was persuaded to resign so that a prominent Lincolnshire politician, Henry Chaplin who had been defeated in the Liberal ‘landslide’ the previous year, could regain a seat in the Commons. The Liberals were unable to put up a rival as their prospective candidate, Sir Arthur Holland, was then Mayor of Wimbledon. So the more Radical organisations in the Borough decided to put forward for the first time a candidate of their own. They chose the famous philosopher, Bertrand Russell, who launched a campaign to give women the right to vote. Among his supporters were some well-known personalities: A L Johnston, the baker, Mr Copeland, editor of ‘The Wimbledon and Merton Annual’, W E Stoakley, proprietor of ‘The Wimbledon Boro’ News’, Mr Lefevre, the leading Broadways draper, and Professor Pollard, an eminent scholar. Their chief backing came from South Wimbledon, but at the poll this proved quite inadequate and Russell lost by a large majority. He had, however, paved the way for the women’s suffrage meetings on the Common in the years before the First World War. At one in 1913 Mrs Lamartine Yates addressed a crowd of over 200,000 supporters from all over London.

Richard Milward

John Evelyn and Wimbledon

Twenty five years or so ago before the Society had adopted its present name, I was on duty in the Museum one Saturday afternoon. A lady came in and looked carefully all around the room. She was obviously very puzzled. Finally she came up and asked: ‘Isn’t this a Museum about John Evelyn?’ I tried to explain that it was really a Wimbledon Museum, looked after by a Society that drew its inspiration from the great conservationist. ‘Why then’ she retorted, ‘don’t you call it by its right name? Why mislead people with the name Evelyn?’ She needed a lot of pacifying – and I must say I tended to sympathise with her.

Yet until the change of name to Wimbledon Society, made in 1982 after two fiercely argued meetings, there was a lot to be said for Richardson Evans’s firm decision to name his ‘Club’ after a man who ‘showed so delicate a love of nature, such a cultivated taste in art’. He lived from 1620 to 1706, a member of a very wealthy family with a large estate at Wotton near Dorking. He was a lovable character with many friends, including his fellow diarist Samuel Pepys. He was genuinely cultured with a large library and a wide interest in the arts, sciences and above all gardens. He was also a real Christian, a staunch member of the Church of England even in the 1650s when attendance at its services could be dangerous. His Diary or ‘Kalendarium’ was never intended for publication. It was probably written as a record for his own use and for his descendants. It is not nearly as lively or as entertaining as Pepys’s since it never reveals his feelings. But it is a major source for English life and culture in the years after 1660.

Evelyn’s connections with Wimbledon are in fact very tenuous. He only came here on five occasions and then just to give advice about the large manor garden. This was already famous. It had been developed in the first half of the 17th century by the Cecils, by Queen Henrietta Maria and by General
John Lambert. Evelyn’s first visit in February 1662 was at the invitation of a new Lord of the Manor, the Earl of Bristol. ‘I went to see my Lord of Bristol’ he recorded, ‘to see his house at Wimbledon to help contrive the gardens after the modern (French style). It is a delicious place for prospect and the thickets, but the soil is cold and weeping clay.’ Nonetheless he must have been able to ‘contrive’ something, helped by the head gardener, John Turner, who clearly impressed him, as he returned to see the results later that year.

He didn’t visit the garden again until 1675 when he ‘went to Wimbledon to see my Lord of Bristol and returned in the evening’. The next year he called again, ‘to see the Countess’. The garden he helped to design can be seen in Henry Winstanley’s view of the rear of the Manor House made in 1678 for its next owner, the Earl of Danby. It is very formal with box hedges, paths lined with flowers, carefully trimmed bushes and small trees – not one that would appeal to many modern garden lovers.

Evelyn’s final visit came the very year the drawing was made. ‘My Lord Treasurer (Danby) sent to me that I would accompany him to Wimbledon. So breaking fast with him privately in his chamber (at what time he was very like to be choked in drinking too hastily), I accompanied him with two of his daughters, and having surveyed his garden and alterations, returned late at night.’ He never seems to have been consulted by Danby again.

Richard Milward

History of the All England Lawn Tennis Club

The town of Wimbledon has been the home of the Lawn Tennis Championships for the past 125 years, first at the ground just off Worple Road, from 1877 to 1921, and then at the present Church Road ground from 1922 to date. Over this period the tournament has developed from the garden party atmosphere, watched by a few hundred spectators, to a highly professional event, attracting an attendance of approaching half a million people, and through the press, radio and television, a following of many millions throughout the world.

