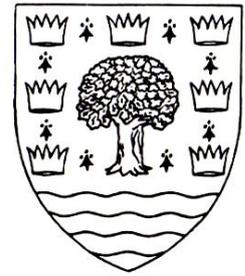


Iford Historical Society

Newsletter No.128 December 2018



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Our website can be found at: <http://ilfordhistoricalsociety.weebly.com/>

We Will Remember Them.

Finally, armistice brought an end to the fighting at 11am on Monday 11th November 1918. When Laurence Binyon wrote his poem *For the Fallen* in 1914, he little thought the fighting would go on for four more years, nor that his words would become so significant.

Extracts from *For the fallen* written by Laurence Binyon

They went with songs to the battle, they were young,
Straight of limb, true of eye, steady and aglow.
They were staunch to the end against odds uncounted;
They fell with their faces to the foe.

They shall grow not old, as we that are left grow old:
Age shall not weary them, nor the years condemn.
At the going down of the sun and in the morning
We will remember them.

As the stars that shall be bright when we are dust,
Moving in marches upon the heavenly plain;
As the stars that are starry in the time of our darkness,
To the end, to the end, they remain.



Many commemorations have been held across the country to celebrate the centenary of the end of the Great War and there is no need to say more here.

In 1918, news of the end of the war brought people out into the streets of Iford. Houses, gardens and shop fronts were quickly decorated with Union flags, church bells rang and people sang patriotic songs. At night time, shops and houses opened their blackout blinds so the streets were fully lit for the first time in several years and fireworks were let off.

Celebrations continued throughout the week with bonfires in some streets at which effigies of the German Kaiser were burnt. A Victory Dance was held in Iford Town Hall later in November which attracted 400 people with another 100 turned away due to limited space.

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The last four years had been very hard both for those at the front and their families left at home. An elderly lady, Mrs Betty Russell, interviewed in 1985 said “I don’t suppose many people who didn’t live through the 1914-18 war realise how short food was. You couldn’t get things like potatoes, they were an absolute luxury, but it was not until right near the end of the war that they brought in rationing. For several years you couldn’t get sweets, and you’d have to queue, maybe for a quarter of a mile, for things like jam. And then when it was nearly your turn, you’d find the last lot had gone, and you’d have to walk home with nothing.

The soldiers in the trenches got such terrible money, it was a real struggle for their families in England to live. Mothers couldn’t afford to give their children proper food to eat. Often you’d see boys and girls with a hunk of bread and dripping in their hands at midday - that was their dinner. Soup would be made with just dripping, salt and pepper mixed together with boiling water. You couldn’t get much else sometimes.

My mother managed by letting the top of the house to a man who was a manager at the munitions factory. He did alright! His wife used to boast to my mother that she was giving her children filleted haddock with poached eggs for their tea, while my poor mother was struggling. After the war that man came and begged from my father because his job had folded and he was on his beam-ends. He had spent as he earned and now had nothing left.”

From *Ilford Recorder*, 15 Nov 1918 and *Ilford Guardian*, 22 Nov 1918, as quoted by Gerard Greene in *Redbridge and the First World War*, p.88; Georgina Green *Keepers, Cockneys and Kitchen Maids* (1987) p.49

The Ilford War Memorial

A public appeal was launched at the end of the First World War to provide a fitting memorial for the 1,159 Ilford men killed in that conflict. See <https://redbridgefirstworldwar.org.uk/> Some of them from the army, navy and air force have been the subject of articles in our newsletter in the last four years.



Photos of the War Memorial and the War Memorial Hall, taken 4th September 2013, Georgina Green

The Ilford War Memorial was unveiled on 22nd November 1922 to commemorate the soldiers from Ilford who died in the 1914-1918 War. (For listing details see our Newsletter No.115, August 2014) The land for the Memorial Gardens was purchased in the early 1920s.

Listed Buildings in Ilford: Ilford 1914 – 1918 War Memorial Hall

(Situated at the north-east corner of the Memorial Gardens, see map on page 6)

ILFORD 1914 TO 1918 WAR MEMORIAL HALL

Listed Grade: II **Date first listed:** 25-Apr-1995

Ilford 1914-18 War Memorial II Memorial Hall. Small single-storey octagonal structure, formerly attached to the children's wing of the King George Hospital, and built in 1927 to commemorate Ilford soldiers who died in the First World War.

Designed by C J Dawson & Allardyce, architects. Red brick with stone dressing. No windows. Two doorways, one on memorial gardens side, one opposite on the hospital side. Stone door surrounds and cornice, foundation stones and tablet. Concrete coping. Metal and glass ceiling dome. Metal doors. Tablet above entrance inscribed: 'ILFORD WAR MEMORIAL/ CHILDREN'S WING/ ERECTED A.D. 1927.' Foundation stone to right of entrance inscribed 'This stone was laid by Lady Wise, wife of Sir Frederic Wise, member 1926.' Stone set into the brick to the left of the entrance inscribed: 'This stone was laid by **Walter H. Stevens Chairman of the Ilford War Memorial Fund 6 Nov. 1926.**'

INTERIOR: Moulded stone surrounds to doors on two sides of the octagon; remaining six sides covered with marble slabs inscribed with the names of the dead. Minimal ceiling cornice. Tablet above doorway to hospital inscribed 'Wing opened in 1927 by Lady Patricia Ramsay, H.R.H Princess Patricia.' White marble floor tiles with black tiles in centre and black border. Metal door frames with glazed panels. Fittings: apart from name slabs, two pairs of crossed flagpoles on facing sides.

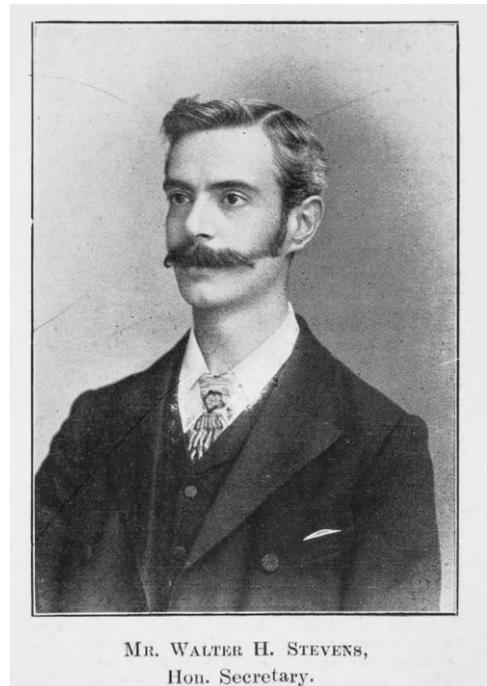
For full details see <https://historicingland.org.uk/listing/the-list/list-entry/1250745>

Walter Stevens and the Santa Claus Christmas Distribution Fund

Trawling through the lists of building plans at the Heritage Centre one day, my eye was drawn to an entry for a proposed hall in the name of the Santa Claus Christmas Distribution Fund. Carol Franklin – sitting opposite me at the time - googled it and found that the one set of archives were held in the very Heritage Centre we were sitting in. Other details emerged over time, and so this is the story of that Fund and its long-time Honorary Secretary, Mr Walter Stevens.

