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## Memories of South Norwood before the War

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Some time in 1970 our then Local History Section Secretary, Muriel Huitson (1915–1987) wrote to Ernest Sidney Lewis (1924–2009), our former Treasurer and Entomology Section Secretary to enquire about his recollections of South Norwood.

E.S. Lewis was born at 62 Oakley Road on 27 April 1924, so was aged 17 when he left the district. He also lived at 8 Parry Road, nearby, but did not supply dates.

This is his reply:

Dear Mrs. Huitson, Many thanks for your letter of the 26th July. I am glad that the leaking roofs, poisoned ventilation, cubist gargoyles, explosive subterranean steampipes, and the other horrors gleefully pointed out to us by our guide at Sussex University [*a Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society visit to the Falmer campus*] failed to discourage your daughter from going there, and that the consequence is so deserving of congratulation. I am reduced to dumb admiration of such success in a subject which to me has always been totally incomprehensible.

Although I knew the Albert Road neighbourhood in my earliest years, there is not much I can tell you about it. I was born at 62 Oakley Road (the plaque was removed by vandals a few years ago) and moved in 1941, since when I have scarcely ever been there.

I surmise that it was named after the Prince, but that may be quite wrong. Nearby Regina Road used to be Queen's Road, but the name was changed in the thirties, presumably to avoid confusion with the better known one in Thornton Heath.

[*Oakley Road is on the north side of Portland Road, east of Harrington Road*]

I imagine that the large houses were part of the mid-Victorian development that achieved greater success north of the railway. The whole area has always been pretty seedy in my experience, and I suspect that it never achieved the social eminence of its northern neighbours, whose residents went to the expense of

building Holy Innocents to save themselves the trouble of going to St. Marks.

*[St. Mark's Church is at the northern end of Coventry Road; Holy Innocents Church is in Selhurst Road]*

I told you about the white-bearded old man with his pair of ducks in a zinc bath at the cottage by St. Mark's. I have a dim recollection of a cottage dwelling on the right hand side going down the slope from Harrington Road. The sewage farm was a powerful influence on my early life, and, with rare visits to Shirley Hills [*Addington Hills*], represented the countryside. For many years my favourite walk was along Albert Road by the recreation ground (then very small, since expanded into the Athletic Centre) [*Croydon Arena*] edged by a hedge I always hoped concealed the nests of rare birds; then through Macclesfield Road to the railway, along the cinder path to Elmers End, left along the track across the sewage farm, with a distant view of the cemetery, its grass and tombstones sloping romantically down to the luxuriant verdure of the richly fertile banks of the Ravensbourne (?), to the end of Harrington Road, and so to Albert Road, and home. This stretch of scenery I termed in early youth 'The View,' by which it is still known in our family, though not without ironic overtones.

A memorable event, about 1930, was the opening up of a piece of the sewage farm at the back of the recreation ground, hitherto forbidden territory, thus more than doubling the area available to the public. For several years there was something rather thrilling about setting foot on this new territory known for so long only by glimpses through the boundary hedge.

In 1940, the space between the pavement and the recreation ground was excavated, and what I suppose were sewer pipes were lowered into it, thus forming a primitive public air raid shelter for residents of the neighbouring roads. A daily scene, as dusk fell in the autumn of that year, was a procession of people with bundles of blankets under their arms, abandoning the warmth and comfort of their homes for the damp, chill, and doubtful security of these improvised shelters, where they ran grave risk of contracting rheumatic and respiratory complaints likely to plague them to the end of their days.

The low point of Albert Road is the foot of the slope dropping down from Harrington Road to the boundary of the sewage farm, which marks the course of a stream which caused flooding until a few years ago, when the Council at last embarked on extensive work to improve the drainage. From there the ground rises again gradually. All the houses between Albert Road and Portland Road along this stretch were, I believe, built within a few years, and completed about 1900 - or so I was told when I lived there. I often wondered who chose the names of the roads, and what determined his choice. Macclesfield and Dundee are considerable towns; Watcombe, Sandown, etc, are quite small places. People in the thirties could remember when the land was fields grazed by cows belonging to a dairy, the name of which my mother fails to recall.

Taken all round, the neighbourhood is one which to me has never seemed in the least interesting: certainly I have no sentimental attachment to the land of my birth. But evidently you see more in it than I ever have. Whatever can it be?