The story began in July 1868 when six gentlemen met in London and founded the ‘All England Croquet Club’. The following year they took up the tenancy of the Worple Road ground and croquet started to flourish, but not for long.

Within a dozen years or so the new craze of lawn tennis was sweeping the country and, not to be left behind, the Club allocated one lawn to the game. Lawn tennis and croquet had nothing in common, apart from the playing surface of cut lawn, but Victorians were eager to seize on a pursuit which brought healthy and energetic competition:

By 1877 lawn tennis dominated the Club and the first Lawn Tennis Championships were held in July; when a Gentlemen’s Singles event was staged. In the 1880s crowds flocked to the ground to see the pioneering Renshaw brothers. In 1884 the addition of the Ladies’ Singles and Gentlemen’s Doubles swelled the programme, and permanent stands around the Centre Court were erected. In the mid-1890s there was a dip in attendance; but the emergence of the Baddeley twins followed by the legendary Doherty brothers kept the game to the fore into the Edwardian era.

By now, lawn tennis was very popular and the gradual number of overseas competitors encouraged more spectators. In 1906 the stands were rebuilt to allow more to see the rising stars, with May Sutton (USA) and Norman Brookes (Australia) leading the way, with both becoming the first overseas champions.

And so on. Enlargement of the stands continued in 1913 and 1914, but the more the accommodation grew, the more spectators packed in, sometimes to suffocation – the description used when approximately 7,500 people were in the ground. Queues were never ending to watch that great athlete Anthony Wilding (NZ) win his four titles.

After the First World War there was an unprecedented demand for tickets to see the young French girl, Suzanne Lenglen, and Bill Tilden (USA) perform. The ground could not be expanded, so the only way forward was for the Club to move to larger premises. This process was started by the purchase of a long triangular shaped area of 13¾ acres in Wimbledon Park, the present Church Road ground. The money for the ground and buildings was set in place mainly by the issue of Debentures.

Work on the new ground commenced in May 1921 and three months later the construction of the Centre Court was underway. By late June 1922 the Centre Court, seating 10,000 with 3,800 standing, was ready
and King George V and Queen Mary performed the opening ceremony. Many thought the ground would turn out to be a ‘white elephant’ but these views were soon dispelled when applications for tickets were such that they have been issued by ballot ever since.

So began an eighty year period during which 75 Championships have taken place. During this time the popularity of the event has steadily increased from an estimated 120,000 spectators at that initial meeting to 200,000 in 1932, 250,000 in 1956, 300,000 in 1967, 400,000 in 1986 and just under the 500,000 mark at present.

Over all these years the Club has constantly been aware of the need to provide facilities and ground improvements compatible with the pace and demand of modern day sport. Rarely has a year gone by without alteration to the grounds or some organisational change taking place. In the past 25 years or so the momentum has significantly increased.

![All England Club, Worples Road, 1913 – Wilson the Groundsman with players](image)

From the Museum Collection

Every five years Centre Court Debentures, and more recently No. 1 Court Debentures, are sold to the public to raise the funds for essential building works and major facility improvements.

Major programmes undertaken in recent times have included a new Debenture Holders’ Lounge and Restaurant constructed on the north side of the Centre Court in 1979 and, at the same time, the roof was raised one metre to provide a further 1088 seats. In 1980 the Members' Enclosure was made a permanent building. The following year the old No. 1 Court complex was rebuilt and enlargements to the North and South Stands increased the capacity of the court by 1,250. Bringing Aorangi Park into the perimeter of the Club’s grounds in 1982 gave much scope for the expansion of many facilities for the future.

The new Centre Court East Building was extended to provide greater accommodation for the Debenture Holders’ Lounge and Restaurant and Museum Offices. A mammoth operation in 1992 replaced the Centre Court roof by a new structure, supported by four stanchions, instead of twenty-six. The 3,601 seats were given a perfect, instead of restricted, view.

In 1993 the Club unveiled its Long Term Plan to enhance and protect The Championship’s pre-eminence into the 21st century and so improve the quality of the event for competitors, spectators, officials, media, members and neighbours.
A start to the plan was made in 1994, and in 1997 the new No. 1 Court Complex, No. 18 and No. 19 Courts, Broadcast Centre and tunnel linking Church Road with Somerset Road were opened. Two years later the Centre Court West Stand extension increased the court capacity by 728 seats, and in 2000 the Millennium Building provided outstanding facilities for the competitors, press, officials and members, on the site of the old No. 1 Court. In 2002 the Centre Court Clubhouse was completely refurbished and much of the Centre Court terracing was replaced.