What the Fund did was to ask for donations of money, clothing, food etc; which volunteers then parcelled up and distributed to poor and underprivileged children on Christmas Eve. In its early days they also raised money in order to send poor children away on holidays during the summer but this seems to have ceased around 1899.

In the 3rd issue of the Santa Claus Gazette from 1897, Stevens, then living in Stoke Newington, recounts the tale of how he came by the idea of the Fund. On the 17th December 1894, whilst reading verses of a poem entitled “*Christmas Eve*,” Stevens was clearly so moved that he thought he ought to do something for the children of the poor in the area. Having sought contributions from friends, and circulating a printed appeal, with the help of others he was able to distribute 310 parcels of clothing and toys a week later on Christmas Eve. The following year, 1,710 parcels were delivered.



Stevens moved to 184 Balfour Road in Ilford in 1900 where he is listed in the Kelly's Directory as the Secretary of the Fund. By this time the Fund had grown in size and was able to deliver 2,951 parcels on Christmas Eve to children in areas from Fulham, Hammersmith, and Kensington; to Tottenham, Stanford Hill, and Clapton; and across to Deptford, Dulwich and Peckham. The Gazette records the types of toys that children might wake up to on Christmas morning: dressed dolls, skipping ropes, skittles, tin trumpets, marbles, slates and slate pencils; and many more.

By 1905 the Fund had grown so much that the Stevens household was full to the brim with parcels. It was decided that a hall should be built in order to store and parcel up the growing numbers of presents. Initially a plan was submitted to build a hall in Brisbane Road close to the corner of Auckland Road. However, Stevens seems to have decided to move to Seven Kings to an address in Aldborough Road, as a new plan was approved in April 1906 for a hall to be built in Durban Road, a few minutes walk from Stevens' new house.



The "Santa Claus" Hall and some "Santa Claus" Luggage.

CASH IS NEEDED

Towards cost of small building which has been erected as Headquarters, for Storage of Goods, for Work Meetings, Committee Meetings, and to provide suitable accommodation for preparation and packing of the parcels.

This seems to have been financed partly by raising money through Fund events, and partly through a loan. Amongst the events were two concerts – the second of which held in the Hall received a glowing report in the following week's *Ilford Guardian*. Day to day running costs of the hall were met through renting it out to others.

In time the Fund's reputation grew to such an extent that they received patronage from the great and good. The Gazette records Lady St. Helier as their Patron in the 1905 issue, and as their President the following year. The 1905 issue also acknowledges receipt of a donation to

the fund from Her Majesty the Queen. In 1909 a new President is recorded - HRH Princess Christian of Schleswig-Holstein, daughter of Queen Victoria, who married a minor German prince. In 1913 donations are again recorded from the then Queen and also Queen Alexandra.



The Redbridge Museum holds three items connected to the Fund (shown below), two of which relate to annual bazaars. These appear to have been important events in the Fund’s calendar. The bound volumes of the Gazette include a programme from one such event held in 1902 from 16th-19th December in Ilford Town Hall, with the addition of a concert held on the evening of Saturday 20th December. In the programme the writer wishes that they “...each do our best to make the Concert a success in order that Mr Stevens may be cheered and strengthened to go on with his splendid work of making Xmas a day to be remembered by the children of the poorer classes.”



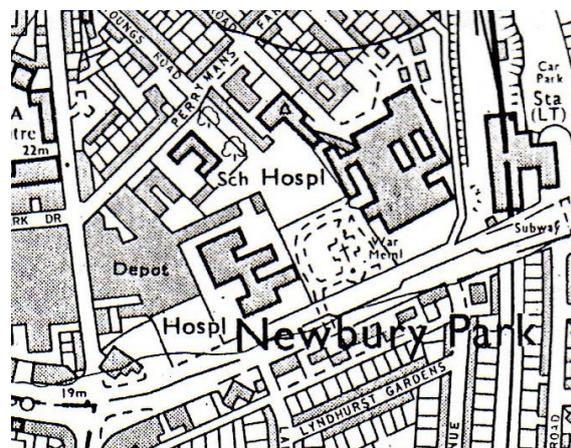
The 1911 Gazette records a surprise presentation to Mr and Mrs Stevens at one of their usual social meetings, of a silver tea service and illuminated address recording the work of Stevens of what was then 17 years since he founded the Fund. It records that Lady St. Helier had made a special effort to be at this meeting and make the presentation.

By 1912 the Fund had grown in size sufficiently for them to be able to deliver over 10,000 parcels across London and that remarkable number was also exceeded in 1913. But events in Europe took their toll and both donations to the Fund and the numbers available to help distribute the parcels fell away significantly; and by Christmas 1917 the parcels delivered amounted to just over 2,000.

Unfortunately, publication of the Gazette seems to have ceased after 1918 and it is not clear how the fund operated after that and at what level. The archive has a ticket to a Whist Drive and dance held in February 1924, and the Santa Claus Tennis Club was established in an empty space between houses in Cambridge Road, Seven Kings. The plan for the pavilion was submitted in late 1922 and it is still listed in Kelly's in 1927 but not in 1929. The documentation that is contained in the envelope with the plan is of interest as the architect and submitter of the plan for the tennis pavilion is the son-in-law of Walter Stevens. The Hall had a further alteration made to it in 1922 but this time the application was made in the name of F.D. Smith and it is therefore possible that Stevens had relinquished the position of Secretary by then. In the envelope for the 1922 alteration there is correspondence from a decade later relating to the Hall being now used by the Holy Cross Spiritual Church. By 1935 it had been taken over by the local branch of the British Legion who occupied the site until recently.