Dr. Hamilton [*Stanley Baines Hamilton (1889 – 1977)*] may be able to tell you something of more use than these ramblings. When we went to Woodside Green, he said that 40 years before he lived within a mile of it; but he didn't say in which direction.

Yours sincerely, Ernest Lewis.

P.S. Coventry Road housed the poorest and roughest inhabitants, and it was dangerous to go along it if you were less than 4' 6", but it may be all right now; or you may be more than 4' 6". E.L.

*[Additional text by Paul Sowan; an obituary and a list of the publications of Ernest Lewis are included below.]*

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## **The end of an era**

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The following items about the last years of Croydon Palace are taken from the British Library's 17th and 18th centuries Burney Collection of British Newspapers, available on the Library's Electronic Resources database, and from the correspondence of Archbishop Secker.

*Whitehall Evening Post or London Intelligencer* Tuesday 21 November 1749

This simply mentions that Archbishop Herring 'has ordered some beautiful waterworks to be made, at his Palace in Croydon'.

*Daily Advertiser* Monday 14 March 1757

This item simply mentions the death of Dr Herring at his Palace in Croydon on 13 March.

In this extract from the correspondence of Archbishop Secker, the views of a Mr Miller, presumed to be his gardener, about the state of Lambeth and Croydon palaces are reported. Spelling and punctuation reproduce the original so far as legibility allows.

'The Gardens at Croydon are in great disorder, the water in every part full of weeds, which in Bishop Herrings time, was kept exceedingly neat and clean, to put this in good order will require the additional expense of four labourers for about a month or five weeks.

Mr Miller has made an estimate of the whole expense of keeping the Gardens, Meadows etc except Frames, Glasses, rollers and a Boat, for ninety one pounds ten shillings p ann

But Mr Miller is of the opinion that no Frames or Glasses should be there, for as His Grace will not chuse to reside there in Winter, or very early in the Spring, so these should be kept at Lambeth, where his Graces horses will be kept at the time when their dung will be wanted for this purpose, which must be purchased at Croydon if hot beds are there made, and as there is very little Kitchen Garden at Croydon, so such things only should be there cultivated, as are frequently wanted, or that will not bear carriage well from Lambeth, and especially latter crops which will succeed better upon the moist land there, than at Lambeth.

Chelsea May 9 1758'

*St James's Chronicle or the British Evening Post* Tuesday 29 November 1768

This item refers to Archbishop Cornwallis.

'The Archbishop designs taking down the Old Palace at Croydon, which stands in low Ground, and building a new one on Dupper's Hill, near the town, so called from an Archbishop of that Name, who took much Delight in that Spot'.

*Public Advertiser* Tuesday 12 September 1780

‘TO BE SOLD AT AUCTION

On the Premises, on Thursday the 5<sup>th</sup> of October next, at Croydon, in the county of Surrey, (unless previously disposed of by private contract) pursuant to an Act made for that Purpose

THE Freehold and Inheritance in Fee Simple of all that Capital Messuage situate at Croydon in the County of Surrey, known by the Name of the PALACE of the ARCHBISHOP OF CANTERBURY, with the Outhouses, Edifices, Buildings, Gardens, and other Appurtenances thereto belonging, and two Closes of land lying contiguous or near the said Capital Messuage, and also the Water Conduit or Conduits, situate in a Meadow called Parson’s Mead, in Croydon aforesaid, with the Aqueducts and Leaden Pipe, or Pipes leading therefrom to a Cistern in the said Palace.

The Particulars of the said Premises will be ready to be delivered on Monday the 25<sup>th</sup> Instant, at the said Palace at Croydon; or at Mr. Vernon’s Chambers, in Lincoln’s Inn, London.

N.B. The said Premises may be viewed in the Mean Time on any Day (Sundays excepted) by applying to John Ray, Gardener, at the said Palace.’

**Brian Lancaster**

*[This article has been written for the Friends of Old Palace and will be published separately by them.]*

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**Starved wood sedge (*Carex depauperata*) specimen in the Society’s herbarium designated neotype for the species**

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The Society’s herbarium, a large collection of pressed plants, is essentially that of Henry Franklin Parsons (1846–1913), our President in 1893–94 and again in 1913, and was amongst materials bequeathed by him to this Society ‘for the Croydon Museum’, at which time both he and the Society had hopes of the then County Borough establishing a permanent and professionally curated museum service for the town. In 1983 we transferred this herbarium on indefinite loan to the South London Botanical Institute, on the grounds that at that establishment it would be more accessible to researchers, and (with the Institute’s own herbarium) enjoy appropriate curation and storage conditions. Parsons’ collection includes, beside material collected by himself (much from Somerset and

Yorkshire), specimens from earlier collectors. It was described by our former Curator, Donald Peter Young (1917–1972) in 1951 in our *Proceedings* 12(1), 76 – 77.