There is still much to be done. In the next few years, work will be concentrated on the area south of the Centre Court where a new No. 2 Court, seating 5,000, will be built and all the grass courts repositioned to create wider walkways. Also, a new turnstile entrance incorporating Club offices will be created as well as a junior Tennis Centre.

Although in recent years the Centre Court has undergone many changes and dramatically expanded with building on three sides, it still maintains that traditional character and atmosphere which is known throughout the world.

Alan Little
Honorary Librarian Wimbledon Lawn Tennis Museum

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**Centenary Dinner 1st May**

Without the generosity of our sponsors, the dinner committee would have found it impossible to offer members and their friends a dinner in The All England Club – with a champagne reception and table wine included in the ticket price. Fortunately good friends have come to our aid to help the Society celebrate its centenary.

John Young, Chairman of Young & Co’s Brewery has kindly offered to supply champagne for the reception. The company has been under the ownership of the Young family since 1838, and needs little introduction to readers, many of whom already have a ‘favourite’ amongst the Young’s pubs in the area: The Crooked Billet, The Hand in Hand, Rose & Crown, The Dog and Fox, and The Alexandra.

Robert Holmes of Robert Holmes & Co is donating wine for the dinner tables. Few in Wimbledon are unaware of the generous part played in the community by Robert Holmes who is a long-standing benefactor to so many of our charities. Once again the support is greatly appreciated.

Without the help of Phase Eight, one of the country’s leading fashion houses, we would have felt unable to invite the Wimbledon School of Art to mount a display of Elizabethan costumes as a highlight of the evening. From small beginnings in SW London, Phase Eight now has 27 stores across the UK – our own branch being located at 31 High Street. It also has concessions with the John Lewis Partnership. The Wimbledon School of Art is the sole beneficiary of their sponsorship.

We ask members to be sure to make their bookings as early as possible as this greatly helps us to organise the event and, in addition, I am sure this promises to be a very popular event. Each table holds ten, but single bookings or parties of varying numbers can be accommodated.

Richard Hardwick

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**Modern Touch at Britain’s Oldest Brewery**

Young’s occupy the oldest site in Britain on which beer has been continuously brewed. The brewery was established by 1581, in the reign on Elizabeth I, when Humphrey Langridge was the brewer at the Ram Inn in what was then the Surrey village of Wandsworth. Unlike many other inns, which brewed beer only for their own customers, the Ram was a commercial brewery, supplying other public
houses. The Ram Brewery, as it became known, was subsequently owned by two other families, the Drapers and the Trittons, and it began to acquire its own pubs.

The Young family came on to the scene in 1831, when the partnership of Charles Allen Young and Anthony Fothergill Bainbridge bought the rapidly expanding brewery. The Youngs have been in charge ever since and the present chairman, John Young, is the great-great-grandson of the original Charles Allen Young.

Young’s shot to prominence when a policy of serving traditional draught beer in all the brewery’s pubs, introduced by John Young in the early 1960s, combined with the growing influence of the Campaign for Real Ale – founded in 1971 – created a demand for real ale that far outstripped the supply.

A new brewhouse was built in the late 1970s and early 1980s to increase capacity and to replace old equipment that was beyond repair. The brewery is now a blend of ancient and ultra-modern, plant producing traditional ales, continental-style lagers, innovative stouts and an imaginative range of bottled beers, such as Double Chocolate Stout, the honey beer Waggledance and a new elderflower beer called Elysium. These beers are enjoying notable success in the supermarkets and major off-licence chains throughout Britain.

Young’s have 205 pubs, wine bars, restaurants and hotels in the south of England and sell their beers to more than 1,000 other pubs and clubs throughout Britain as well as to outlets around the world.

Wimbledon is fortunate in having a good choice of Young’s houses. The Crooked Billet in the street of the same name, off Woodhayes Road, dates back to 1509, when it was a brewery and inn. It was run by Walter Cromwell, a ‘smith, an armourer, a brewer and a hostelry keeper’, whose son Thomas Cromwell, became Lord High Chamberlain of England and Henry VIII’s right-hand man.