Of Stevens himself much can be said about his public work. He became a Councillor for the Seven Kings ward of the Ilford UDC in 1912 and resigned this in 1926 due to his own failing eyesight and his wife's ill-health. He served on many council committees and was, firstly, Vice-chairman and then, Chairman of the Council in 1918-19. At the end of the war he organised the Peace meeting held on 11th November 1918 and was the instigator and first Chairman of the Committee of the War Memorial Fund. (see pages 2-3)

It was said by the Chairman of the Hospital Governing Board that "His name will live here as long as the hospital stands." It is therefore fortunate that a section of the hospital which bears his name has not been lost to us and is part of the War Memorial Gardens. But as I have shown his charity work as Founder and long-time Secretary of the Santa Claus Fund was as important to him as his public duties; and he deserves to be recognised as one of the most significant people of Ilford of the early 20th century.



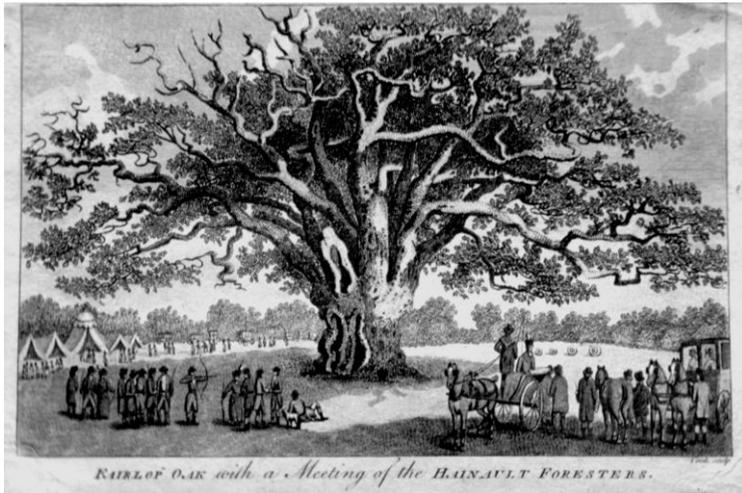
Ordnance Survey, sheet TQ 48 NW, 1977

Stevens moved to Walton-on-the-Naze around 1927 initially to a house called, appropriately enough, "Aldboro" but died in King George Hospital in 1938 after having been admitted three weeks earlier.

Photos reproduced by kind permission of the Redbridge Heritage Centre.

© **Dr Colin Runeckles, 17th August 2018**

The Hainault Foresters



When Sir John Child, Earl Tylney, died unmarried in 1784 Wanstead House and much else passed to his nephew Sir James Long of Draycot, near Chippenham in Wiltshire. He was then aged 48, happily settled, the local M. P. and a much-respected pillar of the community.

Although it cannot have been unexpected, the inheritance of great wealth brought many changes to his life and the new

name of Tylney-Long. His wife had died after just two years of marriage so now he married again and spent at least part of each year at Wanstead. At this time archery was enjoying a revival among the upper classes and he formed The Hainault Foresters in 1789. Although it attracted many members, the society was wound up soon after the death of Sir James in 1794, probably due to the call to arms after France declared war on England.

The society met fortnightly, starting on the third Saturday in May, until late September. Two target days were held with honours and prizes. Admission to the society cost two guineas (£2 10p) with three guineas (£3 15p) subscription for gentleman while the ladies paid just one guinea (£1 5p). The uniform for both ladies and gentleman was specified in great detail, even to specially designed buttons. The patron was Sir James Tylney-Long and the Lady Patroness was his wife, The Rt. Hon. Lady Catherine Tylney-Long.¹

The shoot reported in a newspaper in 1790 (abridged below) must have been one of the early meetings: “On Monday last the Hainault Foresters, consisting of the principal families of Epping Forest and its environs, held an extraordinary meeting to receive the Lord Warden and Verderers, at the venerable Fairlop tree.

The Corps of Gentleman Archers formed and marched out, with a band of wind instruments, to receive the Lord Warden and his suite and escort them to the Fairlop tree where they were received by the Lady President and the rest of the Sisterhood of the Bow. After some refreshments in the tents picturesquely pitched at the rear of the old tree, the excursions of the day commenced by shooting at six targets: the gentlemen archers shot at the right and left wings, the ladies in the centre exhibiting their superior skill.

At three, the company, about eighty in number, sat down to a cold collation in the centre tent, which was elegantly and commodiously served. After dinner a party of ladies and gentlemen entertained the society with several woodland songs and glees which were executed with great taste. The bugle-horns at six summoned them again to the targets, where the sports renewed till the close of the day, when the Lord Warden and his suite were escorted from the ground.”

© *Georgina Green, 4th November 2018*

Source material from LBBB Archives at Valence House and *Essex Journal* Autumn 1977, Vol.12 No.3, p.62-75

¹ They were the parents of the young heiress whose disastrous marriage to William Wellesley-Pole led to the destruction of Wanstead House.

Iford's Pumping Station

A good water supply was essential to Iford's development. According to the Victoria County History a "never failing public well" supplied good water to what was then the village of Iford in 1850.² Some properties had their own wells and pumps. A cast iron pump survives outside Valentines Mansion, on the north side of the dairy wing.

Water supply was transformed in Victorian times with the development of cast iron mains operated at high pressure. Any leaks pushed water out and contaminants could not easily enter the system. This development was pioneered in Nottingham and led to a public health revolution. Water-borne diseases like cholera and typhoid were no longer mass killers once a good high pressure water supply was installed.

In 1853 the East London Waterworks Company obtained an Act enabling it to supply Iford. So did the South Essex Water Company with an act of 1861.³ The East London Water Company extended their mains to the east side of West Ham and eventually to Iford where it served the southern part. (It became part of the Metropolitan Water Board and is now part of Thames Water.) The South Essex Company concentrated on the north and east of Iford but by 1863 their supply was regarded as unsatisfactory.

With the town growing rapidly Iford Urban District Council joined with other local authorities to try to replace the South Essex Company with a local water board. It failed and in 1901 the Company promoted an Act⁴ obtaining powers to sink two new wells.

It seems likely Iford's pumping station was built soon after that though further research is needed to establish a precise date. It was in Mill Road, just south of the Great Eastern Railway and next to the River Roding. The site is now flats.



ABOVE Interior of Iford's pumping station showing drive to pump rods on the left. Massive gear wheels reduced the speed.
© Chris Allen and reproduced under creative commons

RIGHT Hathorn Davey engine built for Leeds Corporation showing the layout of a typical triple expansion engine.

