



Jubilee Party in the East End for King George V and Queen Mary 1935
(not 1933 as it has been captioned!). A Griffiths photograph.

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Here's to Summer!

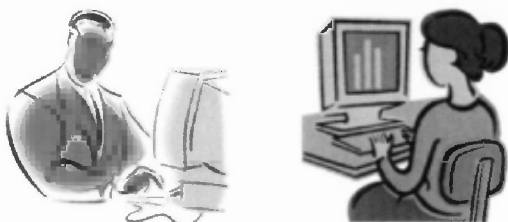
Editorial Note:

Philip Mernick, Chairman, Doreen Kendall, Secretary, Harold Mernick, Membership, David Behr, Programme, Ann Sansom, Doreen Osborne, Sigrid Werner and Rosemary Taylor.

All queries regarding membership should be addressed to Harold Mernick, 42 Campbell Road, Bow, London E3 4DT.

Enquiries to Doreen Kendall, 20 Puteaux House, Cranbrook Estate, Bethnal Green, London E2 0RF, Tel: 0208 981 7680, or Philip Mernick, email: phil@mernicks.com. Check out the History Society's website at www.eastlondonhistory.org.uk.

The Newsletter is edited and typeset by Rosemary Taylor with assistance of Philip Mernick, and an editorial team comprising, Doreen Kendall, David Behr, and Doreen Osborne.



Saturday June 8th 2013

The FTHCP Spring Fair 'all Things 60'

11 am to 4 pm

Celebrate the 60th anniversary of the Queen's Coronation.

Activities on the day will include guided walks, stalls, a treasure hunt, rope making, children's fancy dress 'Kings, Queens and Princesses', woodland crafts. Refreshments will also be available.

Enjoy a day out in Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park!

Don't forget – you can also join Doreen and Diane and assist in recording monumental inscriptions on the second Sunday of each month, from 2-4 pm. All volunteers welcome. Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park is close to Mile End Station.

Cover picture

The cover picture shows a street party celebrating the Silver Jubilee of King George the Fifth in May 1935, although incorrectly titled 1933!

The party is in Lacey Street, Bow, looking towards Morville Street. John Chandler's dairy (19 Morville Street) can be seen in the background. He is listed as a Cow keeper, so cows may have been kept on the premises. The photograph was supplied by A.P. Griffiths' Armagh Road studio.

East London History Society Lecture Programme

By the time you receive this Newsletter our 2012-13 season of talks will have been completed.

David Behr is currently working on the 2013-14 season and you will receive details in Newsletter 3-16 around August.

The lectures are usually held on Thursday evenings at 7.30 pm in the Latimer Congregational Church Hall, Ernest Street, E1. Ernest Street is between Harford Street and Whitehorse Lane, off Mile End Road (Opposite Queen Mary and Westfield College). The nearest Underground Stations are Mile End and Stepney Green. Bus No. 25.

Suggestions and ideas for future topics and/or speakers for our Lecture Programme are always welcomed. If you can suggest someone or indeed if you would like to give a talk yourself, please get in touch with David Behr, our Programme co-ordinator, either at one of our lectures or, alternatively, email our Chairman Philip Mernick with your comments and suggestions.

Email: phil@mernicks.com

News and Views

Made In Bow

Date: Friday, May 17, 2013 to Thursday, July 25, 2013
Private View: Thursday, May 16, 2013 - 18:00
Opening Hours: Tues - Sun 10am - 5pm

Address: The Nunnery, 181 Bow Road, London E3 2SJ

The Nunnery Gallery will host an exhibition of works by Mathew Weir, Lizzie Cannon & Felicity Hammond who have responded to the 18th Century Bow porcelain collection. The factory was just several hundred yards from the Nunnery Gallery and was of world-wide significance to the development of ceramic art history. This exhibition will bring rarely seen pieces from the London Borough of Newham archive into the Nunnery Gallery and place the contemporary responses alongside. This project has been funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund and supported by London Borough of Newham.

Read about the project and the artist residencies in the blog
www.bowporcelain.wordpress.com

Love London? There is a range of courses at Bishopsgate Institute just for you

We live in an amazing city with an incredible story, full of fascinating characters. Our London interest courses give an enticing insight into London's many chapters. Take a look at the impact of Dickens, Pepys and Chaucer on the city, how Modernism and Postmodernism shaped the buildings around us as well as how London has inspired artists and art movements.

Accompany us on one of our Walking Tours exploring gardens in London from hidden

spaces to Royal Parks or venture off the beaten track and through quiet backstreets of Islington. You can also travel along some of the newer stations that have helped to link up the New Overground. These are just some of the subjects looked at in our courses. You can find out more about our courses at www.bishopsgate.org.uk or email courses@bishopsgate.org.uk

**Bishopsgate Institute 230 Bishopsgate,
London EC2M 4QH**

Firemen Remembered

Stephanie Maltman, of **Firemen Remembered**, has supplied this background information to the event attended by Philip Mernick at Stratford Fire Station on Tuesday 19th March when a plaque was unveiled to the five Beckenham and one West Ham firemen killed on the night of 19th/20th March 1941. The plaque was then fixed to the wall of The Plaistow Cafe on West Ham Lane, close to the site of the original incident. **Firemen Remembered** had two firemen in WW uniforms in attendance.

On the night of 19th/20th March 1941, six months into the London Blitz, a convoy of men from the Bromley and Beckenham area was on its way to assist at fires in the Silvertown. Unable to come through the tunnel under the Thames, since it was closed, they came an alternative route across one of the bridges and through the East End in the early hours of the 20th.

