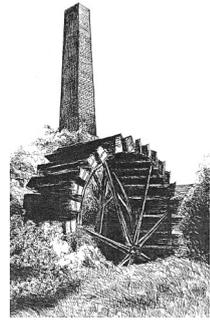


WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM



BULLETIN



Watermeads, Mitcham by E.G. Handel Lucas

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WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM Founded in 1983

PRESIDENT
Harry Galley

TRUSTEES
Nicholas Hart
John Hawks
Fr David Pennells

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE
Alison Cousins
Eric Shaw
Roger Steele
Michael Taylor

GUEST EDITOR
Michael Taylor

Editorial

Another year and another new exhibition. This year we take a look at art and literature in *'The Wandle Portrayed'*. Our thanks must go to our volunteers Alison Cousins and Siobhan Kneale for pulling it all together ready for the new Mayor of Merton Cllr Mary Curtin to open it on the morning of Mitcham Carnival.

Over the years it has become traditional for us to always open our new exhibition on Mitcham Carnival Day. It has got to the point within the Mayor's office that we are already in the diary before we have sent an invitation.

As always we have been busy with our outreach work as you will see within the Operations Team Report.

I hope you enjoy this latest issue of our Bulletin and watch out for our next issue celebrating 30 years of the Wandle Trail.

Best wishes,
Mick Taylor

Cover Picture:

This painting by Edward George Handel Lucas is part of our new exhibition for 2018. Find out more about Lucas and the exhibition in this issue.

Our New Exhibition

The Wandle Portrayed *Through Art and Literature*

“The Wandle Portrayed” is a selection of artistic and literary works depicting the river and what it has meant to those who enjoyed it or worked by it, over the years.

Contributions are from both local people and some well-known names. Some poetic works possibly challenge the definition of “literature” but are still in their way a very personal reflection.

John Ruskin, Alexander Pope, and Sir John Betjeman are a few well-known names who have (briefly) made reference to the river, while local contributions include an extensive and illustrated poem by William Wood Fenning on Ravensbury, and a more modern contribution from Valerie Coleman.

Some items reflect the river in tranquil settings, others see it as an industrial thoroughfare. We have some vibrant paintings by Paul Moore, a recent acquisition by Edward George Handel Lucas, sketches in very differing styles by Peter Harris and John Wallace, and many other paintings distributed around the museum. Outside is also an interpretation by members of the Turf Project.

Alison Cousins



The Mayor of Merton Cllr Mary Curtin, who opened the exhibition, is pictured with Trustee Father David Pennells along with display curators Siobhan Kneale and Alison Cousins .

Photo: Auriel Glanville

Edward George Handel Lucas

One of the main features of our new exhibition '*The Wandle Portrayed*' is a painting that we recently had donated that is by Edward George Handel Lucas.

Born in Croydon on 4th May 1861 he came from a poor family. His father, a tailor, gave him the name Handel after his favourite composer. Edward attended Whitgift Middle School, now Trinity School of John Whitgift, where his talent for drawing and painting was spotted at an early age.



A Self Portrait 1887.

He left school at age 14, where being recognised as a child prodigy, he soon exhibited at the Royal Society of British Artists. Mainly self taught, he did some studying at Heatherley School of Fine Art in London and St John's Wood Art School. At age 17 he had his first picture, called *Roses from the Vicarage* accepted for exhibition at the Royal Academy of Arts. Lucas had at least one painting accepted for display at the Royal Academy of Arts every year between 1879 and 1891.

He married Clara Mary Stunell (known as Mary) in 1895 and they lived in Croydon and had two daughters, Elsie Cecil Lucas born in 1899, and Marie Newton Lucas born in 1900.