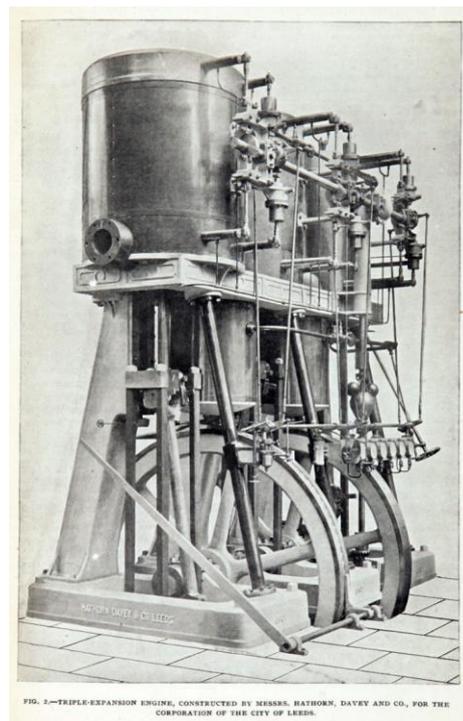


FIG. 2.—TRIPLE-EXPANSION ENGINE, CONSTRUCTED BY MESSRS. HATHORN, DAVEY AND CO., FOR THE CORPORATION OF THE CITY OF LEEDS.

² Barking and Iford An extract from the Victoria County History of the County of Essex. Vol.V. Published jointly by Barking and Dagenham Libraries, Redbridge Libraries 1987

³ South Essex Waterworks Act 185316 & 17 Vict c. 166

⁴ South Essex Waterworks Act 1901 1 Edw VII c 207

Perhaps further research will reveal the aquifers tapped by this pumping station. It wouldn't have been river water as this was tidal and therefore salty. Possibly it reached down to the chalk which is not as deep under London as might be supposed

The water company installed a pumping engine built by the Leeds firm of Hathorn Davey & Co. That firm was established around 1875 and continued operations until liquidation in 1934. Hathorn Davey appear to have specialised in pumping engines for sewage and water. Two of their sewage pumps are preserved at the Cambridge Museum of Science and Technology.

Iford's pumping station was fitted with a triple expansion compound steam engine. This was something of a state of the art machine, similar to many installed on ocean liners of the period. In a compound engine steam enters a high-pressure cylinder to push the piston turning a crankshaft. Steam then expands to enter a middle cylinder also doing work driving the crankshaft. It then expands a third time also doing work so that the full expansive power of steam is utilised giving greater economy.

Such engines rotated the crankshaft fast so engines had to be geared down to drive lift pumps. Precise details are not known. However, it was almost certainly drove vertical pump rods via rocking levers. A surviving photograph of the engine in place show a surprising amount of empty space. Was this intended for another pumping engine at a later date? Was there storage underneath or is this where boilers were located?

The chimney was demolished around 1975 and the engine house knocked down in March 1984. It isn't known if there were attempts to preserve it, but the author cannot recall any. However, a similar engine from 1910 is preserved at the London Museum of Water and Power (Kew Bridge engines).



Iford's pumping station undergoing demolition in March 1984. The triple expansion engine is clearly seen in the photo on the left, with the cylinders at the top driving a crankshaft under the A frame. The smaller high pressure cylinder is nearest the camera.

The photo on the right shows one of the giant gear wheels. The herringbone pattern reduced judder, absorbed side thrusts and is also said to have been quieter in operation.

© Roger Backhouse 1984

There is also an engine house surviving just south of the A12 at Wanstead. This is taller suggesting it was built to house beam engines. Again, beam engine examples can be seen at the London Museum of Water and Power. This deserves further investigation.

Maps show another pumping station just north of the A12 on Roding Lane presumably for water though that seems close to the Wanstead pumps. Another in Roden Lane just south of Ilford Hill pumped sewage up to a higher level sewer for transport, first to Ilford's sewage works and after 1930 to the Northern Outfall sewage works at Beckton.

Ilford's water works was clearly a success. By 1913 South Essex Water Co and the Metropolitan Water Board supplied mains water to all but 53 houses out of 15,832 in the UDC area. That and modern housing contributed to Ilford's reputation as a healthy place to live. It is an important subject but really needs more study than this article can provide.

The film which can be seen at the website below is mostly about Lancashire steam engines but it includes a clip of a triple expansion steam engine similar to that used at Ilford water pumping station.

<https://player.bfi.org.uk/free/film/watch-power-behind-the-spindle-1969-online>

© Roger Backhouse, 12th October 2018

An Ilford Poet ~ Kathleen Raine 1908-2003



I have to admit that I had never heard of Kathleen Raine until Jef Page asked me to read one of her poems at our October meeting. I then found out what a fascinating life she had led! She was a poet, critic and scholar, writing in particular about William Blake, W. B. Yeats and Thomas Taylor. She was also interested in various forms of spirituality and was a founder of the Temenos Academy which fosters greater awareness of spiritualist traditions. In spite of her achievements, she considered that her life was unfulfilled particularly with regard to relationships.

Kathleen Jessie Raine CBE was born in Ilford on 4 June 1908. Her first home was

at 6 Gordon Road (which runs between Green Lane and Loxford Lane). The 1911 census shows her living with her school teacher father, George and her mother, Jessie. Her mother's family came from Scotland and her father was born in County Durham. She always considered that poetry was deeply ingrained in the daily lives of her maternal ancestors: "On my mother's side I inherited Scotland's songs and ballads...sung or recited by my mother, aunts and grandmothers, who had learnt it from their mothers and grandmothers... Poetry was the very essence of life." From her father's family, she inherited a love of Northumberland. She commented, "I loved everything about it." This love was increased when she spent some years of the First World War with an aunt in Northumberland.

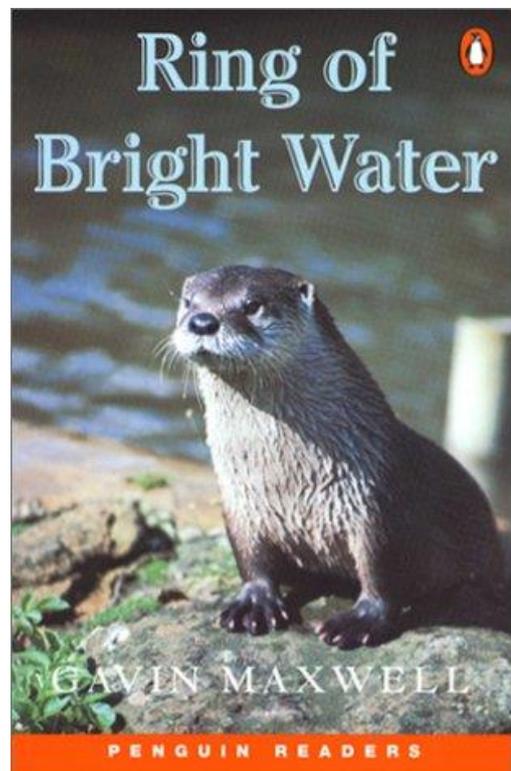
The family later moved to the Cranbrook Road area and Kathleen was educated at the Ilford County High School.