Several earlier incidents that night including a land-mine in the Plaistow Road meant that firemen were already at work and the convoy was held up by hose and debris across the road. Unable to move forward they waited while bombs were still dropping roundabout them. Realising the danger they were anxious to move on but before a way could be cleared for them a high-explosive bomb fell behind the appliance from West Wickham. All five

crew members were injured and died very soon after. A sixth fireman, a member of the West Ham brigade, also died and it is thought that he was working to help clear a path for the convoy.

The names of the men from Beckenham were, Charles Wesley Drew, 29, Denis Gerald Fitzgerald, 28, Stanley Short, 36, Leslie Palmer, 31 and Frederick Moore, 35. The West Ham fireman, Harold George Hugget was 41. All five Beckenham men are buried together in a grave in West Wickham churchyard.



Photo: Philip Mernick

**From Daragh Markham
078 33 55 3948**

I am a freelance journalist writing about urban neglect in London and was just wondering if I could speak to someone from the Society about a particular building I am looking at in Hackney. The property is the Arundel Arms, a dilapidated pub on Boleyn Road, in a part of Dalston that makes up the Hackney Heritage Walk, as designated by the Hackney Society. Due to its heritage status, it is one of various properties I am examining for a series of features on abandoned historical buildings. I would be very interested in speaking to someone from the Society on their thoughts about this building, its heritage value, and its abandoned/neglected status.

The removal of the Stepney Green Mural from the public street in Ben Jonson road.

Sean McGrath, 7, Cowley Road, Wanstead, London E11 2HA

Are you aware that the mural by the artist Jean Powell has been taken down from the front of Stepney Green school due to refurbishment works and is set to disappear from public view?

The mural has stood on Ben Jonson road since 2002. It was a community art based project funded mainly by New Deal for the Communities, who contributed £60,000 towards the cost. Jean Powell had/has an international reputation as a ceramic artist. On the mural she included all the historic and notable buildings of east London above the river shape, below it representational Bengali style art. The tiles which made up the river were made individually by the 800+ students who attended the school. They will be young men in their early to mid twenties now.

I was the headteacher at the time who commissioned this piece of public art. I did it to raise the profile of the school and New Deal for the Communities supported the project as they were keen to improve the environment of the deprived Ocean Estate. I left in 2006. The school had improved by then and had become a specialist college for Maths and Computing.

The borough and the current headteacher plan for the mural to be re-erected inside the school on a hidden rear playground wall at the rear exit of the school. Although seen by current students, it will disappear from public view.

I attach for your information the response from the borough when we queried what had happened to the mural.

The mural became a local landmark and survived on the public street relatively unscathed for a decade. After the debacle over

the Henry Moore sculpture last year, it does appear that, under the aegis of mayor Lutfur Rahman, Tower Hamlets really does not appreciate or value its public art.

Is there anything you can do to try and ensure that the whole Stepney Green community and visitors to the area continue to enjoy Jean Powell's quite remarkable work?

From: Chris Canty
<Chris.Canty@towerhamlets.gov.uk>

Regarding the Mural I have been advised that :-

Whilst significantly contributing to the learning in the early stages of the current school development programme, the mural location was considered within the overall design concept of the street scene elevations of the school.

It was felt by both the design team and the school that to position the mural in its original position would have compromised the new design of the Ben Jonson Rd elevations and was not in keeping with the materials and colour scheme chosen for the building. As the mural was moved to storage to facilitate the demolitions in the early stages, the decision was then taken to reposition it elsewhere within the school complex.

The final scheme designs were approved by Planning and agreed by the Head Teacher.

The mural has now been reallocated to the north/east perimeter adjacent to the new Gym Block location in Trafalgar Gardens as indicated by Sean. This is considered the best solution available and has allowed the mural to remain relatively intact environment at the school. We hope this is agreeable to those who contributed to the original development of the mural.

Tidal Mill, Bromley-by-Bow

The Grade I listed House Mill on Three Mills Island is in need of refurbishment, and campaigners are trying to raise half a million pounds to keep their project from collapsing. The plans for the mill include a heritage community centre for arts and culture, using the mill to generate greener power for its own use and surrounding homes, and as a venue for holding civil marriages.

St John's Church Bethnal Green

The repairs to the church, which were put on hold last summer when the company responsible for the repairs went bankrupt, are back on track, which is good news for the Grade I listed parish church. The work to the masonry should be completed by this summer, and the church which is one of eight of London's most important listed churches, will once more grace the skyline of Bethnal Green.

The Crossrail Project continues to unearth skeletons and other remains as they excavate areas at Liverpool Street and Charterhouse Square. Last year they uncovered 300 graves near the site of the Bedlam Hospital, this time they unearthed the remains of 13 skeletons along with pottery which dates them to 1350, coinciding with the Black Death of 1349.

In My Father's Footsteps

Brick Lane is famous for its Sunday market and its curries and has been home to countless generations. The 'Lane' is also my route to work. It is a walk I undertake five days a week and see something new every day.

This walk begins at one of the newest developments in the area, Shoreditch Station and the nearby Box Park which has a wealth of shops and bars for you to check out at your leisure. From here walk east down Sclater Street noting the sculpture erected as a reminder of the connection with the clothing industries or the 'Rag Trade'. Rope making was also carried out in this area.

When walking through this street, with new developments surrounding you, it is hard to imagine that at one time this place reverberated with birdsong. In 1943 eight out of fifteen properties in this street either dealt in birds or made birdcages, a direct influence of the past association with the Huguenots. Even further back in time 'exotic' fruits could be brought here. In 1855 at no. 82 was Kemps the largest pineapple retailer in England.