The Hand in Hand, a few yards along Crooked Billet, began life as a bakehouse, built on the site of a house owned by Daniel Watney, a farmer whose grandson founded Watney’s brewery. It was owned and run by the Holland family for more than 100 years until Young’s bought it in 1974. It was the 1982 Evening Standard Pub of the Year.

Across the common is the Rose and Crown, which won the same title from the Standard back in 1970. It dates from 1659 and possibly earlier, and was originally called the Rose because crowns were out of favour during the Civil War. It has recently been sensitively extended to include thirteen hotel bedrooms. It is one of twenty-one Young’s pubs that now have accommodation, all of them retaining the original pub bars.

The Dog and Fox stands in the centre of the Village, in the High Street opposite Church Road. Although it is plainly a Victorian building – rebuilt in 1869 – it began as a farmhouse in the 18th century but was trading as an inn by 1758. It was used for meetings of the Volunteers, a predecessor of the Home Guard set up to repel any Napoleonic invasion. Part of the Dog and Fox has been converted into a high-class Chinese restaurant, the Bayee Village, and another part is now a Finch’s restaurant bar, one of a small chain of modern outlets launched by Young’s and named after a long-standing London pub company called H H Finch, which was taken over by Young’s in 1991.

The Alexandra, at the bottom of Wimbledon Hill Road, was built by Young’s in 1876 for a rapidly expanding Wimbledon. It has been much altered since Victorian times, mainly in the 1920s and 30s, when it expanded into a shop next door. A restaurant, added at the side of the pub in St Mark’s Place in 1986, was converted into a wine bar in 1990 and has since been enlarged into a modern restaurant bar called Smart Alex.

Young’s still deliver much of their beer by horse-drawn dray, the only brewery in the South-east of England still to do so. Every day, a pair of horses visits Young’s pubs in the Wandsworth and Putney areas. There are 10 horses – black and white Shires, the traditional English breed of heavy horse – in the Victorian stables at the back of the Ram Brewery.

A Young’s horse pulling the Lord Mayor’s coach

Over the years, Young’s have led the way in championing the continued use of heavy horses both for work and for appearances at shows throughout
Britain. It is estimated that Young’s Shires have picked up 3,000 prizes since they first entered the show ring in the 1920s, more than any other brewery team before or since. Between 1945 and 1954, the team was unbeaten in any show ring, a remarkable achievement.

Shire horse historian Keith Chivers credited Henry Young, chairman of the brewery from 1923 to 1957, with the introduction of heavy horse teams to all the main agricultural shows. Henry Young once explained the decision to stick with horses rather than go over to an entirely motorised delivery fleet: ‘We have no prejudice against the motor, but we have a prejudice in favour of the horse.’ That spirit has been kept alive by his nephew, 81-year-old John Young, who has been chairman of Young’s since 1962, and by John Young’s son James, the company’s deputy chairman. Six Young’s horses pull the Lord Mayor’s coach on its annual procession through the City of London every November.

The brewery, which houses an historic pair of steam-driven beam engines, still in immaculate working order, is open to the public for conducted tours. Telephone 020 8875 7005 for details and bookings.

Michael Hardman

Wimbledon School of Art

Within the Wimbledon town centre neighbourhood sits a ‘gem’ in the world of art and design education. Founded in 1890, Wimbledon School of Art is one of London’s major art schools. It is unique both in course offering and in the learning experience offered its students. A small school environment allows students to work in a close-knit, creative community and develop their work with a range of staff from the professional worlds of theatre and fine art. All academic staff are practising artists, designers and scholars.

Wimbledon School of Art was founded largely as a result of a mandate issued by the Department of Education directing that art, specifically drawing, must be offered to all students. What was then the Rutlish School Department of Science and Art began offering a wide range of art subjects including Freehand and Model, Perspective Geometry, Light and Shade, Wood Carving and Drawing. This course offering was later to develop into Wimbledon School of Art.

In 1904, the pressure to offer an increasing range of scientific and technical knowledge led to the development of a joint venture between Merton and Wimbledon. The resulting Technical Institute opened on Gladstone Road in Wimbledon. With three rooms set aside for the teaching of art, the Art Department now had a clear identity. Further expansion one year later incorporated photographic studios. Records of this expansion are the first to refer to the programme as the ‘School of Art’.

As attendance grew, the Surrey Education Committee recognised the need to re-house the school in a central area. The new site for the Wimbledon School was a former farm called Merton Hall. In April 1940 the School of Art moved to what remains the main site on Merton Hall Road.