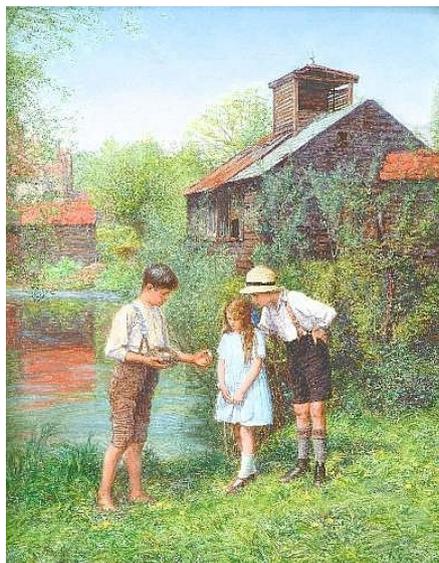
His still lifes of flowers had a high level of detail and realism. The Croydon Advertiser said of one of his paintings, *Dust Crowns All*, "to see the delicacy of the work one has to use a magnifying glass, and the more closely it is examined, the more beauty will be found". It also said "none of his exhibited pictures has taken less than six months of real honest work". The painting *Dust Crowns All* took him 15 months to complete.

He tried to move away from still life to figurative, only to find that his still life paintings were those that sold. Even with figurative work his paintings would take several months to complete. Unable to sell his paintings and his capital gone he at one point turned to borrowing money from friends promising to pay them back when a painting sold. Not that it was all bad news. The Pears Soap Company bought some of his paintings for the *Pears Annual* of 1906.

After suffering from pneumonia in 1908 followed later by a nervous

breakdown brought on by his worry over unpaid rates he was advised to move by his doctor. Moving to Brighton from Croydon where rents were double he hoped to get work teaching. He also took on tenants to help pay the rent.

In Brighton he became interested in photography and ended up forming a company called Handeldtype Syndicate Ltd with Otto Pfenninger and Edwin Butler who had invented one-exposure cameras. The company crashed in 1914 and he lost his money along with the money of his friends and relations he had persuaded to invest with him. Unable to pay the rent the family were evicted from their home and Lucas found himself designing Christmas cards at a friend's factory and living in a flat in Streatham. With no studio he still had an interest in photographic printing techniques inventing a process called Handelchrome. Despite all his inventions he was not successful and he continued struggling with money for the rest of his life. There was one success when Brooke Bond brought a small group of his paintings including one called *The Stolen Nest* which was also published as a calendar in 1929. If you look at the painting you do wonder if it was painted alongside the River Wandle.



The Stolen Nest. A painting by Lucas used for a calendar by Brooke Bond in 1929.

Could the water and buildings be part of the Wandle Valley?

Lucas died in 1936 from a heart attack having received news that his Mary had been knocked down and hurt by a car. He was 74.

In 1972 his still life painting, *Dust Covers All*, came up for sale, and sold for £2000, in an auction at Sotheby's. This was considered a high price for an unknown artist. The result was a greater interest in his work and as a result more of his paintings coming to market. We are certainly honoured to have one within the museum collection.

Mick Taylor

Operations Team Report

We have had two significant donations recently. The first was from Amanda Charlick, whose grandfather was Edwin Hedger, the MD of Mitcham Hair and Fibre Mills Ltd. at Grove Mill, and whose great-grandfather was Benjamin Slater, one of the last lavender growers. She generously gave us four watercolours, one of which is of The Watermeads, by Edward George Handel Lucas (*see cover and page 4*), which currently features in our latest exhibition. We were also given a box of newspaper cuttings and photographs, some relating to the Mitcham Carnival of 1949, when Amanda's mother was the May Queen for that year, despite being only 14. There is also a little booklet of the history of Grove Mills, and a copy of the Official Programme for the Granting of the Charter of Incorporation, in 1934. The details include the names of all the fireworks which were let off and a listing of all the tableaux and decorated lorries from local firms.

The second donation was from Christopher Monier-Williams, who delivered a wonderful collection of local history and reference books, which have added value to our little library. He also passed to us some historical maps and charts which had been used at an exhibition in Wandsworth, including a fascinating map showing Stane Street.