From here you will find yourself in the 'Lane'. A brief diversion and turn left and you will soon be at the proprietors of one of the famous foods of the area. Beigels. The most famous of the two Beigel shops is at 159, the Beigel Bake, open 24 hours and always busy. Over 7000 beigels are produced from its bakery per night. It is worth popping in just to smell the

shop, the smell stays with you and you will certainly come out eating a beigel. Waves of immigrants seeking a new home, have influenced the food of the 'Lane'. Some 120,000 Jewish people were recorded in Whitechapel in 1914 and along with them come their traditions and food and the Indian and Bangladeshi communities arrived in the area from the 1960s onwards and once again their food and traditions were mixed into the great melting pot of the East End. It is this that makes the area a unique and special place.

After you have finished indulging in a beigel turn around and head due south down the 'Lane'.

Close by is East Gallery and further along Brick Lane Gallery which along with the vintage shops and coffee shops are witness to the always fluxing state of the area. Brick Lane is always changing to accommodate a new crowd, a new market, but also always stays the same.

You will notice on the walk a variety of street art that decorates the walls, from a children's mural to artworks of all descriptions. Something different appears almost daily, and aids the vibrancy of the area. Banksy's work has made an appearance here in the past. Look up and will see the variety and age of the buildings that line both sides of the Lane. Soon a large chimney will dominate the skyline. This is the ghost of Truman, Hanbury and Buxton's Black Eagle Brewery. See if you can spot the eagle on the building.

A brewery was erected on a site near Brick Lane in the year of the Great Fire of London. This was purchased by Joseph Truman in 1679 and then developed further. It was once one of the biggest brewers in London and covered some six acres. In one year they brewed 400,000 barrels of ale and porter. The cobbles that still exist would have once vibrated to the sounds of horses and carts delivering beer to all parts of London. The chimney in red brick dates from 1929 and is at the north end of

where once stables for over 200 horses stood. The Brewery closed in 1989 and use to give off the smell of hops which I distinctly remember when visiting as a child. 'Trumans' was where my Father use to work for eighteen years, leaving the countryside of Kent for the streets of East London when he got married.



The buildings of the Brewery now play host to a diverse range of attractions including a Burlesque Bar, 93 Feet East and the Vibe Bar, and also many clothes sales and art exhibitions are held here as well as local businesses based here. In 2010 Truman's beer was resurrected and the beer is still been brewed.

A few minute walk away, still heading down the 'Lane' to your left is Hanbury Street and down this street is Atlantis Art Supplies, the largest UK art and craft material store and it is certainly a shop worth visiting just to look at the amount of different shades of white paper one can buy.

As you walk along this area, also named Banglatown due to its high population of Bangladeshis, you will notice the proliferation of curry houses, for which the Lane is famous. It is certainly an experience to walk through here of an evening with the neon of the signs glaring out lighting the many visitors who are in search of a curry and whom are usually bring encouraged to visit a specific restaurant by the men standing outside the restaurants offering various discounts.



There are many streets that lead from Brick Lane; many are worth exploring for their historic buildings, two of which are close to you now. Princelet Street and particularly 19 Princelet Street, which now hosts the Museum of Immigration and is an unrestored Huguenots silk master's house with many of its original Eighteenth Century fittings. After the Edict of Nantes in 1685 was revoked French Huguenots fled to Britain to escape religious prosecution. By the late eighteenth century over 23,000 were living in Spitalfields and the majority were involved in the silk trade, mainly weaving. Conditions were terrible, an inquest in 1863 found that a child of a weaver had died of blood poisoning due to the sheer filth of the living conditions with many families living and working in one house.

Parallel to Princelet Street is the beautiful Fournier Street with its row of eighteenth century houses built for wealthy French Huguenots. Along this Street is The Rectory, an original 1720s Hawksmoor building and now home to an art gallery. Fournier Street is named after George Fournier, a man descended from Huguenots who left money for the poor of Spitalfields on his death in 1834. The index books for this charity, forever capturing the names of those in receipt of this charity can be found at Tower Hamlets Local History Library and Archive.

In between these two streets you will see evidence for Spitalfields being the centre for immigration over the centuries. In 1975 the Machzike Adass Synagogue was converted into the Brick Lane Jamme Masjid. The Brick

Lane Jamme Masjid, this place of worship on the corner of Brick Lane and Fournier Street was originally built in 1743 as a Huguenot Protestant Chapel. In 1819 it became a Methodist Chapel and by 1897 it had become the Machzike Adass Synagogue. This building and the people that have entered its doors to worship are a symbol of the diversity of the area. The Sundial set high up on the wall bears witness to the diversity of the worshippers that have passed through its doors, this sundial erected, as it states in 1743 was built as part of the Protestant Chapel and the motto 'Umbra Sumus' translates as 'we are shadows'.



Carrying on the walk you will come across Christ Church School. This was built in 1873 – 1874 and the plaque on the School depicts the first purpose built schools of 1782. On the street front is a drinking fountain, designed to let the poor of the area have access to clean water.



On the left just passed the School is Henage Street and something more alcoholic than water, can be found in the Pride of Spitalfields, an always busy pub with a very

small interior and an always busy front. Many times its standing room only.

Further on beyond the textile retailers and wholesalers, another echo of the past. Brick Lane ends and Osborne Street begins. On the corner of Osborne Street and Old Montague Street is The Archers, at 42 Osborn Street a pub that has been established since 1824 originally known as the Archers Tavern. Further along is one of the newer pubs in the area the Apples and Pears at 26 Osborn Street which has an interesting street like interior and a nice quiet area at the back to escape the hustle and bustle. Finally in one note of trivial general knowledge Osborne Street saw at the London Recording Studios at 9-13 Osborne Street, formerly SARM (East) recording studios, part of the recording of Queen's Bohemian Rhapsody in 1975. Madonna, the Clash and Frankie Goes to Hollywood are some of the other artists that have recorded here. The interior of the studio can be seen on Queen's Somebody to Love music video.