In the post-war years, the student body contributed regularly to community efforts. Sculpture students completed over thirty reliefs for institutions all over the county including schools in Morden, Chertsey, Leatherhead, Egham, Woking and Merton. Painting students created large murals for many public buildings in the area. An example can still be viewed in the children’s section of the Wimbledon Public Library. The twelve largest murals depict the months of the year, while others show children’s games. A larger project was the decoration of St Mark’s church in Wimbledon. Students carved capitals and corbels and painted many religious scenes in the church interior. Sadly, the building was completely gutted by fire in mid-1960.

For the future of the School, however, the most important innovation at this time was the creation of what was to become a Department of Theatre Design. Theatre Design had been taught at the Technical Institute in the early 1930s, but had not survived the move to the new Merton Hall facility except in the field of dress and costume design and cutting. This course was to form a vital part of the School’s development. The first of its kind in the country, the Theatre Design course was also the first programme of study at Wimbledon to offer a Diploma of Art and Design. Further to its commitment to this area, a complete on-site studio theatre was built on the Merton Hall site in the early 1960s.

In future years, the Theatre Design programme would expand to offer degree studies in performance, costume, set and technical arts. A new library,
additional painting studios, a lecture theatre and seminar rooms were added in 1968. That year the School offered the country’s first course in Theatre Wardrobe. Additional sculpture studios and a new site on Palmerston road to house the popular Foundation Studies programme further enhanced the Wimbledon School of Art curriculum in 1971. As a result of continued course enhancement, the School now offers full and part time undergraduate and postgraduate programmes in Fine Art and Theatre. In addition, the School welcomes applications for research and PhD level studies. The Centre for Drawing hosts artists of national and international fame during six-week residencies.

Through the years, the School has grown and changed to meet the demands of the students and the art and theatre worlds they enter. In Autumn 2003, Wimbledon School of Art will expand with the opening of a major new building to include purpose-built studios, a lecture hall, refectory and a recreation and bar area.

For more information or for a prospectus, visit the Wimbledon School of Art website at www.wimbledon.ac.uk or write to:
Wimbledon School of Art, Merton Hall Road, Wimbledon SW19 3QA. Tel: 020 8408 5000. Fax: 020 8408 5050

A Tribute to Michael Pope

It was with shock and great sadness that we learnt in October of the sudden death of Michael Pope, the Director of the Interpretative Costume Design Course at the Wimbledon School of Art. We wish to express our sympathy to his family and our gratitude to them and to the School for inviting us to join with them at Michael’s memorial service in St Simon Zelotes Church, Chelsea on 2nd December. From the tributes to Michael, we learnt much about his passion for his work and also came to realise the depth of the affection felt for him by colleagues and students alike. As one tutor said ‘We loved him to bits’.

Michael joined the School in 1963 as a part-time tutor in the Theatre Design department, a small section of which was designated ‘wardrobe’. By 1969, he had turned this Cinderella into a recognised course for the Diploma of Higher Education. But he was not to stop there. In 1987, with his customary skill, enthusiasm and rigorous standards, he devised a new course which was accepted as the country’s first BA Honours degree in Costume Design. It remains the foremost.

Just three months ago on a pleasant September evening we spoke about the project for the year ahead. Undaunted at the prospect of guiding his students through the complexities of reproducing farthingales, ruffs, etc., as part of the Greenwich Elizabethan Exhibition, he seemed to relish the challenge. He told us that he had a particular interest in the period ever since he had seen the Queen’s effigy in Westminster Abbey. It had been remade in 1750, but by 1995 was once again in a sorry condition. Apparently, as the ‘autopsy’ progressed to the stomacher and undergarments, it became apparent that the corsetry was not 18th Century but Elizabethan – and in all probability had once been worn by the Queen Elizabeth herself. For Michael, the historian, seeing the garment was a defining moment.

Students in previous years had of course chosen Elizabethan subjects for their course work, though nothing like on the scale required for Greenwich. ‘Still,’ he told us, ‘what was made in olden times we should be able to make now, always bearing in mind that portraits of the Queen are exaggerated representations, not the real thing. I reckon our students should be able to tackle most things, except the Ditchley portrait that is. I should probably advise against any of them attempting that in the available time.’ We discussed whether the students could manage to have their work ready for the Gala Dinner. It was with confidence and pride he assured us ‘For students, they are pretty motivated group’.