During the last three months the team has undertaken a further 14 talks (some as part of printing workshop visits) to various church groups, local libraries, disability meetings, guilds and various retired professionals, such as the U3A. Our Trustee John Hawks is a member of our "team" for the purposes of the talks programme.



We welcomed a group from Fetcham U3A. After a short talk and tour of the museum they were taken for a walk along the Wandle through Ravensbury Park into Morden Hall Park. Here they had the opportunity to see the Archimedes Screw in operation.

The most unusual was to the Friends of Wandle Park (Croydon) where we gave our presentation in the café, but were asked to perform the printing process outside. This was still April, so a few challenges !!



Following a talk in the pavilion the group went outside to complete their personal block print. With The Friends expecting around ten people to turn up 25 people come along.

We visited Poplar Primary School in Morden and even persuaded the Headteacher Katherine to do a print, and also held print workshops for the Circle Library local history group, and as part of the Wandsworth Heritage celebrations.



The pupils from Poplar School added a frame to their individual prints. Inspired by the Morris prints we had shown them they decorated them in nature themes.

Yet again we supported The Discovery Day at Morden Library in May with a stall publicising our new educational worksheets, and downstairs, craft activities for children.

We Have A New Chair!



The museum is very pleased to announce that Father David Pennells (*pictured here*) has been offered, and accepted, the role of Chair of Trustees. Father David joined us as a Trustee during the summer of 2017.

Father David has been the vicar of Mitcham Parish Church, St Peter & St Paul since 2015.

Our thanks must go to John Hawks and Nicholas Hart for holding the fort after the passing of our former Chair Dr Rev Andrew Wakefield.

SERIAC 2018

Saturday 21st April

Hosted by Berkshire Industrial Archaeology Group (BIAG)
at Windsor Boys School, Windsor

Blotters, Board and Banknotes, by Sheila Viner, a member of BIAG, the Hampshire Mills Group, Mills Archive Trust and many others.

<https://millsarchive.org>

Papermills in the region produced some unusual products. Blotting paper was 'invented' when size was omitted from a batch of paper at a mill in East Hendred. Fibrous board was developed for the backing of radios and televisions at Jackson's Mill on the River Wye, and at the Glory Mills, Woodburn, Wiggins Teape developed photographic paper for Ilford Films. Reed International produced a large range of packaging at Colthrop on the River Kennet. Bank note paper was produced in Hampshire's Test Valley, pioneered by Henri de Portal. At Bisham, on the Thames, during WWII the War Department started the secretive production of ticker tape for punched tape for Telex machines.

Illustrating Catalogues: Jabez Hare, Commercial Wood Engraver, by Martin Andrews, a retired lecturer from the Department of Typography at the University of Reading.

The increase of manufacturing companies in the C19th created a demand for printed marketing material to show off their latest products. Illustrations needed to be of a high technical quality to show the detail of the engineering. Jabez Hare, born in Ipswich about 1798, went to school with members of the Ransomes family, a local engineering firm specialising in agricultural machinery. He was a talented engineer as well as a skilled artist and wood engraver. He helped on Ransomes' sales stand at the Royal Agricultural Show, and it occurred to him that an illustrated catalogue of their products could be distributed to potential customers at the show. He started Hare & Co, which continued through two more generations. Martin had a display of printing blocks, engraving tools and catalogues. He became interested in Hare while a student at Reading working in the Ransomes archive at the Museum of English Rural Life.
<https://merl.reading.ac.uk>

The Slough Industrial Estate and its Railway, by Jaye Isherwood, Slough and Windsor Railway Society.

<http://www.swrs.co.uk/swrsweb/index.html>

The War Department bought land west of Slough in 1918 for a central depot for the repair of damaged Army vehicles from WWI battlefields. It

had its own power station, fire and ambulance services, railway with its own locomotives, dedicated GWR station and water supply from artesian wells. Cost increases and delays deferred the opening until 1919 when it was no longer needed. The site and 15,000 vehicles were sold off.