Her parents encouraged her love of poetry and literature. Her father had studied the poetry of Wordsworth for his master's thesis. He also had a passion for Shakespeare and Kathleen saw many Shakespearean plays as a child. She wrote that for her poetry was "not something invented but given...Brought up as I was in a household where poets were so regarded it naturally became my ambition to be a poet". She confided her ambition to her father who was sceptical of the plan. "To my father" she wrote "poets belonged to a higher world, to another plane; to say one wished to become a poet was to him something like saying one wished to write the fifth gospel".^[3] Her mother encouraged her love of poetry from babyhood. Sadly, her relationship with her parents became difficult as she grew older and they tried to protect their only child and she hankered to be free of restrictions.

After school, Kathleen read natural sciences, including botany and zoology, on an Exhibition scholarship at Girton College, Cambridge, receiving her master's degree in 1929.

She was a great beauty as well as intelligent and had many admirers in Cambridge. In 1930, Kathleen married Hugh Sykes Davies. The marriage was a short one and she eloped with Charles Madge and they had two children together. That marriage also broke down and in 1939, she and her children went to stay with friends in the Lake District. She loved the solitude of the Lake District but found it difficult to support her family. She moved back to London where she met Sonia Brownell, who later married George Orwell. Sonia introduced

her to a literary circle including Dylan Thomas, Cyril Connolly, Rex Whistler and James Tambimuttu. It was Tambimuttu who published her first book of poems, *Stone and Flower* and through whom she met Gavin Maxwell, the author and naturalist. Gavin Maxwell was the love of Kathleen's life and the title of his most famous book *Ring of Bright Water*, was taken from a line in Kathleen's poem *The Marriage of Psyche*. Her relationship with Maxwell was difficult and inevitably doomed because he was homosexual. The relationship ended in 1956 when Kathleen lost his pet otter, Mijbil, indirectly causing the animal's death. Kathleen held herself responsible, not only for losing Mijbil but for a curse she had uttered shortly beforehand, frustrated by Maxwell's homosexuality: "Let Gavin suffer in this place as I am suffering now." Kathleen blamed herself for all Maxwell's subsequent misfortunes, beginning with Mijbil's death and ending with the cancer from which he died in 1969. After her relationship with Maxwell ended, she renounced personal relationships.



As well as her work as a poet. Kathleen spent much of her time on the study of William Blake and, in later life, often referred to Blake as her 'master'. She wrote *Blake and Tradition* in 1968 and it has stood the test of time so well that it was republished in 2002. She was a research fellow at Girton and taught at Harvard.

Her other consuming interest was spirituality. In 1980, she, together with like-minded authors and artists, launched the *Temenos*, a journal, which propounded that man is firstly a spiritual

creature with spiritual needs that have to be nourished in order to fulfil our potential and be happy. In 1990, the Temenos Academy was launched as a teaching organisation to spread the ideas propounded in the journal. Prince Charles has been a great supporter of the institute and originally it was housed in his Institute of Architecture in Regent's Park. Kathleen, in turn, had great empathy for the prince. She wrote about 'that poor young man – anything I can do for him, I will do, because he is very lonely'.

In her seventies, she made her first visit to India which she considered to be the one true living civilisation. Although she was brought up a Christian and, in fact, became a Roman Catholic in the 1940s, she was always more at home with the eastern traditions. Her enthusiasm for all things spiritual did not make her relationships with her more conventional peers easy. She was upset that she was passed over for the Oxford poetry chair in 1968 and in 1991, she declined the Royal Society of Literature's companionship of literature when she realised it had already been given to Anthony Burgess and Iris Murdoch, both of whom she regarded as journalists rather than writers. In 1992, however, she received the Queen's gold medal for poetry, without incident! In 2000, she was made both a CBE and a Commandeur de L'Ordre des Arts et des Lettres.

I wish I could conclude this piece with examples of Kathleen's love of Ilford but that is not to be because she hated the place! In her autobiographical trilogy – *Farewell Happy Fields* (1973), *The Land Unknown* (1975) and *The Lion's Mouth* (1977), Kathleen describes the suburbs as she remembered them as a places that stifle ideas and creativity. She calls Ilford a 'prison-house'. On returning from the splendours of Girton, one holiday, she finds her parents' house even 'smaller...than I had remembered'. She said that 'between the garden gate and the front door I had to shrink back into those mean dimensions' She calls Ilford, an 'environment devoid of all culture' and further that 'the mean streets of the Ilfords of the world impose meanness of thought, make ...all but impossible certain kinds of feeling, certain modes of consciousness'. Her assessment of the infamous 1922 Thompson and Bywaters murder (Frederick Bywaters stabbed to death the husband of Mrs Thompson, his lover) really emphasises her contempt for conventional Ilford. She considered that 'Mrs Thompson and her adolescent sailor lover' were not typical of the town because 'the flame of life burned too brightly for Ilford'. I wonder what her response would have been if we had asked her to be a Vice-President of the society!

Kathleen Raine died on 6 July 2003 at 95 in London. She published twelve books of poetry including her first book of poetry, *Stone and Flower* (1943) illustrated by Barbara Hepworth, *Living in Time* (1946) and *Pythoness* (1949). In 2000, she published her *Collected Works* which drew on her eleven previous works.

She also wrote scholarly work most particularly *Blake and Tradition* (1969) – this book was based on a series of lectures that she delivered at the National Gallery of Art in Washington DC in 1968

She published her autobiography originally in three separate volumes. She translated Balzac's *Cousin Bette* (1948) and *Illusions Perdues* (1951)

Quotations in this piece are from her autobiography or other published works.

© Janet Seward, 17th October 2018

‘Sunday don’t reach to Barkingside’

The influence of Fairlop Fair in the 1850s

The impetus for this article comes from my re-discovering a long-forgotten report by the London City Mission ⁵ on the ‘spiritual condition’ of Barkingside in the 1850s. Supplemented by extracts from contemporary newspapers, I have used this to attempt to portray a picture of one aspect of life in the district in the middle of the nineteenth century.

For the 1,500 or so inhabitants of Barkingside, the 1850s were a time of significant change. At the start of the decade the village was still bordered by 4,000 wooded acres of Hainault Forest. For more than a century the forest had been home to the annual Fairlop Fair, held on the first Friday, Saturday and Sunday in July and attended by tens of thousands, keen to eat, drink and be merry, and to see the arrival of the Fairlop ‘boats’. With its dozens of drinking and gaming booths, the fair was also a draw for pickpockets, confidence tricksters and opportunist thieves.

The middle years of the decade saw much of Hainault Forest removed and turned over to agriculture. New farms and houses were built at Barkingside and labourers lodged there while felling the trees in the forest. At the same time, the authorities sought to bring an end to Fairlop Fair.

The Chelmsford Chronicle, 1 July 1853

SUPPRESSION OF FAIRLOP FAIR. – This time-honoured assemblage of cockneys and country holiday makers is to be altogether suppressed by the meddling hand of modern legislation and improvement. The barn is to supersede the booth, and the plough is to go forth to produce plenty on the spot where thousands have been accustomed to scatter their money in thoughtless dissipation. Notice has been officially given that in consequence of the inclosure and allotments of the forest under the act of parliament no fair will be allowed to be held there after this day, so that the stroke of twelve tonight will be the passing knell of Fairlop.



Despite the authorities’ attempts at suppression, Fairlop Fair continued to be held.

The Essex Standard, 14 July 1854

FAIRLOP FAIR. – Pursuant to the annual custom this fair was held on Hainault Forest on Friday, but the number of shows, stalls and fair-going folk did not equal some previous years. Two boats only passed through Stratford, and the assembly to witness their return was also much diminished ... Several pockets were picked

⁵ The London City Mission was established in 1835 as a joint venture by members of different Protestant denominations. Its early work centred on the poor and destitute, developing a range of charitable help including Ragged Schools and ministering to working people. Its method was to recruit full-time workers, assigning to each a district that he was to visit frequently; its goal was to draw people into local churches.

notwithstanding the vigilance of the police, but the losses on the aggregate did not exceed those of former years, which of course is of little consolation to the victims of the light-fingered gentry.

By 1855, the original forest site of the fair had been cleared and made arable and Forest Road had been laid out. In order to continue, Fairlop Fair moved a half-mile to the west, closer to Barkingside, onto private land at 'The Maypole' inn ⁶.



This postcard shows the southern end of Fencepiece Road where it approaches Fullwell Hatch. Little changed from how it would have appeared in the 1850s. 'The Maypole' inn stood opposite. (Source: Author's collection)

The Essex Standard, 11 July 1855

FAIRLOP FAIR. – *This ancient fair was held according to custom, on the 7th instant, in an enclosed piece of pasture, near the Maypole. There was a large number of stall keepers, showmen, and all the motley group who get a living at such places. Many thousands from the metropolis visited the fair and the forest, and the number present very nearly equalled the palmy days of Fairlop.*

In the autumn and winter of 1855-56, the London City Mission's missionary for the Hainault Forest district reported:

In the course of visitation my attention was soon directed to the state of Barkingside, the neighbourhood in which Fairlop Fair is held. The population has very much increased the last two or three years. The enclosing of the Forest and the erecting of many new buildings have caused a large influx of labourers and mechanics into the place. The spiritual condition of the people may be inferred from the manner in which the Sabbath is kept. Going into the church ⁷ one Sunday morning, 17 adults and about

⁶ In the 1850s, 'The Maypole' inn stood where Fullwell Cross Health Centre now stands, at the junction of Tomswood Hill and Fencepiece Road. The inn moved to its present location further up Fencepiece Road in 1934.

⁷ The movement for a new parish church at Barkingside began in 1838, when a petition was sent to the Church Building Commissioners by inhabitants of Ilford, who promised to raise £1,000 for the purpose. The petition stated that the people of Barkingside were 'very destitute and degraded' owing to the temptations to which they were exposed by the proximity of the forest, the nature of their occupations, and their visits to the London

as many children formed the congregation in the body of the church. At a little chapel⁸, the only other place of worship, used as a preaching-station, fewer persons still were found by me at the time of public worship. On the same Sunday, more persons were found outside a public-house, waiting for the doors to be opened, to whom tracts were given by me, than those congregated in the church and chapel put together ... So proverbial is this state of things at this place, that I have been told it is a common proverb at Ilford, 'Sunday don't reach to Barkingside' ...

It was in contemplation to close the chapel used as a preaching-station at Christmas. On application, however, it was readily placed at my service. A Sunday-school is now in active operation there, with an average attendance of nearly 40 children, many of them great boys working in the fields, who cannot read, and who have no other means of instruction⁹; while not less than 120 persons attend the Sunday evening meeting, some of whom have not been in a place of worship for 20 years.

The Essex Standard, 11 July 1856

FAIRLOP FAIR. – This annual fair was held on Friday last in Hainault Forest, when a numerous gathering of "Londoners" enjoyed themselves during a temporary rustication. It is somewhat remarkable that but one charge was presented before the magistrates at Ilford on Saturday arising out of such a numerous gathering of all classes of society.

Events at Fairlop Fair in the summer of 1856 were also covered in the missionary's report:

Fairlop-fair, renowned for its wickedness, has been held in this place for many years annually on the Lord's-day. This, no doubt, has had a great tendency to confirm the people in their Sabbath-breaking habits, and may be looked upon as the plague-spot of, and the seed-time of the devil in, Barkingside ...

Several women mounting horses to ride were offered tracts by me at the Fair time. The first refused, using very bad language, but a kind word induced her to accept it. I then offered a tract to another. She said, 'What is it about? O, it is about God; I shan't have that' ...

Offering a tract to a man engaged in looking after horses, he remarked that he thought things were getting worse, alluding to the shortness of the company at the fair ...

The Sunday was a perfect contrast to Friday. The number present was immense. An attempt was made by me in different places to get up an Open-air Meeting, but to little purpose, so fully bent was every one upon his worldly pleasure, and the effects were visible at the meetings in the village for a considerable time afterwards, the attendance being much smaller, while the public-houses were filled considerably more than before. Some who I thought could not be so affected were carried away by the current.

markets. The Commissioners agreed to give £350 towards a church, and a site in Mossford Green was given by John Wight, owner of Gaysham Hall; Holy Trinity church was subsequently built there in 1840 to the designs of Edward Blore.

⁸ This was a chapel opened by the London Itinerant Society in 1818. In 1829, its congregation was said to number 80–100.

⁹ Barkingside National School had opened in 1842, to the east of Holy Trinity church. Attendance, especially by older children, was at first small and the standard of attainment low, but by the end of the nineteenth century the school had been enlarged to provide 400 places and had achieved a good reputation. It closed in 1935.

At the same time, the missionary's Sunday School at Barkingside was bearing fruit:

The Sunday-school mentioned in my last report, as established at Barkingside, I look upon as a most encouraging matter, – to obtain an average attendance of 60 children from so neglected a class, and thus to have brought them under regular weekly instruction in the things of God. The children of the Infidel, of the drunkard, and of the very worst characters are there to be seen in regular attendance. The parents of some of these have made attempts to deter them from coming, but to no purpose ...

Despite progress at the Sunday School, such was the poor moral state of Barkingside that a second missionary was appointed. In 1857, he reported:

... a more benighted and utterly neglected spot can even yet scarcely be found in England. In the church on the Sunday the adults present are often not more than 1 person in 100 of the whole population. The clergyman does not visit, nor even live in the parish. And very many families were without the Scriptures when the parish first came under missionary visitation.

A great number of the children cannot read. The school attached to the church is not what the place now requires, as it is fast increasing, and the school would not have been what it is but for the praiseworthy efforts of a few of the gentry in the neighbourhood ...

The poor people are nearly all farm labourers; and, as the farmers grow a great many vegetables for the London markets, very many of the women are employed also in the fields for the greater part of the year. They are dreadfully low in the scale of morality. Their drinking habits may be judged of from the fact that there are in the place 4 public-houses and 7 beershops, all selling on the premises, that is, 11 places for the sale of intoxicating drinks, while there is not one butcher's shop, and only 3 shops at all in the place.



This photograph shows Oak Row cottages in the High Street at Barkingside. They would have been a familiar sight to villagers in the 1850s. (Source: Author's collection)

Not only was drunkenness prevalent, but violence too:

Among every other vice wife-beating is very common. Women frequently answer the door with black-eyes. Only last Monday a man was sent to jail for six months for beating his own wife, and his brother's also at the same time. And on Saturday night last my neighbours, next door but one, got drunk and quarrelled so fearfully that the man knocked his wife down into a ditch opposite his door, went in after her, and beat her while there. The man next door to them ran to the woman's assistance, then the two men fought like wildcats, scratching and biting, and I heard one of them with fearful oaths declare the other had nearly bitten his finger off, while the woman is so lame all this week she can scarcely walk ...

As the 1850s drew to a close, the London City Mission appeared pleased with its work at Fairlop Fair. In January 1858, its magazine reported:

There is still an immense concourse of people on that day [Sunday], but they are of a lower order than was previously the case, being now almost exclusively suppressed. But the visits of the missionaries since, year by year, to the Fair, as recorded in the pages of this number, will show how much need there is still for missionary effort on these occasions, and how great is the need of still further check. ...

While the Christian cannot but grieve at the report of our missionaries, as quoted in these pages, as to Fairlop Fair now, there is great encouragement in the consideration that it is so materially improved, notwithstanding the rapid increase of population since. The low theatrical shows, the swings, the gambling booths, &c., which were all once open on the Sunday, are now all closed, and we cannot but rejoice that the Mission took its part in bringing about this great and happy change. And the condition of the Fair would be still more marked than it is, but that it escapes the arm of the magistracy by being now held in enclosed and private ground, belonging to the landlord of the Maypole public-house ...

Despite the Mission's hopes for the future, newspaper reports of Fairlop Fair at the end of the decade show that there was still much work to be done.

The Essex Standard, 7 July 1858

FAIRLOP FAIR. – Pursuant to annual custom this fair was held on Friday, in Hainault Forest; and the large number of persons present showed that it still retained many of its former attractions of shows and swings. The gipsy tribe appeared to reap a rich harvest among credulous maidens and others desirous of having their future destiny predicted. As usual, the "boats" (mounted on wheels, so as to travel "over land") were objects of great attraction both in going and returning; and in the evening, as the boats returned through Stratford, Bow, Mile End, &c., thousands of persons had assembled to witness their arrival.

The 1850s turned out to be Fairlop Fair's swan-song. The disafforesting of Hainault ultimately destroyed the fair by eradicating the forest scenery and then allotting the land to new owners. In the following decades, Fairlop Fair moved to several new sites, lingering on until it petered out at the end of the nineteenth century. By this time, Sunday did well and truly 'reach to Barkingside'.

© Alan Simpson, 21st November 2016

The Tavern Signs of Ilford

In Ilford there's a **'horse'** that's **White**,
And one that's **'Black'** of course.
The **'Angel'** smiles and so beguiles,
The **'Sope'** has its resource.

The **'Havelock'** bears a noble name
Renowned for martial power,
Much joy this brings to **'Seven Kings'**,
I mean the **'Cauliflower'**.

The old **'Red Lion'** on The Hill
Surveys the **'Rose and Crown'**
The **'Coach and Horses'** beckons still
A little further down.

And if you would escape scot free
From motor bus alarms
There is a path that leads unto
The **'Papermakers Arms'**.

The **'Prince of Wales'** sells good ales,
And so does the **'Red Cow'**,
The famous **'Bell'** sounds very well
But what about the **'Plough'**?

The new **'Green Gate'** is up-to-date
And close by may be found
The noted **'Horns'** that house of thorns-
'Twas Tommy Tiddler's ground

the Bible (Numbers 12:2). The *Papermakers Arms* was linked to the paper mill in Mill Lane just off Ilford Hill and served gas workers after they finished their long night shifts, opening up around 7am.

Some of these pubs had obvious royal connections, i.e. the *Prince of Wales*. A name not so well understood was the *Red Lion* (the most popular pub name - over 550) for maybe James I (the Scottish red lion) or more likely for Charles II. Originally the *Red Lion* was called the *Blue Boar* - Richard III's badge. The *White Horse* (300) refers to the 'White Horse of Hanover' - a military cap badge first granted by King George I in 1715 to the 101st Grenadiers. So was Ilford a royalist stronghold or just trying to show that it was loyal?

This little ditty is taken from the "*Essex Review*" on a loose bit of paper but it's undated and unsigned. Clearly written by a local, the poet names 17 local inns but what is just as interesting is the pubs he doesn't name.

The *Green Gate* was at the junction of the Eastern Avenue (opened 1925) and Horns Road, Newbury Park, built to serve locals and travellers along the road to Southend. Its plans were approved in 1921 and before 1925 that part of the road was Hatch Lane. Plans for the pub's drainage were made in 1924 and alterations carried out in 1928. I was once told to leave as the landlord claimed I was under age - bloody cheek! The fact that I was, is not the point... It's now a McDonalds and I drink elsewhere.

Considering the wide area the writer covers there are some obvious omissions. The *Valentine* at Gants Hill is missing, built 1938 (I thought built a few years earlier). But the most notable absentee is the *Beehive* on Beehive Lane - very strange - one of the oldest pubs around, but not that far away from Ilford to be included as are the *Chequers* and *Fairlop Oak* in Barkingside.

The *Havelock* was named after General Sir Henry Havelock (1795- 1857) hero of Cawnpore and the Indian Mutiny - the pub's name clearly traded on his fame, whilst the *Red Cow*'s name is taken from

The anonymous author mentioned the *Prince of Wales*. The one he refers to is the pub in Ilford on Green Lane (built late 1880s which seems very early, it appears on the 1891 Census) to serve locals living on the new Clements estate. Quite a concession from Cameron Corbett who rarely allowed pubs on his estates.

I had mistakenly thought the writer meant the *Prince of Wales* on Manor Road, Chigwell - until it took a direct hit on a packed Friday night from a parachute mine during World War II in April 1941 destroying it and tragically killing many. We still don't know who or the exact number. Two pubs in the Ilford area with the same name. Is there a connection?

The title 'Tavern Signs' is a bit demeaning and 'tongue in cheek' as these were all licensed inns and pubs and the *Seven Kings* was even named as a Hotel as were at least three others. Taverns were usually considered as low class beer houses whilst inns provided food, were licensed, usually had rooms for overnight travellers and stage coaches stopped at them to change horses - like modern service stations.

The *Angel* - previously the *Angel and Child* was on the High Road, the *White Horse*, barely 100 yards away, was on the corner of the High Rd and The Broadway where Barclays bank in Ilford is today, whilst directly opposite it on the other corner of the High Rd was the smaller *Black Horse* (now Corals betting shop). Did all three pubs, rivals and competitor publicans, get on well? In an 1899 newspaper adverts appeared naming six of the pubs and what they offered to entice customers: the



Red Lion c.1905

White Horse was the HQ and caterers of Ilford FC, whilst the *Red Lion* hosted the Honourable Artillery Company HQ 'so why not have a drink with them' and all the local pubs offered the finest quality stabling, wines, beers and cigars*.

I don't know why the '*Horns*' on Horns Road should be described as a "house of thorns", though "Tommy Tidler's Ground" was a children's game like 'tag', and is the title of an 1861 short story by Charles Dickens and the phrase appears in "Nicholas Nickleby" and "David Copperfield", and there's even a 1931 poem and book with the title "Tom Tiddler's Ground".

Peter Foley wrote a poem about a previous landlady at the '*Horns*' 1848: Harriet Uffindell. Many women were publicans as it was almost considered a respectable business for a woman to run (or a 'front' for something else less respectable) - though Mrs Hone at the *Red Lion* in Ilford was quick to undermine her rivals. It was Peter of course who said that all villages have two pubs: one you drink in and one you don't: loyalty to your local - very true.

Pubs were an important part of the local community but now only perhaps seven of the pubs named, survive in some form. The author does extoll drinking but he talks about joy and, smiles and "motor bus alarms".

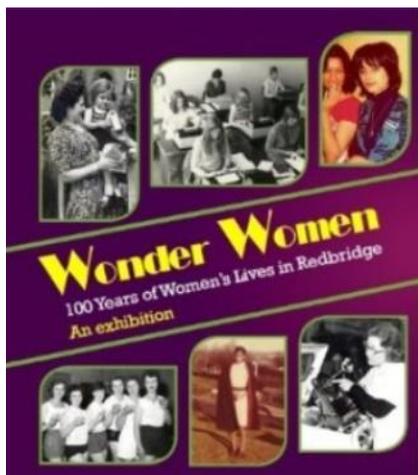
The poem appears to have been written in the late 1920s/early 1930s and mainly deals with central Ilford but unless we can find the entry in the *Essex Review* we cannot date it.

*The adverts are in "*Bygone Ilford*" by Brian Evans, no: 150a & b.

Thanks to Colin Runeckles for his help highlighting Ilford's *Prince of Wales*.

© *Jef Page, 16th October 2018.*

Wonder Women: 100 years of Women's lives in Redbridge



13th November 2018 – 27th April 2019

Tuesday to Friday: 10am - 5pm, Saturday: 10am - 4pm

Redbridge Museum has just opened a new exhibition to celebrate 100 years since the first women in the UK won the right to vote. From the days of 'mistress and servant' to the varied lives of today's diverse communities, this exhibition tells the story of local women in their own words. From the Suffragette campaign and through the impact of two world wars, the display uncovers the changing pattern of work, education, family life and sisterhood. Featuring new films about women's lives today alongside a wealth of historic objects, photographs and oral

histories, this is a unique chance to meet Redbridge's very own 'Wonder Women'.

This exhibition is in partnership with Woodford County High School.

Visit [Redbridge Museum Website](#) for more details.

IHS PROGRAMME 2019

Our regular monthly meetings are held on the second Monday of each month, September – May from 7.30 – 9.15 pm. Visitors welcome, £3 per meeting, with free refreshments
Membership of the society costs £15 per year which includes 3 newsletters

The Society meetings listed below will be held in the Gloucester Room, Ilford Central Library, Clements Road, Ilford IG1 1EA.

We will serve refreshments from 7pm and start our talks as usual at 7.30pm.

14 January 2019 *Woodford's Community Through the Ages*

by Georgina Green, author and Ilford HS Vice President.

11 February 2019 *Barkingside in the early 20th century* : some postcards and aerial photographs by Alan Simpson, author and Barkingside historian.

11 March 2019 *Greer Garson, film star: from Manor Park to Hollywood*: the true story of "Mrs Miniver" by Janet Seward, Ilford HS Secretary.

8 April 2019 AGM at 7.15pm, followed by *A Town Built in a Year?* The development of Seven Kings
by Dr Colin Runeckles, member Ilford HS.

13 May 2019 *Life behind Closed Doors. A Prison Officer's Life.*

by Pauline Martindale.

The next newsletter will be available at our April meeting, or from the editor (details on page 1) after 9th April.

You can follow us on Facebook too.