Three Spanish botanists have recently inspected material in Parsons' collection and designated a specimen of *Carex depauperata* (Starved wood sedge), one of Britain's rarest plants, as the neotype for this species. This means it is the unique reference specimen with which any other specimen worldwide may be compared for identification purposes. This frankly unprepossessing rare plant (as its name suggests) was first described in a publication in 1787 but, at the time, without a designated preserved type specimen. Thus it is that the Society's specimen, which was collected near Charlton, now in SE London, in 1830, has now been designated the type specimen (neotype because the original on which the first publication was based has not survived). It is concluded that the collector was probably John Joseph Bennett (1801–1876) who was Keeper of Botany at the Natural History Museum from 1859 to 1870. He was elected a Fellow of the Linnean Society in 1828, and of the Royal Society in 1841. His personal herbarium was reportedly acquired by our former member Robert Russell Hutchinson (1870–1951) and, with Hutchinson's other natural history collections and library, bequeathed to us and incorporated into the Parsons Herbarium. Hutchinson, a retired bank manager from Eastbourne, moved to Croydon in the 1930s, and was our Curator in the years 1937–1950. He was also actively concerned with the former Museum maintained at St. Mildred's Church in Addiscombe.

**Anon.**

VICKERY, Roy, 2009, Spanish researchers designate SLBI specimen as neotype of *Carex depauperata* (Starved wood sedge). *South London Botanical Institute Gazette*, Series 2, 10, 9–10.

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## Obituaries

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### **Sister Mary Baptist (c. 1915–2009)**

It is unusual nowadays for the deaths of any of our members to be noticed in the national newspapers. However, we learn from the *Guardian* of 26 May 2009 that Sister Mary Baptist, an active member especially of the Geology Section in the 1970s, died aged 94 this year. Memorably, she attended both indoor meetings and field excursions in full nun's habit. The author of this note recalls, with other members, hauling Sister Baptist

out of semi-fluid clay at a Gault Clay pit near Westerham. The more she struggled, the deeper she sank. Whether we recovered her footwear I do not now recall.

Sister Mary Baptist was born Bessie Taylor at Darlaston, south Staffordshire and was brought up in a strict Methodist home in a working-class district. In 1932 she entered the University of Birmingham, where she studied modern languages. She took an MA in French, and a diploma in education. In 1934 she was awarded the Diplôme de Langue Francaise from the University of Rennes. It was at about this time that she became a Roman Catholic.

Her first teaching post was at a school in Scarborough founded by the Daughters of Mary and Joseph. She took her first vows with this order in 1943. During the last year of the war she was evacuated to Dunblane, and then joined the staff at Coloma Convent School for Girls in Croydon (this had been in 1869 the Order's first foundation in England). On making her final vows in April 1949 she became Sister Mary Baptist. She taught at Coloma until September 1976. As a geography teacher was required, she studied for and qualified with a BA degree in that subject, and in 1966 completed a PhD thesis on the development of Bromley, Beckenham and Penge since 1750. She was in due course appointed Head of Geography at Coloma. During 1960–1967, with pupils from Coloma and others (including Ken Maggs), she surveyed National Grid squares TQ26 and TQ36 for the Second Land Utilisation Survey, published in 1968.

Later, she moved to a community at Sanderstead and worked for a charity called Little Way which raised money for overseas missions. In 1993, when almost 80, she went to Uganda and visited the Order's Foundation there.

She then moved to the convent at Shirley Court, in 1984, and, when the sisters left there, she moved to her final home at St. Joseph's Convent at West Wickham.

The details of the published land-use map for which she did some of the fieldwork are below. A copy is held in the Society's Library.

LAND UTILISATION SURVEY (SECOND), 1968, *Land use survey sheet 187: Croydon TQ 26 and TQ 36* [Surveyed 1960 - 67 by G. Bagwell, St. Mary Baptist, pupils at Coloma College, I. Coleman,

A.D. Matheson, B.K. Williams, K. Maggs, H.G. Few, and E. Ll. Williams] Isle of Thanet Geographical Association: colour-printed map at 1:25,000.

[Part adapted from the Guardian article]

### **Ernest Sydney LEWIS (1924–2009)**

Early in 2009 we learned of the death of Ernest Lewis, a former Treasurer of the Society (1961–1970), Entomology Section Secretary and, from 1973, an Honorary Member.

Ernest Sydney Lewis was born on 27 April 1924, at 62 Oakley Road, South Norwood, and later lived at 8 Parry Road in the same district, then at Court Farm Road in Warlingham, before retiring to Chagford in Devon. Professionally, he was a Chartered Secretary. In his leisure time he was an entomologist, with a particular interest in the Coleoptera (beetles), and was (from about 1952) a Fellow of the Royal Entomological Society. In the 1940s and 1950s he was an active member of the Amateur Entomologists' Society. His set of that Society's *Bulletin* was donated to our Library on or about the date he retired. He joined our Society in 1946, and served as Treasurer from 1961 to 1970 and a director from incorporation in 1967 to the latter date. He played an essential rôle in the purchase of the freehold of our building in South Croydon in 1966, and in securing our incorporation as a company limited by guarantee in 1967. He was a source of guidance and support for the writer who, in 1963, took on the job of Honorary General Secretary. Ernest was a catalyst in ensuring that the Society organised a series of public events in Croydon to mark National Nature Week (in 1963) and pursued the campaign for a Croydon Museum with redoubled vigour. During National Nature Week Ernest and other members collaborated in writing and illustrating a series of four one- or two-page articles on Croydon wildlife, published in the *Croydon Advertiser*. We also took over a substantial part of the upper floor at Roffey & Clark's bookshop for a National Nature Week exhibition. Recorded birdsong entertained shoppers for the fortnight! He is succeeded by his wife Constance, and son David. His mother, Mrs. V.M.M.C. Lewis (1887–1975) was also a member from 1961 until her death.

Ernest's Entomology Section *Circulars, correspondence, reports of field meetings, &c. 1961 – 1976*, preserved in our Archives, are delightful reading, being written in his characteristically wryly humorous style. In 1970, in response to a request from Muriel Huitson (1915-1987), our then Local History Secretary, he put on record his childhood memories of South Norwood.

During the years 1968–89 he identified insect specimens for the London Borough of Croydon's Health Department: copies of his reports are held in our Archives.

### **Published and unpublished work held in the Society's Library and Archives**

- [1949] Directory of Natural History Societies. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 8(102), 42 - 44.
- [1949] Membership. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 8(97), page 10.
- [1950] Labelling. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 9(113), page 48.
- [1951] Annual General Meeting. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 10(126), 53 - 54.
- [1951] Mating in Rove-beetles. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 10(126), 52 - 53.
- [1952] Council's report for 1951. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 11(138), page 41.
- [1953] Council's report for 1952. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 12(150), page 43.
- [1954] A beetle parasite. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 13(168), 114 - 115.
- [1955] Beetles at light. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* page 35.
- [1955] *Mutilla* and *Thanasimus*. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 14(169), page 6 [Hymenoptera / Coleoptera]
- [1956] Splitters and lumpers. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 15(184), 31 - 32.
- [1956] *Viviania cinerea* Fallen (Dipt., Tachinidae), a beetle parasite. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 15(183), 21 - 22 [Record for Orpington]
- [1959] Notes on two Australian beetles now established in Britain. *Proc. CNHSS* 12(4), 267 - 268 [First UK record at West Wickham 1884; subsequently recorded at Shirley c. 1913; now widespread]
- [1960] The spread of *Lathridius bifasciatus* Reitter (Coleoptera: Lathridiidae): a new study group. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 19(239), 98 - 99.
- [1961] Entomology Section. Circulars, correspondence, reports of field meetings, &c. 1961 – 1976.
- [1962] *Lucanus cervus* Linn. (Stag beetle.) *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 21(255), page 56.
- [1962] Report of local group meeting. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 21(254), 30 - 33 [Croydon]

- [1962] A robin that didn't return. *Bull. Amateur Entomologists' Society* 21(252), page 8 [A North American silk moth species found escaped in Croydon]
- [1963] National Nature Week starting .. [With W.A. Billings and Paul W. Sowan] *Croydon Advertiser*, 17 May 1963, page 19.
- [1963] 20,000 British insects - but they are not all in your garden. *Croydon Advertiser*, 24 May 1963, 18 – 19.
- [1967] Review: G.J. Kerrich, *et al.*, 1967, *Bibliography of key works for the identification of the British fauna and flora*. *Bull. CNHSS* 2, page 6.
- [1967] Review: L. Manns, 1967, *Leaf litter fauna in the ecology of ground feeding birds*. *Bull. CNHSS* 2, page 6.
- [1967] Review: R.S.R. Fitter and M. Fitter, 1967, *Penguin dictionary of natural history*. *Bull. CNHSS* 2, page 7.
- [1967] 96A Brighton Road: woodworm. CNHSS: typed single page report dated 12 June 1967.
- [1968 – 89] *Correspondence 26 August 1968 to 7 September 1989 with John A. Keen of LB Croydon Health Department re. identification of insect specimens sent to him for examination.*
- [1970] ALS dated 13 August 1970 to Mrs. Muriel Huitson describing South Norwood as he knew it as a boy up to 1961. ms. 5pp.
- [1971] [With K.G.W. EVANS] Reports of the Sections: Entomology. *Proc. CNHSS* 14(8), page 179.
- [1973] Heroic beetles. *Financial Times*, 25<sup>th</sup> May 1973, page 2 [Reply to 'Welldung' in the 'Observer' column of the same newspaper of 18<sup>th</sup> May]
- [1973] Reports of the Sections: Entomology. *Proc. CNHSS* 14(10), page 247.
- [1974] Reports of the sections: Entomology. *Proc. CNHSS* 14(13), page 443.

**Paul W Sowan**

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## News and Notices

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### **Peter Coxhead and Derek Hill honoured**

Society botanists Peter Coxhead and Dr. Derek Hill, both of whom have served on this Society's Council, have been elected Honorary Members of the Surrey Botanical Society in recognition of their years in the service of Surrey botany, and of the Surrey Botanical Society and its predecessor the Surrey Flora Committee.

The Surrey Flora Committee was established at a meeting of members of the Botanical Society of the British Isles held at the rooms of the Linnean Society of London, Piccadilly, on 26 January 1957. The meeting, convened by Job Edward Lousley (1907–1976), had the object of forming a working group to compile a new *Flora of Surrey*, updating the last published such *Flora*, that of Charles Edgar Salmon (1872–1930), published in 1931. Although those attending the first meeting are not listed as such in the minutes, our former Botany Section Secretary, Donald Peter Young (1917–1972) was certainly present.

The new *Flora* was published in 1976. Although compiled by Job Edward Lousley (1907–1976), it was seen through the press by our former member Cecil Thomas Prime (1909–1979) as a result of Ted Lousley's death shortly before his work on the book was completed.

Although, by this publication, the initial aim of the Surrey Flora Committee had been realised in 1976, the Committee continued and was renamed the Surrey Botanical Society in 2004. It continues to record the ever-changing botany of Surrey. Peter Coxhead's and Derek Hill's contributions to this work are recognised by their being declared Honorary Members.

## Subscriptions

Please remember that subscriptions for 2010 are due on 1 January 2010 but can be paid at any time earlier by post, or at the "Focus Underground" meeting on Saturday, 28 November 2009, or you can set up a Standing Order with your bank (send to 96A for a form). The current subscription costs are listed in the Programme circulated with this Bulletin.

## Herbert Shaw's paper on Nalder & Collyer's brewery

Our late member Herbert Thomas Shaw (1912–1992), husband of former Honorary Member Muriel Elsie Shaw (1916–2006), was a diligent local historian who did detailed research on a number of local themes. His paper on Nalder & Collyer's former brewery, which stood in Croydon High Street between the old Grand Theatre and Masons Avenue, was published in our *Proceedings* in 1989. With our permission, the Brewery History Society has reprinted this in a recent issue of their journal *Brewery History*.

The bibliographical details are as follows:

SHAW, Herbert Thomas, 1989, A Croydon brewery. *Proc. CNHSS* 17(10), 249 – 262.

SHAW, Herbert Thomas, 2009, A Croydon brewery. *Brewery History* 131, 2 – 18 [Republication of the original 1989 paper].

## **Ornithology**

Mavis Barber reported that the following birds were seen on a day's visit to Grove and Stodmarsh, nr Canterbury, Kent.

There was one rarity, a black-winged pratincole. Upon looking it up I see that these birds breed in south west Asia and south east Europe and migrate to overwinter within Afro-tropical region crossing Iran, Iraq and parts of Turkey. So it is a long way off course. It was resting on the ground happily sitting next to a shelduck. On occasions it flew around and its dark underwings, white rump and forked tail similar to a swallow's could be seen.

Great crested grebe, Cormorant, Little egret, Heron, Mute swan, Greylag geese, Shelduck, Gadwall, Gargeny, Shoveler, Pochard, Tufted duck, Marsh harrier, Sparrowhawk, Kestrel, Hobby pheasant, Moorhen, Coot, Little-ringed plover, Ringed plover, Lapwing, Black-tailed godwit, Redshank, Greenshank, Herring gull, Common tern, Woodpigeon, Collared dove, Cuckoo (heard only), Swift, Skylark, Swallow, Pied wagtail, Wren, Dunnock, Robin, Nightingale, Blackbird, Song thrush (heard), Cetti's warbler (heard), Sedge warbler, Reed warbler (heard), Whitethroat, Garden warbler (heard), Blackcap (heard), Chiff-chaff, Blue tit, Great tit, Jay, Magpie, Jackdaw, Crow, Starling, House sparrow, Chaffinch, Goldfinch, Reed bunting.

David Gough reported on an IGGY walk in South Norwood Country Park one morning, indicating that nothing special was seen, the list being: Magpie, Woodpigeon, Carrion crow, Long-tailed tit, Greenfinch, Kestrel, Mallard, Whitethroat, Blackbird, Great tit, Song thrush (heard only), Coot, Canada goose, Tufted duck, Great-spotted woodpecker, Robin, Wren, Dunnock, Green woodpecker (heard), Swift, Reed bunting.

## **New computer for the Society**

The Society has purchased a lap-top computer for the use of Paul Sowan in his capacity as librarian and archivist. This is accompanied by a new copier / scanner / printer. Hitherto, the library catalogue and other files have been kept on a computer owned by Subterranea Britannica, of which Paul is a former chairman and current committee member. Cataloguing the library should now be greatly accelerated, as the computer can be taken to the library for use there, and of course taken home again for security purposes. It will not be left at the library. Phil Barber has very patiently assisted with training Paul in the use of the new machines, new operating system, and updated software. It is indicative of the efficacy of Phil's training that the material that Paul provided for this Bulletin issue was transferred electronically to the editor in Wandle Park prior to a Society walk.

## Entomological survey of Mitcham Common

We have received from the Mitcham Common Conservators a copy of an impressive entomological survey of Mitcham Common, compiled by our Entomology Section Secretary, Graham Collins. The details are as follows:

COLLINS, Graham A., 2009, *Mitcham Common: entomological survey 2008*. NP: (1) + 112pp + 43pp tables.

Strictly speaking, of course, entomology is the study of insects, rather than creepy-crawlies in general. However, Graham's survey also includes one or two other groups, such as spiders. Altogether, he has documented 1,633 records for 782 species. The list includes seven Red Data Book species, a further six provisional RDB species, and 36 Nationally Notable species. Four species on the list are UK Biological Action Plan priority species.

The 782 recorded species include 209 different kinds of flies; 192 butterflies and moths; 122 bugs and plant-hoppers; 115 bees, wasps and sawflies; 108 beetles; 10 lacewings; 10 grasshoppers and bush-crickets; six dragonflies; four caddisflies; one earwig, one mayfly, one scorpion-fly; one spider; one harvestman; and one mite.

The habitats on the Common include dry acid grassland, woodland, ponds, and capped landfill. Resources required by the more important species are listed, and suggestions made for habitat management.

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## The South Norwood heritage of William Stanley

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William Ford Robinson Stanley [1829–1909], a sufficiently highly regarded scientific instrument maker to merit an entry in the *Dictionary of National Biography*, died at his home at South Norwood, London SE25, on 14 August 1909 and was buried at nearby Beckenham Cemetery. A celebration was held at his grave to commemorate the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of the death of 'Mr. South Norwood' as he was known.

This great inventor and philanthropist set up in business making mathematical and scientific instruments in London in 1853, but moved to South Norwood in or about the 1860s. He designed and built for himself two substantial houses in the immediate neighbourhood, and in or about 1874 expanded his works into larger purpose-built premises at Belgrave Road, near Norwood Junction Station. He designed and superintended the building of the Stanley Halls and the adjoining Stanley Technical Trade Schools at the foot of South Norwood Hill. And in 1907 the inhabitants of South Norwood subscribed for and erected a clock tower at the top of

station road to commemorate the golden wedding anniversary of W.F.R. Stanley and his wife Eliza, née Savory. In the same year, in view of his public benefactions, he was made a Freeman of the County Borough of Croydon.

In his will, Stanley made bequests including a number in favour of local charitable and educational purposes, amongst which was our Society, which body celebrated its centenary in 1970, and continues as a focal point for local archaeologists, geologists, and local and natural historians in 2009. For some decades after his death, a Stanley bequest made provision for the award of Stanley Art and Science prizes for pupils in the third form (now known as Year 9) in Croydon schools. The author of this note was awarded both prizes whilst a pupil at the Croydon Secondary Technical School, also in South Norwood, in 1953. South Norwood had two technical schools at that time.

Sadly, the once-visible Stanley heritage in South Norwood has been progressively whittled away, such is Croydon and such is progress! A checklist follows:

- Stanleybury, Stanley's first house at 74 - 76 Road, was demolished in 2003.
- Cumberlow, Stanley's second house in Lancaster Road, was demolished in 2006.
- Stanley's factory in Belgrave Road was largely destroyed by a fire, although what remains has been incorporated into a modern residential development.
- Stanley Halls in South Norwood Hill, opened in 1903, survives in public use.
- Stanley Technical Trade Schools next to the Halls in South Norwood Hill, opened in 1907, have been robbed progressively from 1966 onwards of the sculptures which once graced their front elevation, and incorporated into a new 'Academy' style school now called Harris Academy South Norwood despite widespread feeling that the philanthropic engineer's memory should be retained, not that of a carpet salesman!
- Stanley's clock tower, in Station Road, was refurbished in 2007 and survives.
- The William Stanley public house (Wetherspoon's) in South Norwood High Street has no direct connection with the engineer, but perpetuates his name locally.

Curiously, the exact chronology of Stanley's arrival and first activities in South Norwood remains obscure, although he does appear in an 1869 street directory. Several published works throw some light on this.<sup>1-4</sup>

The best published account of Stanley's South Norwood works is to be found in John Corbet Anderson's book on the Great North Wood.<sup>5</sup>

Stanley was a prolific writer with several, generally self-financed, published books to his name, best described today as curious scientific speculations. He also published a series of sumptuously executed illustrated catalogues of his mathematical and scientific instruments.<sup>6</sup>

W.F.R. Stanley was a President of the Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society in 1905 – 1906, and a generous benefactor. The Society's library contains the published works cited, and copies of some of Stanley's books and other relevant material.

**Paul W. Sowan**

<sup>1</sup> INWARDS, Richard (edr.), 1911, *William Ford Stanley: his life and work*. London: Crosby Lockwood & Co.: 82pp [The first five chapters are Stanley's own autobiographical work]

<sup>2</sup> ALLEN, Cecil J., 1953, *A century of scientific instrument making 1853 – 1953*. New Eltham: W.F. Stanley & Co. Ltd: 64pp [W.F. Stanley & Co. Ltd. was incorporated 20 April 1900 / Stanley's Scientific Instrument Works at Avery Hill Road, New Eltham, SE9, closed in 1999]

<sup>3</sup> AKPAN, Eloïse, 2000, *The story of William Stanley: a self-made man*. London: author: 86pp [0-9538577-0-0]

<sup>4</sup> AKPAN, Eloïse, 2002, *William Stanley's school 1907 - 2002*. The Croydon Society: (vii) + 149pp [0-9538577-1-9] [Stanley Technical Trade Schools, later Stanley High School for Boys, now Harris Academy at South Norwood]

<sup>5</sup> ANDERSON, John Corbet, 1898, *The great North Wood : with a geological, topographical and historical description of Upper, West & South Norwood in the County of Surrey*. [London]: Printed for the subscribers [by Blades, East and Blades], pages 84–86.

<sup>6</sup> STANLEY, W.F.R., 1866, *A descriptive treatise on mathematical drawing instruments, their construction, uses, qualities, selection, preservation, and suggestions for improvement; with hints upon drawing and colouring*. Author: xii + 243pp.

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