Commercial vehicle refurbishment companies moved in, as did truck manufacturers such as Peerless, Four Wheel Drive and Citroen, leasing buildings on what was one of the first industrial estates. Other early tenants were Mars, Gillette, Johnson & Johnson, Weston Biscuits, Aspro, Black & Decker and Hygienic Ice. Rail usage ended in April 1973, one of the last industrial uses of steam. To the west was Haymill, a cornmill at Cippenham, working until 1930s, near Windsor Lanes bowling alley. On the estate, The 'Avenue' street names run east-west, the 'Road' names run north-south.

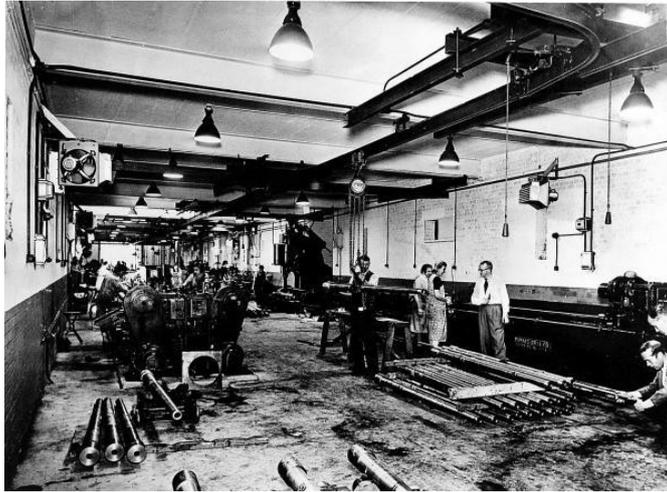
Miles Aircraft factory, by Ken Fostekew, Curator of the Museum of Berkshire Aviation, Woodley.

<http://museumofberkshireaviation.co.uk>

Fred G Miles and Charles Powis began building new light aircraft in 1932, to the designs of Miles and his wife Maxine. Most were basic trainers, to replace obsolescent WWI surplus aircraft. The airfield and buildings were successfully camouflaged during the war, although one German bomber pilot found it – he had been trained there before the war! In anticipation of the war the factory expanded rapidly in 1938/39 with a workforce of over 7,000. By 1947 the hoped-for market for civil airliners had collapsed and Miles Aircraft went into liquidation. Handley Page (Reading) took over, building aircraft until 1967. Magal Engineering now use some of the surviving buildings. Housing has replaced much of the airfield and many of the wartime buildings. The Berkshire Museum of Aviation opened in March 1993 with objectives to research and preserve the aviation history of the county.

The Hush-Hush Factory at Tubney Wood, by Rosemary Kitto.

Lord Nuffield's Hotchkiss factory in Coventry had just started production of barrels for Bofors guns for the Army, when it was heavily bombed in November 1940. A new less obvious factory was established at Tubney Wood, near Abingdon. By April 1941, 2 workshops 300ft long by 30 ft wide had been built, hidden in 15 acres of pine woods. Offices, a sewage works, swimming pool, dormitories and a canteen were also built. Secrecy was paramount, hence the name Hush-Hush. Working conditions were dangerous and accidents frequent so a surgery was also built. All was demolished in 1992 to make way for Oxford Instruments' semi-conductor factory. Local military historian Nigel Dawe, has made a record of the site and of some of the people who worked there.



The inside of the Hush Hush Factory at Tubney

Preservation of Public Road Transport in the Thames Valley, by Colin Billington, Chairman of the Thames Valley & Great Western Omnibus Trust. (TV&GWOT)

<http://www.tvagwot.org.uk>

The Great Western Railway pioneered bus operations as an extension to the railway. The industry flourished after WWI with a plentiful supply of ex-Army vehicle chassis at the Slough 'dump' and ex-servicemen with driving and maintenance skills. The Trust is particularly proud to own the only surviving GWR bus. The Trust's area of coverage is "fro' Paddington to Penzance" [sic] and includes operators Thames Valley Traction, Reading Corporation, Bristol Tramways & Carriage Co., Southern National, Western National and Royal Blue. They have depots in South Devon and near Maidenhead, where maintenance and restoration is carried out.