Carry on walking down Osborne Street and turn right into the busy Whitechapel High Street and finish at the Whitechapel Gallery which has been in existence since 1901, bringing art to the people of East London, and my place of work.

Gary Haines

NEWS FROM NOWHERE CLUB

Patron: Peter Hennessy

'The club is a real beacon of light.' **Peter Cormack** (former curator of William Morris Gallery)

Founded in 1996, the club challenges the commercialisation & isolation of modern society.

We meet on the first Saturday evening of each month.

'Fellowship is life and the lack of fellowship is death.' **William Morris**

PROGRAMME 2013

Venue The Epicentre, West Street, Leytonstone E11 4LJ

Times 7.30pm Buffet (please bring something if you can) 8.00pm Talk & discussion, followed by social ending

Travel & Access

Stratford stations, 257 bus / Leytonstone tube (exit left) & 257 / W14 bus / Overground: Leytonstone High Rd, turn right, short walk
Disabled access, car park, bikes can be brought in, quiet children welcome / You can phone to confirm the talk will be as shown.

Meetings open to all - just turn up.

Enquiries mail@newsfromnowhereclub.org
0208 555 5248 / 0208 558 2845 / text 07887 352 179 www.newsfromnowhereclub.org

*Free entry: voluntary donations welcome.
Funded by Cann Hall Ward Forum*

Saturday 11th May 2013

'A Club Collection': The Work of a Local Artist

Speaker: Lucy Harrison

Lucy is compiling a collection of east London clubs, past, present & future, in a project called *A Club Collection*, commissioned by the London Legacy Development Corporation

to anticipate the opening of North Park community hub in the Olympic Park, summer 2013. The collection of images, ephemera, information & personal descriptions will be assembled online; aspects will be displayed at the hub, one of the first public spaces to open in the Park. Her many other projects include *Mapping Your Manor* (2011) & in 2008 she worked on a commission for *Art on the Underground* at Stratford station.

Saturday 8th June 2013

Tony Hancock 1924-1968: The Man, The Comedy, The Legacy

Speaker: Dan Peat

Dan lives locally & has been President of the Tony Hancock Appreciation Society for 25 years. 'We have meetings in Bournemouth where Tony lived when young with his mum & dad. Last year our guests included June Whitfield, as well as Ray Galton & Alan Simpson who wrote the Hancock's Half Hour shows. We send out a newsletter four times a year, keeping Tony's name alive. I was an undertaker for 30 years. People were dying to meet me. (Sorry about that). I am now 65 & retired, so can do even more for the Society. Be great to meet you all.' Dan will talk about Hancock the man, the people he worked with & the Society. We'll be treated to watching an episode of 'Hancock's Half Hour.'

Saturday 13th July 2013

Tara Arts

Speaker: Jatinder Verma (This meeting will be part of the Leytonstone Festival)

Tara Arts was the first Asian-led theatre company to be established in Britain, founded in 1977 as a response to the racist murder of 17 year old Gurdip Singh Chaggar. Their goal was to 'foster a global sensitivity in our locality'. In 1989 Tara Arts became the first Asian company to present work at the National Theatre. Their productions bring stories from around the world together with a variety of eastern & western theatre practices, using a distinct *Binglish* drama method fashioned by Artistic Director Jatinder Verma, drawing on the story-telling traditions of

Indian theatre, combining music & dance. Jatinder has been a driving force behind Tara Arts from its beginnings, motivated by his belief that performing art has the power to break down assumed cultural barriers.

Saturday 10th August 2013

Political Biography

Speaker: Rania Khan

Involved in campaigns near & far, Rania gives an autobiographical reflection on what it means to be politically engaged. She has been the youngest local government councillor in the UK, while her activities have included the 'Stop the Olympic Missiles' protest, Palestinian rights & 'We are Waltham Forest'. She has crossed bridges & defied easy stereotype. She will talk about how political action & personal life intersect, in what can be contradictory ways. Rania is an independent councillor in Tower Hamlets & a biology teacher.

Saturday 14th September 2013

Conflict & Competition: The Rise & Fall of London's Docks in the 19th century

Speaker: Dr Tom Wareham

By the outbreak of World War I, the Port of London had become the busiest & most important port in the world. This illustrated talk will discuss the rise of the docks & the course of events that led to their collapse. The docks are reviewed, with explanation of how they came into existence & their significance for, & impact upon, London's East End. Tom is curator of Community & Maritime History at the Museum of London Docklands, author of several books & appears on TV & radio. He is currently working on a book on the Princess Alice disaster.

Saturday 12th October 2013

Before the Plebs: Independent Working Class Education in the 19th century

Speaker: Keith Flett

The Plebs League started with a student strike at Ruskin College & education in Marxism for trade unionists. The space for independent working class education had been defined by

the 1870 Education Act & the compulsory schooling it introduced. It aimed to stamp out alternative education associated with the early radical & labour movement. Keith will look at this lost tradition of radical education in the British working class & reflect on what it might mean for the Left today. He is a research historian & convenor of the socialist history seminar at the Institute of Historical Research. His many publications include *Chartism After 1848* [Merlin].

Saturday 9th November 2013

'We are the 99%': A Personal & Social-Psychological View of Occupy

Speaker: Alexandra Stein

Since its start in September 2011, Occupy has contributed to a new era of public dialogue, reclaiming of public space & rapid diffusion of participatory democracy. In London, it has ranged from Occupy LSX to Occupation Records, the Occupied Times & Friern Barnet library. Alexandra will discuss the history, influences & methods of Occupy, with a focus on the Free University. A writer & associate lecturer in social psychology at Birkbeck University, she participated in Occupy London & taught a course at the Free University.