2003 was to have been Michael’s last year at the Wimbledon School of Art. He was looking forward to retirement, with time at last for his garden. Unhappily this was not to be. His legacy remains in the continued work of his Department and in the memories of friends.

Monica Ellison
The Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra

For well over a hundred years amateur music has flourished in Wimbledon: the town is rich in musical talent of all kinds and at various times has had youth orchestras, Old Tyme dance bands, jazz groups, chamber orchestras, even a banjo orchestra. There was a time when the words ‘amateur orchestra’ would suggest a unique kind of audience discomfort at the prospect of faltering techniques, sour intonation and muffled entries. The Portsmouth Sinfonia of a few years ago — a professional band that aimed to sound like a bad amateur one and sent up the whole amateur musical movement — was brilliantly funny but things have changed even in the two decades or so since then: standards in amateur music rise all the time and are no longer to be laughed at. Amateur orchestras can be found all over England: every borough in London has at least one. And here in Wimbledon we are lucky to have an orchestra of first-rate quality conducted by a musician of international standing — John Alldis.

There has been a local orchestra here since before the first world war. Under Herr Gustav Machtig, an immigrant from Germany and Wimbledon resident, concerts were given from the 1890s until 1913, with orchestras made up of professional and amateur players, and with programmes that were both innovative and popular. Then between the wars the Wimbledon Philharmonic Orchestra was formed, and revived after the war. It continued until the late 1950s, conducted by an enthusiastic local bank manager, Kenneth Tucker, until he retired and moved to the West Country.

Then, in 1963, the composer-conductor Kenneth V Jones announced in the broadsheet Wimbledon Borough News his determination to start a new orchestra, and he invited interested players to contact him for auditions.

This was the beginning of the Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra, and it met for the first time in 1963. When Kenneth V Jones moved from the district he was succeeded by John Alldis, founder of the famous John Alldis Choir, and conductor, successively, of the London Philharmonic Choir and the London Symphony Chorus. Under his inspired musical direction, the orchestra has built a solid reputation for adventurous programming and fine performance, able to attract prominent soloists, the likes of John Lill, Joanna McGregor, Hamish Milne, Alan Hacker, Felicity Palmer, Michael Collins, Richard Watkins, Rodney Friend, James Galway, Jack Brymer and Paul Lewis. Many have made return visits.

Music is a social enterprise: it creates friendships and camaraderie like few other activities. Many of the fifty or so people in the orchestra have been members for twenty years and more, and they come from many walks of life: teachers, computer programmers, media people, doctors, solicitors, architects, an airline pilot, a personnel officer, a senior civil servant, a barrister and a professional cake-maker. All these diverse types come together every Tuesday evening to rehearse for a schedule that embraces four main programmes a year and at least one smaller-scale concert. In recent programmes the orchestra has played music by Bernstein, Birtwistle, Britten, Copland, Stravinsky and Tippett, in addition to composers from the mainstream classical repertoire.

The orchestra used to give its concerts in Wimbledon Town Hall. Since that was demolished to give place to the shopping centre, the concerts have taken place mainly in St Matthew’s Church, Durham Road. The WSO’s next concert, on Saturday the 8th March 2003, will be the orchestra’s annual promotion for Macmillan Cancer Relief, a social event keenly looked forward to in the town. That will be followed by a concert on the 17th May, when the orchestras will give the first performance of a work commissioned by the Wimbledon Society from the Wimbledon-born composer Martin Prynn. Music for a double anniversary: the Wimbledon Symphony Orchestra’s fortieth, and the Society’s hundredth.

Paul Vaughan
The Activities Programme 2003

I am pleased to present for this Centenary Year a mix of lectures, details of the meetings of the History Group, a local visit, two local walks, and four excursions. Dates, times and a brief description of the venues are shown here together with instructions how to book and the meeting points. Last minute changes – relative to the booking availability of the four excursions – may be had by telephoning Anne-Marie Hill, the Activities Liaison Officer, telephone number 020 8241 3368. I am grateful to Anne-Marie for agreeing to receive the bookings and field any last-minute excursion enquiries.

My thanks to Monica Ellison and our Chairman, Martyn Harman, for arranging some lectures, mentioned elsewhere in the Newsletter. Details of Richard Milward’s talk at the Society’s AGM, to be held on Wednesday 28 May at Collyer Hall, King’s College School, will be published in the summer Newsletter, as will details of the ski-history film show talk, presently planned to be given at the Ski Club of Great Britain in Church Road.

New members will like to know that Richard Milward chairs our Local History Group. The Group meets at 8.00 p.m. in the Society’s Museum in the Ridgway on the first Friday of each month, excepting August. A warm welcome is assured to all who join the Group. Now for dates and details, but also see pages 11 to 15 of the Centenary Brochure, for Events and Activities information, and the page 9 Diary of Events listings.

Stanley Picker Trust: Saturday 17 May

Meet at Southside and The Grange, SW19 at 1.45, for departure by cars at 2.00 p.m. (Please complete the Booking Form and return to Anne-Marie Hill by Saturday, 19 April.)

A Centenary Year opportunity to visit the Stanley Picker Trust, a notable and local gallery of 20th century British art. Members who have visited before are welcome to attend again. The gallery’s painting and sculpture collection is exhibited in the house, grounds and gallery of the late Stanley Picker. A guide from the Tate Gallery will show our group around. At a half way point in the proceedings the Trust offers hospitality, so the visit is both relaxed and informative. Our visit is free – the Trust makes no charge – but limits a group to around 10. Please note, no transport is provided by either the Society or the Trust for this visit. Society members with cars and prepared to offer a seat(s) to fellow members for the return journey to and from the venue and The Grange, SW 19, are requested to indicate their willingness to do so on the Newsletter’s Booking Form. Members who would appreciate a lift are asked to indicate this. The three mile journey by road to the gallery takes some 7 minutes, but by public transport is relatively difficult to reach. Full details of the journey will be given on the afternoon. We expect to return to The Grange about 4.30 p.m.

A Walk round the Village: Saturday 14 June

Meet outside the Society’s Museum, Ridgway, Wimbledon at 2.15 for the guided walk’s start at 2.30 p.m.

The Society’s President Norman Plastow is pleased to present another of his much-informed walks around the High Street. Topics to be discussed will be the architectural merits and otherwise of the buildings to be seen there, as well as historical and social detail of the lives of the people who lived and worked in what is commonly termed today as ‘the Village’. No booking is necessary, just meet Norman at the appointed time, outside the Museum.

Houses round Rushmere: Saturday 21 June

Meet at the War Memorial, High Street, Wimbledon at 2.15 for the guided walk’s start at 2.30 p.m.

Cyril Maidment of the Society is constantly updating his knowledge of this interesting and well established corner of the Commons, and will be pleased to impart this to all who attend this day. The sights and sites of the houses around the Rushmere, and notes on the lives of the people who lived and worked within them form the basis of Cyril’s walk and talk. No booking is necessary, just meet Cyril at the War Memorial from 2.15 p.m.

Hatfield House & Gardens, 7 June

Meet at the corner of The Grange and Southside, Wimbledon Common, SW19 at 9.00 for the coach departure at 9.15 a.m. (Please complete the Booking Form and return to Anne-Marie Hill by Saturday, 19 April.)

Here is a great chance to see a Hertfordshire house with a Wimbledon connection, and visit the Festival of Gardening. First the House. Described by Richard Milward of the Society ‘as the most lovely house in England’, here is the magnificent Jacobean home of Robert Cecil, 1st Earl of Salisbury, built
between 1607 and 1611. Hatfield has remained the home of the Cecils ever since. Our visit coincides with a special day. Hosted by the Marchioness of Salisbury, today will be staged Hatfield’s 21st annual Festival of Gardening show. During the course of the weekend the house will be full of flower arrangements, whilst in the grounds is staged a full programme of gardening lectures and related events. This is a fitting first-exursion for the Society’s Centenary Year. The Cecil family has a Wimbledon connection. The first Earl, Robert Cecil, was the 2nd son of Sir William Cecil, Lord Burghley, the Lord of the Manor of Wimbledon. This year too marks the 400th year of the death of Queen Elizabeth I. It was at Hatfield in 1558, Elizabeth learned she was to be Queen.

Of the Festival, the Hatfield Press Release (05/12/02) describes it as ‘an event for all garden lovers… there is a NAFAS floral art competition in the Old Riding School where talks and garden lectures will be given by celebrity guests…’ Around the gardens specialist plant nurseries, flower clubs and sculptors will inspire all with their displays. On the South ground … craft and trade stands will offer every commodity of interest to gardeners, whilst in the arena will be staged a number of shows. Music on offer varies between chamber and jazz. Visitors can take luncheon either in the Old Palace – or find a real treat in the Food Court outside, ‘Acres of Inspiration!’…’ As a result of the Festival, seven hours is scheduled for our visit, which leaves plenty of time to visit the House and the Grounds. The cost of the excursion includes the House and Festival entry fees. Departing Hatfield at around 5.30, our arrival back at The Grange is expected by 6.35 p.m.

Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, & Ham House, Saturday 9 August

Kingston to Richmond by boat, onto The Royal Botanical Gardens, Kew, for lunch and a guided visit, and then an afternoon’s visit to The National Trust’s Ham House and Grounds. Meet at the corner of The Grange and Southside, Wimbledon Common, SW19 at 8.45 for the coach departure at 9.00 a.m. (Please complete the Booking Form and return to Anne-Marie Hill by Saturday, 19 April.)

A prompt departure from SW19 is needed to meet the departure time of the ferry between Kingston and Richmond. This is an hour’s mini cruise in itself, offering fascinating views of the Thames’ banks and the Teddington Lock. Alighting at Richmond we walk five minutes to reconnect with our coach parked at the Green, for the journey to The Royal Botanical Gardens. Lunch can be had in one of ground’s three restaurants. Included in today’s excursion cost is an hour’s Gardens’ guided tour. But there is much to see at Kew – from colourful aromatics to the world’s largest indoor plant. One option to see more might be to buy a £3.00 Explorer’ ticket, providing transport, to stop at eight points of interest around the grounds. After our four hour Kew visit we head to our final destination, ‘Ham House’, of The National Trust. Built on the banks of the Thames, ‘Ham’ is described as perhaps the most remarkable Stuart house in the country, the
building’s fabric having remained virtually unchanged since the 1670s. On view in the House are some 20 rooms, many retaining the furnishings of that period. An extraordinary house, and with a tea-room likely to be used by many in our party, and this despite the relatively short distance between there and home, for an expected return at 5.45 p.m.

Glyndebourne & Brighton, Saturday 15 November

A winter’s excursion to Glyndebourne Opera House, with lunch in Brighton, and then an afternoon’s tour of The Royal Pavilion. Meet at the corner of The Grange and Southside, Wimbledon Common, at 8.45 for the coach departure at 9.00 a.m. (Please complete the Booking Form and return to Anne-Marie Hill by Saturday, 18 October.)

A prompt start will likely be appreciated on this November morning, but Glyndebourne is reached within about an hour, fifty minutes, and on arrival our party is assured of hot coffee. Why a winter visit? Operational needs of the opera-house dictate that group visits can only be offered in the middle two weeks of November, so this arrangement this day presents a rare chance. We will not see a rehearsal, let alone a production, but a walking tour, to include front-of-house, the auditorium, the stage, and back-stage of this world renowned production company will provide a fascinating morning’s visit. Leaving Glyndebourne at about 1.00 p.m. we head for Brighton. Hot lunches can be found aplenty in the town’s Lanes area, or in restaurants nearby ‘The Royal Pavilion’, the venue for the remainder of our afternoon. Originally built as a small farmhouse, The Royal Pavilion has come to be acclaimed as one of the most exotically beautiful buildings in the British Isles. From the huge copper cookware collection of the Great Kitchen to the Chinese inspired opulence of the state rooms, there is much to see. On the Pavilion’s ground floor our visit is to be guided, while the rooms above, and time in the tea room, are taken at one’s own pace. After a near-theatrical day, our Wimbledon arrival time is expected to be about 5.30 p.m.

To book one or more of the four excursions, and/or the Stanley Picker Trust visit, please complete the Newsletter’s Booking Form and return this, with the remittance (cheques payable to The Wimbledon Society) as necessary, to the Activities Liaison Officer, Anne-Marie Hill. I look forward to attending all the excursions, and the chance this affords to meet members, and new members alike.

John Bridger

The Wimbledon Society (formerly the John Evelyn Society) was founded in 1903 and is a Registered Charity (No. 269478). Its main objectives are to preserve Wimbledon’s amenities and natural beauty, to study its history and to ascertain that urban development is sympathetic and orderly. The Museum and Bookshop (020 8296 9914), situated at 22 Ridgway, near Lingfield Road, are open from 2.30 to 5.00 p.m. every Saturday and Sunday – admission free. Annual subscriptions to the Society are at the following rates: Individuals £8.00; Families £12.00; Organisations: Non-commercial £25 and Commercial £50. Please send membership applications to the Acting Membership Secretary.

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