After the conference, there was the choice of a railway and IA walk through Windsor, a trip to the TV&GWOT depot or an archive transport film show. The walk included Gardner Cottages, a Victorian square terrace round a green, the grave of Daniel Gooch, who built the broad gauge GWR for Brunel, in the churchyard at Clewer village, Brunel's bowstring railway bridge over the Thames, the Sydney Camm Memorial (a replica Hurricane fighter plane), Windsor Royal Railway Station and Windsor & Eton Riverside Station. The film show used a genuine projector and showed 'Nanook of the North' (1922), 'Drifters' (1929) and 'Night Mail' (1936). Those on the bus depot trip travelled to Fifield and back on the Trust's Thames Valley Bristol K6A double decker of 1946. We had a guided tour of the garages and workshops which contained some delightful treasures.

Peter Cousins

35 Years On

This year sees the museum celebrate 35 years of existence. The formal proposal for the forming of the museum, sponsored by The Merton Community Trust, was put forward in August 1983.



This document included, as Stage One, plans for the Renovation and Conversion of Liberty Mill, Merton Abbey, SW19. Sadly, as you know, these plans never reaching fruition and we are now housed in our 'temporary' home in the Vestry Hall Annexe.

Also note the logo for the museum based on the water wheel at the Liberty site, now Merton Abbey Mills.



At our Annual General Meeting on the 15th November we will be celebrating our 35 year birthday with a celebration cake so do join us.



The museum celebrated Volunteers Week this year by taking our volunteers on a visit to see the exciting work taking place at The Chapter House. The museum is looking forward to the potential opening in September and continuing our relationship with the Priory Trust. We followed up the tour with ice creams at Merton Abbey Mills.



Volunteers inside The Chapter House.

Since Volunteers Week we have welcomed two new volunteers – Chris Tanner as a Wednesday front of shop helper, whose railway experience augments Eric’s unsurpassed knowledge, and Fiona McKelvie, whose background with Liberty’s will be invaluable, as a Sunday volunteer. Welcome to the team.



Dates for the Diary

25th July 2018

Mitcham Cricket Green Community Event

From 6pm to dusk the museum will be one of a number of stalls at this evening event. Take the chance to learn more about this historic area.

8th September 2018

Mitcham Heritage Day

The museum is once more throwing its doors open from 10am.

Visit <https://mitchamcricketgreen.org.uk/> to find out what else is happening that day.

8th until 23rd September 2018

Wandle Fortnight

A series of events and activities celebrating the life of the Wandle Valley. <http://www.wandlevalleyforum.org.uk/wandle-fortnight.html> for more.

16th September 2018

Wandle Trail Celebration

A series of walks have been planned to celebrate 30 years since the first 'official' walk of the Wandle Trail. See the following page for further details.



In June members, and guests, of Merton Historical Society were led on a walk by the museum from The Watermeads, Mitcham to Carshalton Ponds.

15th November 2018

Annual General Meeting

From 7:30pm at Vestry Hall, London Road, Mitcham. Guest speaker is Sarah Gould from Merton Heritage Service. She will be speaking about the role of the industries, and some of the people from them, during the First World War.

WANDLE TRAIL 30TH ANNIVERSARY WALKS

SUNDAY 16 SEPTEMBER 2018

In 1988 the first Ramblers' walk took place along the newly created Wandle Trail from Wandsworth to Croydon. The walk was led by Colin Saunders of the Long Distance Walkers Association and attracted over 200 people. As part of Wandle Fortnight we are hoping to exceed this number and are offering a selection of walks up and down the Wandle so please come along.

Help us celebrate.

Walk One

Dep. 9.30 Charing Cross Station (forecourt), lunch Morden Hall Park, finish East Croydon Station (17 miles). Led by Colin Saunders.