Saturday 14th December 2013

Poetry & Place: Reading Poetry Through Maps

Speaker: David Amery

David will introduce a novel approach to poetry reading, combining it with map reading in a way which brings both to life: there will be a close reading of maps & poems with the involvement of everyone in the group. Looking at poems by Romantic & Modern poets alongside maps of their original settings, we will aim to pinpoint their exact locations, track their movements & create a three-dimensional picture of their landscapes. Anyone is invited to read a short poem of their own featuring a particular place. David lives & works in east London & is an active member of poetry groups.

Letters, etc

Doreen has been receiving several requests for copies of the Victoria Park Book recently. Quite gratifying to know that there is continuing interest in that excellent publication! Here are some of the letters she received.

Mrs Janet Young, from Eastbourne, East Sussex, wrote in requesting a copy of the History of Victoria Park, and mentioned her connection with the Roman Road:

Although I now live in Eastbourne, I still visit my Mum, brother and auntie who all live in Roman Road. My brother and I still walk the short distance to Victoria Park nearly every week, (weather permitting). Although there have been many changes to the park, not all of which we think were needed, we still love going there. We are now both in our mid-fifties, but when we are over Victoria Park we are children again.

Our memories of the countless times we visited the park, firstly as young children with mum and dad and later with our friends, are priceless. We lived in Ravenscroft Buildings Columbia Road as children, so we were a bus ride away. I can remember the four of us walking to Barnet Grove to catch the No.8 bus. I can still hear my dad asking the conductor for 'two and two halves to the Aberdeen' then passing me the long bus ticket. There used to be a milk machine just as we got off the bus outside the church. Dad always used to buy one, it was a little waxy carton, just enough for one.

One of our most poignant memories is of the lido, queuing up before it opened on a beautiful summer's day. Everyone had their swimming gear wrapped in their towel under their arms, nothing else, just the money to get in and maybe a few coppers for some sweets from the cafe later on. I can still remember the changing rooms where you were given a coloured rubber band with the number on. You

then had to walk through the little paddling pool to get to the main swimming pool.

There weren't any sunbeds, just hard concrete where you put your towel to lay on. the bid blue water fountains were great fun to climb on, but the water was freezing cold, as was the pool itself, but that didn't stop us going in!

I can still visualise the lido very clearly, it was a beautiful pool where hundreds of children especially during the 1960s, spent their childhood. I have so many memories of the cafe which had the stage built behind it and where you could sit with a cup of tea in a proper green cup and saucer and feed the birds by the little lake outside. Sadly, all these places are now just a distant memory, demolished by the decision taken by people who obviously never spent their childhood there. So sad, but no one can take away those wonderful days from any of us ragamuffins who thought and still think that 'Vicky Park' is the best!

Liz Lofthouse, from Dalbeattie, Dumfries and Galloway wrote:

Thank you very much for sending the lovely Vicky Park book. My relative (father's cousin) was thrilled to receive it and the photos brought back memories.

My father (born 1921) loved the park as a young boy. Sadly for him he became a deeply unhappy man as time wore on. Wartime issue I think – the Blitz and then his Naval service on the Arctic Convoys. He spoke rarely about his East End background and he died in 2008. So now I'm piecing things together. I have a friend who lived in Digby Street so visit her and have walked and walked around the area.

Thank you for the leaflets of the Park and Tower Hamlets Cemetery. Both most interesting. And thank you for your map. I see that you are near to Cypress Street (No. 114 where my great grandparents lived). I will certainly get on to the East London Family

History Society. I so enjoy receiving the ELHS Newsletter – I do wish I lived nearer and was able to join in! You all do such wonderful and fascinating work and I for one, appreciate it, and thank you.

(Thank you for your kind words!)

Mrs J E Philp, from Perranporth, Cornwall, requested a copy of the Victoria Park Book and added:

My father was Charles Arthur Blowers, (see photo below). My grandfather lived and worked at the Great Assembly Hall for many years. As a family, we spent many good times there.

My father, as a young man asked Charrington for a loan to start up a Cricket team, father agreed to pay back a certain amount each week. On the final payment Charrington told my father, "You have proved yourself to me," and he gave back all the money to the team.

The team played at Victoria Park, and were named the Sphinx Assembly. They were part of the Finsbury League.



Charles Arthur Blowers, seated, front right.

Bookshelf

The Jewish Sephardic Cemeteries at Queen Mary, University of London. Dr. Caron Lipman. Pub. March 2012. 7.95. Available by post from Stephanie Gardner, Office of the Principal, Queen Mary University of London, Mile End Road, London E1 4NS. Or buy online at <http://eshop.qmul.ac.uk>

Pea Soup and Jellied Eels by Bernadette M. Redmond. (available as a Kindle book from Amazon, price 1.95). Another interesting biography of a nurse in the East End of London, this time at St Andrew's Hospital in Bromley by Bow. The hospital itself was demolished in 2009, and only memories remain of this former asylum. We are fortunate in having people like Bernadette prepared to share their experiences within the walls of places like St Andrews which played such a crucial role in the health of the community.

Baptists in Newham 1852-2012 by Colin Marchant. 2012. This compilation of the history of the Baptist congregation in the East End of London, with special emphasis on Newham, was produced by Colin Marchant, ad Baptist Minister, to celebrate the 400th Anniversary of the first British Baptist congregation in Spitalfields in 1612 and to mark the 2012 Olympic Park in Newham. An invaluable guide to the origins of Baptist Church buildings in and around Newham. The publication does not appear to be on general sale, but there is an email address for contact: cjm_shalom@yahoo.com.

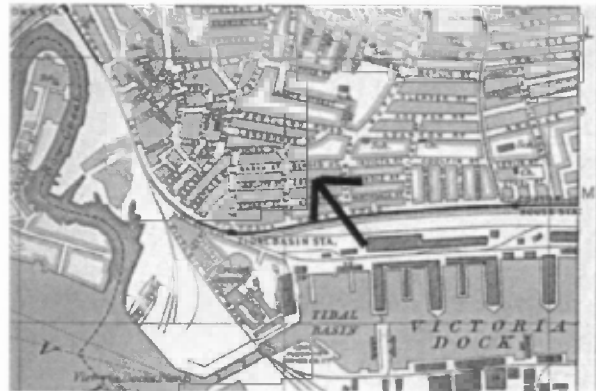
Philip Mernick's Email Inbox:

Below are some of the queries Philip has received and his responses.

From Paul Warner:

I am involved in some family tree research and am trying to locate Bengoe Street, West Ham. It doesn't exist now and I'm having trouble finding it on any maps, though I have found it listed in trade directories online – unfortunately without giving much of a clue as to where it was. My ancestors were recorded as living there on the 1881 census. Would you be able to help? Thanks in anticipation

Dear Paul, the street layout of Canning Town changed a lot post war. Bengoe Street is shown on this 1913 map. It would appear to have been where Boreham Avenue is now (just north of Custom House DLR station).



Venetia Livens asked:

I am wondering if you can help me or point me in the right direction as to who could help me?

I am a family historian for the Livens family and have come to a halt with my last ancestor - William Livens

Born: Approx 1780, unknown parents, brothers, sisters

Married: St Mathew's Church, Bethnal Green in May 1814 to Mary Barnes

Died: March 1843 in Leicester, Leicestershire

1841 census - no clue as to birthplace and parents, brothers, sisters

Occupation: Grocer and Tea Dealer

I am guessing that Mary and William Livens moved to Leicester is because Mary had extended family there.

Can you please help?

Philip responded:

ELHS is a local history society rather than family history so I have no great expertise on the matter. William was certainly in Leicester by 1828 as he is listed in Pigot's Directory of that year, also 1835 (but not 1822). Grocer at Northgate. These are available on the web hence rapid response. Poor Law rates for Bethnal Green might tell you if/when he was resident, if the books survive. You would need to contact Tower Hamlets Local Archives.

Tim (Dad of Sophie Brooker):

I am trying to help my 21 year old daughter who is studying History at Manchester University and needs to interview anyone who witnessed conditions during the Blitz. I have been searching East End contacts online and she would like to get in touch with someone she could interview as part of her dissertation on the existence of crime during the bombings in 1940.

Do you know of anyone or a group that could possible help? If they were 13 in 1940 this would make them 85 now so it may not be possible (although I thought I must at least try).

She would like to interview in the next 2-3 weeks if possible as her previous contact had to pull out. One of your links is "The East End I knew" by Allan Young - have you a contact number or address that you could give me? Any help would be appreciated.

Philip replied:

I am afraid I don't know of anyone who can help and putting the enquiry to our members would take too long for your deadline. Alan Young regrettably died a few years ago.

You could try contacting the Stairway to Heaven Trust as they are more directly related to the blitz.

<http://www.stairwaytoheavenmemorial.org/>
Age Exchange in Blackheath <http://www.age-exchange.org.uk/> is another possibility.

Elizabeth Wiggs

mailto:Bet@betwiggs.com

I am trying to put together my family history and know that my great grandfather lived in Silver Street Stepney around 1870+-. I can find no images of this road. Can you help me please? I would also be grateful for any advice you could give me with regard to family history research.

Philip's reply:

There were 3 Silver Streets in Stepney
Silver Street off Pelham Street (Spitalfields), renamed Spelman Street 1883
Silver Street off Prusom Street (Wapping), renamed Penang Street in 1912
Silver Street off Stepney Green, renumbered into Apsley Street in 1938.

Do you know which one it could have been?

Images of Stepney back streets are rare but Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives are the best people to ask, once you have pinned down the location. I am afraid I am not really into family history, for that you would be better off contacting East of London family History Society.

Ken Haywood:

I am currently carrying out a research project into the construction of the East London Railway during the period 1865 to 1876. You will no doubt be aware of its use of Brunel's Thames Tunnel as a river crossing, but my interest is in the construction of the rest of the railway; particularly the section north of Wapping to Whitechapel. One of the parts of the work which caused the most difficulty was where the line passed under the Eastern Dock of London Docks. I am aware of how it was constructed, etc., but

have not been able to find any drawings, photographs or illustrations of this major work. I have visited TNA, LMA and the Docklands Museum itself, but remain empty handed in relation to this aspect. In the course of my investigations, I contacted the PLA, who told me that their archive is at the Docklands Museum. However, as you again will no doubt be aware, the archivist at DM has just left for pastures new, and the Museum will not even accept enquiries about their PLA archive until a new archivist is appointed. In this light, I wondered if you could let me know if you have any knowledge of any

Philip's response:

I am afraid I can't help you as ELHS has no library or archives other than its past publications. Even if we had published something about the East London Railway in the past it would have been derived from standard publishers such as Oakwood Press. The only other people I could suggest you ask are History of Wapping Trust and Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives.

Sanders Bros. - A significant business born in Bethnal Green

Back in the 1880s, Globe Road in Bethnal Green was host to a large variety of businesses, but one particular business, now long-forgotten, was started there in 1887 and rose to become the largest distributor of cereal products in the United Kingdom.

Originally a corn trader and wholesaler, it seems, the business embarked in the 1890s on a policy of opening branch stores in the East End of London and by the turn of the twentieth century had moved its headquarters to Narrow Street, Limehouse.

By 1925, when the decision was taken to list the company's shares on the Stock Exchange,

there were over 150 branch stores across London and suburbs, new premises at Thomas Street, Limehouse, backing onto the Limehouse Cut, and the business was also a significant food manufacturer and wholesaler – of products ranging from custard and jellies, to blancmanges, cake mixes, tea dainties and biscuits.

The market capitalisation of the business by this stage was higher than Marks & Spencer, and by the beginning of the Second World War it had 270 stores: more than J.Sainsbury's and many more than its younger grocery rival, Tesco.

The name of the business, now long forgotten: Sanders Bros. (Stores) Limited, a corn merchant and grocer. In the early part of the twentieth century, it seems that the business badged itself as "The People's Corn and Flour Market", its selling message being that prices were kept low as a result of many of Sanders Bros. Produce being manufactured or imported directly, and as a result there was "no middleman's profits [for the customer] to pay".

As a corn merchant and seedsman, in the earlier part of its history, Sanders Bros. was a significant retailer of straw and other foodstuffs for the many horses in London used for transportation, as well as poultry and rabbit food for the East End's many chickens, cage birds and rabbits. As a marketing approach similar to one applied by Sainsbury's, Sanders Bros. included a card within each of their own brand packs of custard de-luxe, jellies and blancmanges: these trade cards included series featuring dogs, pigeons and rabbits. With the demise of the importance of horses in transportation and lower numbers of people keeping chickens in the 1920s and 30s, Sanders Bros. increased their focus on groceries and biscuits, as they also developed a significant branch network outside their East London heartland.

In common with many businesses at the time, no company archive has survived for Sanders Bros. The history of the business has had to be reconstructed using a wide range of sources, greatly helped by online research tools, and which have also helped identify a large number of the individuals working within the business, and their part in the Sanders Bros. story, which is that of a very significant importer, manufacturer, wholesaler and retailer.

Although by 1950, the Sanders Bros. store network extended to Northampton in the North, Brighton and Hove in the South and Bristol in the West, and flour production continued in Cambridgeshire, the business was still headquartered in the East End of London, and many of the roads, streets, markets and waterways of East London had been affected in some way by Sanders Bros. over a number of decades, including:

254 Globe Road, Bethnal Green – the original store taken on by Thomas Sanders in 1887;
111 – 113 Narrow Street, Limehouse – headquarters, warehouse and import division, using Duke Shore Wharf 1902-1923;
48 Thomas Road (previously Thomas Street), Limehouse – headquarters and biscuit factory representing over 4 acres of land with significant frontage to the Limehouse Cut. Sanders Bros. would have been a major employer in the Limehouse area 1923 – c.1952;

6, Furze Street, Limehouse – garage (1918-19);

40, Havannah Street, Isle of Dogs – stables and garage (1921-27);

Branch Road, Limehouse - workshop (1931-35);

Rose Lane, Ratcliffe – workshop (1933-35);

As well as over 50 stores in the East of London open in many cases from the turn of the century to the early 1950s.

As London's buildings and streets have changed so much over the last 50 years, few traces remain of the business which was once the UK's largest distributor of cereal products. Only the trade directories and increasing numbers of advertisements and news articles identified in the national and local press allow us a glimpse into the world of this once large and well-known business, with its roots in the East End of London. Census returns, electoral registers and similar sources also have allowed an increasingly detailed view of the people - store managers, assistants, sack-menders, drivers and engineers, warehousemen, dog and game food manufacturers and biscuit factory workers, as well as the Directors, to help build up a picture of the people and their roles within this major East End business, and its development over a period of 70 years.

Neil Tyler



*Sanders Bros Church Street, 1924
Image courtesy Newham Heritage & Archives*

EAST END PHOTOGRAPHERS NO. 13: Arthur Griffiths

If you walk down Armagh Road - 'the heart of Bow', as a nearby placard proclaims - from Old Ford Road, past the chapel and the serried ranks of 1970s blocks of flats, to the junction with Roman Road and its busy street market, you may not realise that you have only covered barely a third of the original street. Armagh Road, like Caesar's Gaul, has been divided into three parts, and what remains today is only the poor rump of a much longer street.

The Northern section of the original street - presumably so named from its settlement by Irish immigrants in the early 19th century - extending almost as far as the canal, was redeveloped after the war', and renamed Sycamore Avenue, while the Southern section, from Roman Road to the junction with Tredegar Road, was renamed Hewison Street some twenty odd years ago to commemorate Elizabeth Hewison, a local councillor. Most histories of the area ignore the street - not even Pevsner bothers to mention the flats, or even the area's former claim to fame in the oldest fish and chips shop in London, at 400 Old Ford Road (long gone).

But tucked away near the junction with Roman Road stood another shop with perhaps an even greater claim - the firm of A P Griffiths, at 98 Armagh Road, the very last of the East End's Victorian photographic studios. Somehow, Griffiths managed to outlast not only all its local rivals - Waltenberg, closed in the 1930s; Bartier, a victim of wartime bombing; Whiffin similarly; even Boris had called it a day in the 1960s - but even the once famous names of the West End studios, such as Bassano, Elliott & Fry, the London Stereoscopic Company etc. Griffiths clung on into the 1970s, by which time it had become an anachronism, while all around it Armagh Road, which had largely escaped the bombing, was being totally transformed by the Council's new housing blocks. Perhaps the studio's

location in a side street helped its survival. It did not quite achieve its centenary, but it wasn't far off.

Griffiths' photographic studio was a father and son combination. As they both had the same name, they will be referred to here as Arthur and Percy Griffiths. Arthur Griffiths was a Bethnal Green lad, born in Hackney Road in 1864. By the mid - 1880s, he had taken over his father's business of fancy trimmings manufacturer, and moved to Usk Street, where he married Ellen Bryers in 1888. Two years later, Griffiths made his move to the iconic address of 98 Armagh Road, and in 1894 ditched the trimmings for good, and replaced them with a photographic studio. It may have been slightly off the main streets, but it was enormously successful, so much so that in 1904, Arthur added a second studio in Gibraltar Walk. This studio, however, failed to find sufficient customers, and closed after a mere 18 months,

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The couple had three children, including a son Percy, born in 1897. Arthur and Percy lived over the shop in Armagh Road until 1909, when, to the amazement of the locals, Arthur sold the shop to Walter Butler, a private photographer living just round the corner in Tredegar Road. The reasons for the sale remain obscure, but shortly after Arthur announced the purchase of a new studio at 282a New Cross Road Deptford, from Wilfred Roberts, who had been running it rather unsuccessfully for the past year. The twin Griffiths quickly turned it round - their Midas touch had not deserted them - and before long,

had installed a manager in the shape of a young South African, Alfred Sheppy (1868 - 1944) to look after its day to day operation. The impending Great War clearly took its toll, both on the studio, and on the Griffiths' family, yet during this extremely difficult period, Arthur Griffiths opened yet another studio at 440 Old Kent Road, in Southwark. It was sold off to Ellen Cohen after the war, by which time Percy had become a full partner in the business ; in 1920 the firm's style became A P Griffiths & Son. A bigger surprise in the immediate aftermath of war was Walter Butler's decision to retire, despite the intermittent help of his son, a gunner in the London Regiment's Machine Gun Corps. And so, Percy Griffiths once more took over control of 98 Armagh Road, gradually introducing his own family into the business ; in 1935 the style was changed to AP Griffiths & Sons. The Deptford studio was perhaps considered too far away after the war; when Sheppy left in 19221 it was sold out of the trade.

Arthur Griffiths' wife died suddenly in 1900, and two years later he married Charlotte Howey, like him recently widowed. She had been looking after her former husband's public house, the 'Red Lion' in Islington, since his death. She too, died rather suddenly in 1925. The twice widowed Arthur moved out of the East End to Barnet in the late 1920s, with Percy in sole charge at Armagh Road. Percy himself had found a property in Woodford Wells for he and his wife Emma.

The studio trundled on through the Second World War, and into the post - war era with hardly a change. Like many local East End photographers, Percy Griffiths supplemented his studio takings with a handful of commercial contracts, and as long as these continued to roll in, they could be offset against the declining customers in the studio. By the 1960s, it is unlikely that the studio was any longer making ends meet, but presumably was kept afloat by Percy Griffiths' stubborn pride. It seems that on more than one occasion

during this period, the threat of a compulsory purchase order hung over the studio; the building of the flats in the late 1960s and early 1970s was probably regarded as the beginning of the end. In effect, Percy kept the 20th century at bay for as long as he could, but in the end, a moth - eaten studio in a moth - eaten area was simply doomed. At 77, Percy finally closed the studio in 1974. Eighty years had passed since Arthur had opened 98 Armagh Road. It is an achievement which deserves a plaque somewhere near the site.

Arthur Griffiths died in Barnet in 1938, and Percy in Woodford forty years later. Almost another forty years have passed since the closure, but it seems reasonable to assume that there may still be members of the Society who, as children, were taken to Griffiths for their photograph. If there are any members to whom this applies, the Society would be most interested to hear their stories - and also share any photographs.

And of course, this also applies to any other relations. As is far too often the case, no records survive from the firm, and despite their long tenure, not too many examples of their work. So have a look through those old albums NOW.

DAVID WEBB

Some Images from Philip Mernick's collection:





100 Years Ago: Sylvia Pankhurst and the East London Suffragettes

Our picture shows Bromley High Street and Devons Road, from 1911. The roads formed a junction here, until they were realigned. In the central island was a drinking fountain with gas lamp and horse trough, referred to both by Sylvia Pankhurst and George Lansbury as the 'Obelisk'. This area was also the Village Green and had stocks and a whipping post until mid 19th century. The Black Swan Pub stood on the eastern side of junction of High Street with Bow Road and The Rose and Crown Pub, in Stroudley Walk, previously Devons Road, a 19th century building replaced the Bowling Green Inn.

In February 1913 Sylvia Pankhurst stood on a cart placed against the wall of the LCC school and made an impassioned speech to the people of Bow urging them to join the cause for women's right to vote. The meeting passed without incident, so Sylvia, in a desperate attempt to attract attention, picked up a stone

and smashed the window of the undertaker's shop, C Selby and Son, which is clearly visible in the picture.

Mrs Watkins, Mrs Moore and Annie Lansbury, the daughter of George Lansbury were arrested along with Sylvia. Willie Lansbury broke a window in the Bromley Public Hall, and Zelig Emerson, not to be outdone, broke a window of the Liberal Club in Bow Road. They were taken to Bow Police Station and charged. Sylvia, Willie and Zelig were sentenced to two months hard labour. Annie, Mrs Moore and Mrs Watkins received a month each. Once in Holloway, Sylvia, Zelig and Mrs Watkins embarked on a hunger strike. So began a series of disturbances, arrests and hunger strikes for these women determined to publicise their cause for women's franchise. The East End Campaign for women's suffrage had begun in earnest.

Rosemary Taylor