Walk Two

Dep. 10.00 Mitcham Junction Station (bus stop on bridge), circular walk visiting hidden paths and green spaces around Mitcham, includes a visit to the Wandle Industrial Museum - entry fee £1.50 to include refreshments (4-5 miles).

Walk Three

Dep. 10.30 am Wandle Park Tram Stop. Finish Morden Hall Park (7 miles).

Walk Four

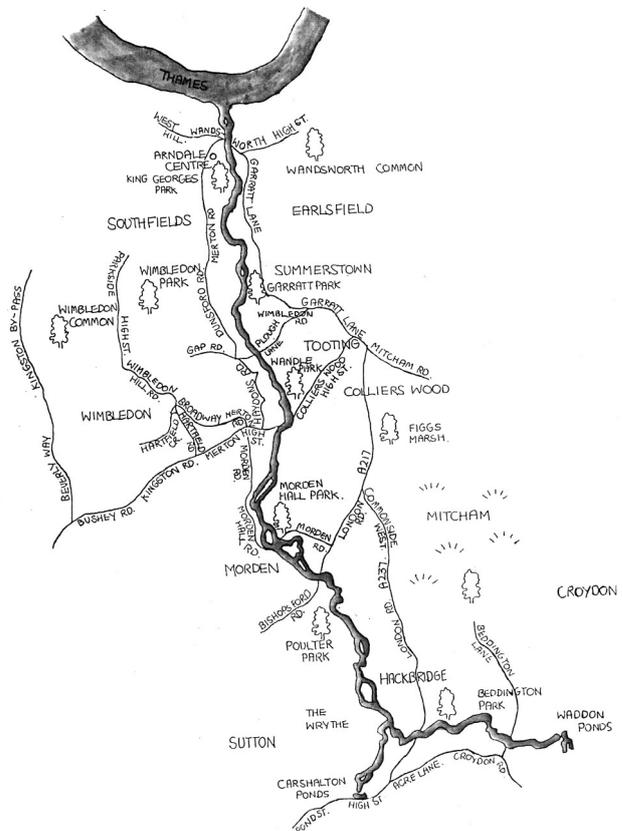
Dep. 1.30 pm Wandle Park Tram Stop. Finish Mitcham Junction Station (4 miles).

Walk Five

Dep. 2.30 pm Morden Hall Park (Snuff Mill). Finish Earlsfield Station (4 miles).

Walk Six

Dep. 3.45 pm Earlsfield Station. Finish Wandsworth Town (2.5 miles).



All walks are led by members of the Sutton and Wandle Valley, the Croydon, and the Hammersmith, Fulham and Wandsworth Ramblers' groups.

For further information, now or on the day, please contact Melanie on 07944 833605, or e-mail mlnunuzet@gmail.com.





Museum Mentor: Chris Taft, British Postal Museum and Archive.
Museum Advisor: Yvette Shepherd, Museum of London (Docklands).

A full colour version of this newsletter is available online at www.wandle.org. If any subscriber is happy to receive the newsletter by email, could you please send a request to office@wandle.org. This helps us to reduce our costs.

The Wandle Industrial Museum, the Vestry Hall Annexe, London Road,
Mitcham, Surrey CR4 3UD. Tel: 020 8648 0127

Company No 01792482, Charity No 288655.



OPEN: Every Wednesday 1 ~ 4 pm;
Every Sunday 2 ~ 5 pm.
(The Museum is closed Bank Holiday weekends)

The Museum is also open to schools and groups by appointment.



Admission: Adults 50p, Children & Senior Citizens 20p

The Wandle Industrial Museum would like to point out that the views of contributors to this newsletter are not necessarily the views of the Museum. We would be happy to give the right to reply to anyone who finds the content contentious.

All contributions and news items gratefully received and appreciated - please feel free to let us know at any time - telephone or write or email to office@wandle.org

You can find us on:

