

 **COR BLIMEY GUVNOR...IT'S THE** 

COCKNEY

HERITAGE FESTIVAL

STREET
PARTIES
SINGALONGS
FAMILY EVENTS

GUIDED
Walks
DOWN
Memory
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FREE
TALKS
EXHIBITIONS
AND
FILM
SCREENINGS

JULY
18-27
2013

CELEBRATING COCKNEY
HISTORY & CULTURE

ORGANISED BY COCKNEY HERITAGE TRUST AND
TOWER HAMLETS LOCAL HISTORY LIBRARY & ARCHIVES

PUT ON YER
WHISTLES
FOR A
RIGHT OLD
KNEES UP

Brochure for Cockney Heritage Festival 2013

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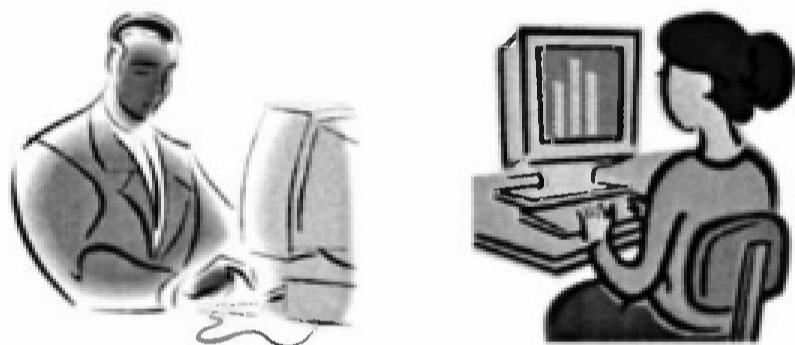
Editorial Note:

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.



Researching Graves

Looking for ancestors in the East End? Join Doreen and Diane Kendall and assist in recording monumental inscriptions in Tower Hamlets Cemetery on the second Sunday of each month, from 2-4 pm.

All volunteers welcome.

Tower Hamlets Cemetery Park is close to Mile End Station.

Guided Walks around the cemetery are offered on the 3rd Sunday of every month starting at 2pm. A good place to begin if you have not been there before and want to get to know the cemetery.

Some interesting news - The Lodge, situated just inside the main gate of the Cemetery has become vacant, and the Friends were pleased that their proposal to take over the building and use it for their extensive and varied activities, has been accepted by the London Borough of Tower Hamlets! No doubt the building will need refurbishing and adapting for this use, but this is really good news, and we will continue to update you on their progress.

Cover picture

The picture gracing our cover is the front page of the programme for the Cockney Festival held in July. ELHS had a table at the event launch.

Produced by Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives in partnership with Cockney Heritage Trust, the programme included exhibitions, talks, walks and film shows held in many locations around the borough.

East London History Society Lecture Programme

Thursday Sept 12

Fly a Flag for Poplar, a rarely seen 1975 film that includes archive and documentary material.

Thursday October 10

Elizabethan playhouses in The East End
Julian Bowsher

Thursday November 21

Images from The Gentle Author's London Album
The Gentle Author

Thursday December 12

The Lost Squares of Hackney
William Palin

We hope to have the following speakers for January to May 2014 but dates and titles won't be available until the next Newsletter:

Samantha Bird, Stephanie Maltman, Stan Newens, Ray Newton, David Webb.

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

What to Do and See

(You might just be able to visit this!)

Black Eyes and Lemonade: Curating Popular Art

9 March – 1 September 2013 Pat Matthews Gallery (Gallery 4)

The Whitechapel Gallery presents a new archive display revisiting the Gallery's 1951 exhibition Black Eyes and Lemonade. Coinciding with the Festival of Britain, the exhibition challenged established ideas about the cultural value attached to particular kinds of objects. Celebrating everyday items, from the traditional and the handmade to the mass produced, it included lavishly decorated pub mirrors, an edible model of St Paul's Cathedral and a talking lemon advertising Idris lemon squash.

This presentation at the Whitechapel Gallery includes several of the original exhibits from 1951, including the fireplace in the shape of an Airedale dog, alongside unseen archive material from the University of Brighton Design Archives, the Vogue Archives and the Whitechapel Gallery Archive. Re-examining Black Eyes and Lemonade over half a century after it was originally staged, the exhibition looks afresh at the presentation and curation of popular art.

Entitled **Black Eyes and Lemonade**, after the Thomas Moore poem Intercepted Letters or The Two-Penny Post Bag (1813), the original exhibition explored topics including advertising, toys, festivities and souvenirs and featured ship figureheads, old Valentines, quilts and Salvation Army uniforms. All the exhibits shown were made or manufactured in Britain.

The 1951 exhibition was organised by artist, designer and writer Barbara Jones. It was divided into categories such as Home, Birth-Marriage-Death, Man's Own Image and Commerce & Industry, reflecting Jones's ideas

on museum culture and questioning the cultural values attached to both handmade and machine made objects. Stating that 'the museum eye must be abandoned', Jones created a provocative spectacle which posed questions about hierarchies of value, making and manufacturing as well as consumption while championing the judgement of makers, collectors and consumers.

Many of the items included in the exhibition came from Jones's own collection and were acquired during travels, from bazaars, second-hand shops, and directly from makers. Further exhibits were sourced during a road trip in June 1951 that Jones made in a converted London taxi with her co-organiser Tom Ingram. This presentation features material from Jones's surviving studio, highlighting her innovative curatorial approach and the connections she was able to draw across images and objects.

The exhibition is part of the Whitechapel Gallery's dedicated programme curating archives of individual artists or institutions. The exhibition is co-curated with director of the Museum of British Folklore, Simon Costin, design historian Catherine Moriarty and Curator, Archive Gallery, Whitechapel Gallery, Nayia Yiakoumaki.

Visitor Information Opening times: Tuesday – Sunday, 11am – 6pm, Thursdays 11am – 9pm. Admission free. Whitechapel Gallery, 77 – 82 Whitechapel High Street, London E1 7QX. Nearest London Underground Station: Aldgate East, Liverpool Street, Tower Gateway DLR. T + 44 (0) 20 7522 7888 info@whitechapelgallery.org whitechapelgallery.org Press Information Claire Rocha da Cruz on 020 7522 7880, 07811 456 806 or email Clairerochadaacruz@whitechapelgallery.org Daisy Mallabar on 020 7522 7871 or email DaisyMallabar@whitechapelgallery.org

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**

The Wick - newspaper issue 2 (Summer 2012 edition)

'At A Crossroads' is the theme of the second edition of The Wick - a free art newspaper published by the See Studio in Hackney Wick. In this paper, publisher Daren Ellis and editor Isaac Marrero tie together an array of articles, including a feature about the future developments in Hackney Wick from an architecture/planning perspective, photographs that depict the landscapes in and around the Olympic site, a tongue-in-cheek 'A-Z Survival Guide to the Olympics' and my own piece 'Fragments of Hackney Wick: A Potted Social History'. The editors forward makes a clear case for why The Wick paper is an important contribution in the current landscape of critical debate surrounding the Olympics:

"Sandwiched between the opulence of the Olympic Park and the funding cuts hitting local boroughs, Hackney Wick and Fish Island (HWFI) are at a crossroads...This issue of *The Wick* tries to provide material to get this discussion started. In the midst of this development frenzy, we have looked back to both the distant and recent past. This is an attempt to rescue from oblivion some of the history and stories that have shaped this peculiar island, from noxious smells to failed advertising murals. We believe in the importance of active remembering, not as nostalgia but of active memory." The paper would be a particularly absorbing read for any East London History Society members with an interest in linking histories of the East End with current architectural and development agendas, and wider political debate concerning the Olympics.

Copies of The Wick paper are available from the See Studio, 13 Prince Edward Rd, E9 5LX

End of the Road for Robin Hood Estate

Robin Hood Estate, a 1970s experiment in community living has been reduced to rubble by the bulldozers. Once the pride of post-war municipal architecture, for a while it had iconic status, and was admired by architects for its innovative design, but which slowly descended into decay and disillusion, the draughty, leaky flats are being demolished to make way for an ambitious regeneration programme for the construction of 1,600 new homes, including 700 low-cost properties.

The first phase included 98 new homes for families in properties soon to be pulled down who want to stay in the neighbourhood.

Letters, etc

Frank Weston writes:

Just received the current issue of the newsletter and am kicking myself for not contacting you before re Griffiths. I have been meaning to for a while. I lived just three doors away from Percy's studio up until my early twenties. My mother was still there until the houses were demolished around 1971/72. I have some memories and photographs including shots I took of Armagh Road before, during and after the destruction of the old terraced houses. At least two shots include Griffiths shop front. I also have a 1945 peace party photograph which includes Percy in the shot. I also have a photograph by Butler at the same address.

If this is of interest to you I will go through my photographs and also put together what memories I have.

In your article there is no mention of Percy's two sons who worked with him. I remember the name of one but will have to check with my sisters to see if they can recall the other. In your article you mention that Armagh Road had "largely escaped the bombing" In actual fact a bomb struck Armagh Road just across the street from Griffiths and wiped out six terraced houses and leaving not much more than a shell of the rather grand detached house that belonged to the Eastwell family of grocers who had stalls in Roman Road market. This was between October 7th 1940 and June 6th 1941.

June Garden comments on the same story:

I was pleased to read the article about East End Photographers in the latest East London History Society newsletter. I enclose photos which may be of interest to you. They are of 3 generations of my family whose photos were taken at Griffiths studio: my maternal grandmother, Sophia Ada Stokes, (nee Fuller); my father Sam Barrall and pictures of my

sister, Jean, and myself; taken to the studio to have our pictures taken in the uniform of Coborn Grammar School. These were taken in 1958 and 1959.

I live in Kent now and am sorry not to be able to attend your events but am grateful to be able to keep in touch with my roots through your efforts.



Above: Jean and June in their Coborn School uniforms, 1958 and 1959.



Sam Barrall July 1941



Nan Stokes c 1904

John Curtis writes:

BRICK LANE OF OLD.

Reading the item 'In my father's footsteps' in the Spring/Summer 2013 issue made me think about a similar walk but some eighty or so years ago.

Starting in Selater Street, between here and Bethnal Green Road was a vast bomb site. In the street itself, I recall this being a veritable zoo on Sundays, full of men selling cagebirds, puppies, fishes, chicks, etc. I seem to remember two particular stalls near to Brick Lane, one selling sarsaparilla wine and the other apple fritters. Turning left into Brick Lane, a place I recall was a pie and mash shop. Opposite Selater Street is Cheshire Street and a railway arch along here housed one of our 'secrets', one which we explored, a collection of government surplus goods and suchlike. Here were things like military gas-masks, etc. Also down here were some steps going over the railway and leading to Pedley Street.

Retracing our steps, turning left and continuing down Brick Lane, there came the railway lines running over the road, forming a rather long 'tunnel'. Here you could make your voice echo by shouting out. Now the lines have been reduced and the overhead bridge is much smaller.

On the right comes Quaker Street and my memory of this is that my mother told me the family, together with their scanty household contents, had to sleep in the street, under the railway arches, because of having to do a moonlight flit due to not having paid the rent. Now comes the big firm of the area, Truman's Brewery. Their beer was delivered to pubs by horse and cart. When the day's work was over, the horses were unharnessed, led to a ramp that led to their upper floor stabling and given a slap on the rump with a shout for them to gee-up. Off they would run, up the ramp to a well-earned feed and rest. We kids would stand and watch this.

I'm coming now to an area with which I'm much more familiar. When my father died, I

lived with my Gran and family at 87 Brick Lane. This was above a loction shop and the shop occupier and his family lived above the shop. We occupied the upper floor and the attic. How we all fitted in, I don't know. There was my Grandmother and Grandfather, three uncles, an aunt and myself. I may say I knew of much larger families in similar accommodation.

Coming to Hanbury Street, on one corner was a bakers and I stood and watched the baker many times late at night, fascinated by the process of mixing the dough and all the other business of baking. Down the street, towards Commercial Street, stood Hanbury Street Hall, the church hall of Christchurch. Here we would attend Sunday School. More or less opposite the hall was the site of one of Jack the Ripper's murders, later built over as part of Truman's Brewery. A bit further down was Funnels the bakers. Here was born Bud Flannigan of Crazy Gang fame.

Retracing our steps to Brick Lane and turning right, to our left was a small doorway and through this a narrow passageway led to a room where I can remember lining up for some soup. I think this may have been run by the church. Continuing, we came to the synagogue on the corner of Fournier Street. I can recall standing on the edge of a large bomb crater near this, curiously waiting to see what any rescue workers uncovered. Opposite the synagogue was the steam baths and I associate this with knots of Jewish men standing and chatting. I never did get to use these baths.

Now we come to my old school. This was Christchurch Elementary School, attended by me from around 1933/4 until 1941, when I won a place to Raines Foundation School for Boys, evacuated at that time to Camberley in Surrey. We were all local kids and all walked to school. No lines of cars then and I doubt very much if any of our parents owned one. My Grandfather was the caretaker here and I remember my uncle telling me that the headmaster told him to ask his father if he was

interested in taking the job - and my uncle ran all the way home to ask him. Next to the school was the Seven Stars pub and I saw a few New Years in there during my later teens. Now it is just a wreck!

A bit further on is Fashion Street. Just a little way down here was a greengrocers that also sold coal. There was a similar shop in adjacent Flower and Dean Street and I used to have to go to either of these to buy 7lb of coal, with my father's words in my ears "Don't let them serve you too much dust". Then I would hump my coal up the stairs to our sixth-floor flat. Back into Brick Lane and The Mayfair came into view. Alas it is no more and only the frontage survives. Our memories of this cover Wolfie the commissionaire. He wore a blue topcoat and a peaked military style cap. In the days of having to queue up, he would beckon you forward with the cry of "two one and nines" or whatever seats were available. Our lot of teenagers always occupied the same area at the back of the stalls. We also, before courting days, could gain entry by bribing one of the cinema workers. He would let us in by an exit door in Chicksand Street and we would go past him, giving him a cigarette.

Mentioning Chicksand Street, at the Brick Lane corner as kids would 'bunk on' the bumpers of cars or the tailboards of lorries or horse and carts, and have a ride down to Great Garden Street, where most of the vehicles turned another corner. Great Garden Street was later renamed Greatorex Street.

On the other side of the road to The Mayfair was The Flowery, real name Flower and Dean Street. The street had a very bad reputation but I only recall two murders there in my time. This was the street in which I lived. At the Brick Lane end were remnants of what the street used to contain, lodging houses, one for men and the other for women. It is said that three of Jack the Ripper's victims lived here at one time. In my time, this was a street of six-storey flats, all built around the end of the nineteenth century. I lived at 25 Ruth House, a

flat in the roof space which I considered to be the sixth floor.

Back in Brick Lane, at the corner of The Flowery was Katies, a grocery shop, where food could be bought in very small quantities. If my Dad was flush, we could afford a pennorth of jam, and this was served wrapped up in paper. In those days I thought all biscuits were 'broken biscuits' and butter was an unheard of luxury - marge (margarine) being the norm!

Just around the corner was the barber. There I had to go for my haircuts. Out would come a board, placed across the arms of the chair so that you were at the height at which the barber could work. When finished you were given the choice of a small gift - a notebook comes to mind - and all for a copper or two.

I think I'll finish my little journey down memory land here, although I suppose many more could be dredged up.

Incidentally, I've just celebrated my eighty-fourth birthday and at the time of these recollections my name was not John Curtis but Johnny Cohen. I changed it when I was twenty-one. Are any of my contemporaries reading this?

EAST END PHOTOGRAPHERS No 14 - James Flude and Robert Sands

An earlier article in this series, in 2010, proposed Eliza Burrows as the owner of the East End's first commercial photographic studio in Commercial Road in 1854. However, a recent discovery has thrown this claim into some doubt, and raised the intriguing possibility of a rival establishment in the East End in the same year.

Philip Mernick's find of an ambrotype taken by James Flude is illustrated below. An ambrotype was a wet collodion daguerrotype on glass, reversed to give a mirror image, and usually kept in a plush - lined case to avoid exposure to the light.



Flude (1823 - 1899) was a bookbinder with premises in Postern Row, a small terrace directly opposite to the Tower of London. It was one of the most prominent such firms in the East End, and Flude moved his premises several times over the next few decades as the business expanded, finally ending up in a custom - built factory in Hooper Square, off Leaman Street, in the 1880s. It was not uncommon in the early days of photography, to combine it with a separate business, always useful to fall back on if demand tailed off. Flude is never listed as a photographer in any of the London or local directories of the period, which suggests that he only regarded photography as a minor sideline to his main business. Perhaps Flude hoped for business from the Tower personnel which never materialized. Ambrotypes were a luxury trade - a single example could easily cost a week's

wages for an average worker. Clearly the bookbinding business was paramount, and Flude's involvement with photography probably very brief - no evidence has yet emerged to suggest that Flude was still working as a photographer by the time the carte de visite arrived in the early 1860s.

Postern Row was a relic of the early 18th century, and somewhat jerry - built - in parts it was only 25 feet wide. By the early 19th century it housed a miscellaneous collection of small shops and public buildings - Flude had himself acquired the premises of a former bookseller, Thomas Harris, while next door stood the Nag's Head public house. During building work in the 1850s, a section of the Roman London Wall was excavated, only to be subsequently reburied in the foundations of a warehouse. In the late 1850s Flude acquired a partner, Joseph Birch, and made his first move to larger premises in Great Prescott Street. Within a few short years, Flude had moved a few doors down the street to accommodate the demands of his business, and taken on another partner in George Skelt. The last move to Hooper Square came in 1879, and consolidated Flude's reputation in the binding trade. The photographic venture had been firmly consigned to the past.

There was another reason for Flude's relatively brief flirtation with photography, obliquely hinted on his trade label : 'No connection with next door'. Next door, at 3 Postern Row, was the firm of Robert Sands, which unlike Flude, were 'proper' photographers - i.e. full - time, with no lucrative sidelines to fall back on. Sands may even have opened for business in the key year of 1854, when photography in Great Britain was released from the clutches of Richard Beard's monopolistic patent. Robert Sands was born in Atherstone, near Coventry , in 1813, and had been at various times a comb maker, a commercial traveller, and a photographic goods dealer, before turning to photography solely. He had three sons and two daughters with his wife Elizabeth Lyne, and all of them helped out in the studio at various times over the next thirty

years. There were times when business was precarious, and Sands did not escape; despite his appointment as military portrait painter to the Tower of London, he was declared bankrupt in November 1861, and served a brief sentence for debt in the notorious Whitecross Street Prison. Thereafter, for some time, Sands concentrated on his goods dealership, and let his sons run the photographic business.

The carte de visite boom of the early 1860s helped re-establish the studio, and for a brief period Sands opened a second studio at 79 Minories, just round the corner from Postern Row. It never achieved the status of Postern Row, and Sands made it over to an employee, a German artist named Emil Folk (1830 - 1887); it closed after only a couple of years. By the mid - 1860s, the firm was being run by Sands' two elder sons, Edward and William. Possibly to enhance the appearance of the firm, the Sands brothers renamed it 'The Cooperative Photographic Society' for a brief period in the early 1870s; it did not catch on, and was eventually abandoned. In 1881 Edward Sands emigrated to Australia, married a local girl and opened a photographic studio in Melbourne, which continued to the end of the century. He died in Williamstown in Victoria, Australia in 1914.

The studio continued under the control of William together with Robert junior, with help from their sister Sophia Maria for a short time, until she married a German tailor, Frederick Kopieske and sadly died in childbirth in 1882. Robert Sands, her father and the family patriarch, died on August 3 in the same year. By now, the onward march of the underground railway to Tower Hill was becoming a real threat. Postern Row was demolished in stages during the 1880s; number 3 had to be sacrificed shortly after the death of Robert Sands, and the firm moved a few doors further down the terrace for the last couple of years of its existence. In 1885, it was all over; Postern Row vanished forever and today only a somewhat wider roadway opposite to the Tower provides any indication of its former

location. The Sands family decided that it was a good time to close down their operations, rather than try to relocate. Robert Sands junior became a sugar baker in Whitechapel.

Ironically, James Flude's business was also blighted by railway development in the area, specifically the Southern Railway's extension and goods depot off Leaman Street. In 1892, Flude dissolved his partnership with his surviving partner, George Skelt, closed down the business and retired to Southend, where he died on May 2 1899. The bookbinders' premises were demolished, along with the rest of Hooper Square, in 1893. Flude was 75 at the time of his death; in his heyday, he had employed a staff of 65. It had been a very successful career, and it is intriguing to speculate how it might have progressed if Flude had persevered with his photography. We will never know the identity of the young man who posed for his photograph one day in the 1850s. We can be certain that it was not a casual wander in to the studio; this would have been a booked appointment, and would have taken some considerable time to set up and execute. His own immortality is ensured by his use of what is most probably the East End's oldest photographic studio.



David Webb

Bookshelf

Stepney Then & Now In Colour, Samantha L. Bird, History Press. ISBN 978-0-7524-7958-3.
96 pages, card covers. 2013

Samantha Bird's previous publication was the scholarly Stepney published in 2011 and she spoke to ELHS on the reconstruction of Stepney in February 2012. This book follows the familiar History Press pictorial style. It comprises then and now images of streets and buildings across the old Borough of Stepney in a more or less west to east direction. The text and pictures (many of the early ones supplied by Bancroft Road) are comprehensive but illustrate only too well how few buildings of major importance survive from that area; also how mean many of the streets were. Anyone with memories of Stepney (good or bad) will find the contents very interesting.

There are a few textual points I, however, would dare to take issue with. As a Poplarite I would query the back page claim that Stepney gained iconic status for architecture during the Festival of Britain.

More serious in my opinion is the impression given in the St Katherine's Dock piece that it benefited East London by sweeping away more than a thousand slum dwellings. The approval of the 1825 Dock Bill was an early and extreme example, still apparently followed by Mayors of London of both political hue, that only money talks and that the interest of Commerce must override the needs of the ordinary citizen, who in those "good old days" wasn't even entitled to a vote. You only have to look at the contemporary maps showing the planned dock overlaid on rows of streets to see the effect this was to have. Landowners were compensated, everyone else had to shift. However, don't let my hobby horses put you off, as I said earlier there is lots of interest here.

Also how about another talk Samantha!

The East End. An Illustrated A-Z historical guide, Richard Tames, Historical Publications Ltd.,

www.historicalpublications.co.uk. ISBN 978-1-905286-33-5, 192 pages, card covers.
Published June 2013, £14.95

This book is in the format of the Harold Finch's 1996 *The Tower Hamlets Connection*, still available from Bancroft Road, but covers a much wider area both topic wise and geographically - I liked it! It is suitable for browsing or looking up specific references, although indexing by category rather than simple alphabet, makes the latter awkward.

I like books like this where you look up something specific and find a page full of other interesting subjects that you have to read about, such as Pie & Mash, a rare topic for historical guides. The book also has sufficient illustrations to make browsing pleasurable. I have no doubt that experts will find a few points to query, Three Mills Island, is surely not on Bow Creek, but that adds an extra frisson to the exploration.

Philip Mernick

London and the Georgian Navy by Philip MacDougall.

Publication: 17th June, £14.99

Paperback original, 978-0-7524-7485-4

From the Admiralty Building and Somerset House, to the Naval Hospital at Greenwich and the dockyards of Woolwich and Deptford along with nearby wharves and warehouses, the importance of London to the Navy has been long-established.

In fact, Georgian London was the hub of the world's largest industrial-military complex which underpinned a global trading empire that was entirely dependent on the Royal Navy for securing the safety of sea routes and facilitating the operation of new trade monopolies. Philip MacDougall explores the political and military administration of the Navy and the key personalities involved. He

also looks at the large number of buildings which housed different aspects of this process and the locations of key manufacturing and service industries such as dockyards, chandlers, and storage of food and ordnance. He also considers the importance of Londoners as a recruitment resource.

Copies can be obtained from your local bookshop, Amazon, or by visiting our website on www.thehistorypress.co.uk. Direct Sales: 01235 465500

Philip MacDougall is a founding member of the Naval Dockyards Society and he has travelled and researched state-owned dockyards at home and abroad. Contact Philip for an accompanied walk around London's key naval sites: www.philipmacdougallbooks.co.uk. He lives in Chichester.

London E1 by Robert Poole, Introduction by Rachel Lichtenstein. Published by New London Editions in 2012. ISBN:978 1907869624. Paperback. Price £9.99. Enquiries to Five Leaves Publications www.fiveleaves.co.uk. email: info@fiveleaves.co.uk.

Published in 1961, this turned out to be the only novel written by Robert Poole, who died without completing his next work. This edition has an introduction by local author Rachel Lichtenstein.

Robert Poole was born and grew up in the Brick Lane area of Stepney, and he uses this to full effect in his book, which is set in the same area. Literary merit apart, if you want an authentic flavour of what life was like in the East End in the decades leading up to and including the Second World War, this is the book to read.

Rosemary Taylor

Philip's Email Inbox:

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

From: Nelda Sale
Subject: Great British Sewing Bee

We're currently producing the second series of BBC2's Great British Sewing Bee and I was hoping for the opportunity to please speak to you about the short history films that we include in every episode. The idea of these inserts is to provide an insight into an aspect of history associated with sewing / textiles and also an opportunity to bring the world of sewing to the sewing room studio.

One tale I'm considering telling is the story of East London's history with fabric, textile production etc so it'd be great to hear from someone who might know more about this interesting topic.

If this is something that you'd be interested in finding out more about, I can be reached on 020 7067 4843 or I can contact you if you provide a contact number.

Looking forward to hearing from you.

**Nelda, Love Productions, 43 Eagle Street,
London WC1R 4AT, Tel: 020 7067 4843
nelda.sale@loveproductions.co.uk**

Philip responded:

Although it is not a subject I claim expertise in, East London has many connections with textile production. Silk weaving springs immediately to mind but Bromley by Bow had a scarlet dye works and in medieval times a special levy was made on teasels crossing Bow Bridge so wool weaving must have been important.

For all matters East London I suggest you speak with Malcolm Bar-Hamilton at Tower Hamlets Local History Library & Archives.

Nelda responded:

Thank you for your reply. I'll get in touch with Malcolm Bar-Hamilton. I think the scarlet dye works is an interesting story itself!

From: Jennifer Essex

Subject: Derelict buildings of historical interest

I'm currently working on an application to create work in derelict buildings in order to bring attention to some of the UK's lost treasures. I was hoping you might advise me of some buildings you might be aware of of historical/archetectoral significance that have become vacant in recent years.

Many thanks for any advice you might have,
Jennifer

www.jenniferessex.com

Philip replied:

I have to say that nothing immediately springs to mind. Historic buildings are always at risk in East London due to pressure from the expanding City, so they rarely remain empty for long. However many occupied buildings such as the London Fruit Exchange and Spitalfields Market are still at risk. I can mention your project in our next membership Newsletter.

(Do any of our members have any thoughts on this?)

From: Glenys Tolley

Subject: History of Play

Hi - I have just discovered your website - filled with lots of interesting information. We are currently putting together a bid to the Heritage Lottery fund on the the heritage/history of children's play in Tower Hamlets.

It would be great if you had any particular information or photos (the maps you have online will be good to look at in terms of changes to green space etc...) relating to children's play/places where they played.

I especially liked the postcards on your website and think you may be interested in our collection of cards 'Greetings from Mile End'.

Link below:

[http://www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk/index.php?page=27&name=Greetings From Mile End](http://www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk/index.php?page=27&name=Greetings+From+Mile+End)

If you think you can be of any help or would like to be involved in any research/sifting through archives - please do get in touch.

Glenys Tolley

Director

Play Association Tower Hamlets

Oxford House

Derbyshire Street

London E2 6HG

Tel: 020 7729 3306

www.playtowerhamlets.org.uk

Company no. 5484207

Charity registration no. 1110356

Philip's response:

I don't recall anything of specific connection with your project although we may have published something in one of our newsletters. There are, however, a few experts in specific topics i.e. Dan Jones for playground activities and Colm Kerrigan for schools football. I would be happy to help in any way I could.

From: Glenys Tolley

Hi Philip - thanks for your swift response. We haven't had any formal connection - just wanted to do some initial scoping.

We have been in touch with Dan Jones in the past and plan to contact him again.

When we are a bit further on with plans (and hopefully funding) I will certainly get back in touch.

From: Katie Richards

Subject: Shadwell High Street

Please could you help with any information about Shadwell High Street?

I am researching my family history and have a copy of the 1901 census showing them living at 217 Shadwell High Street in St Paul's parish. I am trying to find out if the building still exists. However I can't find the High Street on the map and wonder if the road name might have changed. I'm not holding out much hope given the amount of rebuilding work in the last century. I hope you can help and look forward to hearing from you.

From Philip:

Shadwell High Street was renumbered into The Highway in 1937. 217 was on the north side, west of King David Lane. I would guess somewhere near the present Bluegate Fields Primary School. To be more precise you would have to compare Post Office Directories either side of 1937.

From Paul Caton

Subject: Newham Family Tree Project

I am contacting you in regards to a project we are developing in Newham. I am writing on behalf of a small charity called Link Up UK. We are planning to create a digital 'family tree' of Newham. Later this year, we will train up to 60 local young people to act as researchers alongside Goldsmiths University and West Ham Football Club. These young researchers will look at how the diverse communities of Newham have shaped the modern-day culture and development of the area.

In order to achieve a balanced and fair representation of the history and diversity of the borough, we are seeking to develop relationships with wide variety of local organisations/businesses/community, cultural groups, historical societies and museums. Our researchers will be expected to access local and national archives and conduct oral history interviews with local people and groups. Their research will form an online resource which can be added to over time by the wider community.

If you are interested in hearing more about the project we'd love to hear from you. If you'd be kind enough to send further contact details I will call you at your earliest convenience to discuss the project further.

Paul Caton, Development Manager, Link Up (UK) Tel: 0845 607 0702
Email: paul.caton@greatbritishcommunity.org
Web: www.greatbritishcommunity.org

(If anyone would like to get involved in this project, please contact Paul Caton, details above)

From: Tom Long

Subject: Hackney in Wartime

I attach a photograph for which the only caption I can supply is "1943 Hackney W.D. Dept. L.C.C." The identity of the photographer is unknown. The young lady sitting on the far left of the front row (our left, not the sitters') is my mother (Lilian Renée Hibberd), aged 17 or 18. I wonder whether any members of the East London History Society might recognise any of the other people in the photograph or be able to provide any other information regarding the Hackney W.D. Dept. of the London County Council during the war. My mother was not living locally and we have no known connections with Hackney. She was probably living in Walworth or Camberwell and had previously worked for the London County Council at County Hall. She would probably have left the LCC shortly after this photograph was taken as she went to work for the Air Ministry.

If any members of the Society can offer any information I would be grateful to receive it.

Philip put out some feelers, and responded:

Hi Tom, I got this reply from Isobel Watson who is very involved in Hackney Archive matters:

Hi Philip. As it's LCC, I think we will need to look beyond HAD. The dates may be a coincidence and nothing to do with the war, but I wonder. The LMA Works Dept records (if it is they) don't seem to be open as late as this date. There's somebody I can ask about this, leave it with me and I'll see if I can find anything out.

Philip: As you see we are still on the case and will get back to you as soon as there is any news.

PS, HAD = Hackney Archives, LMA = London Metropolitan Archives (for LCC records).



From: David McGowan
Subject: V. H. Friedlaender

I have recently been reading the work of author, journalist and suffragette, V.H. Friedlaender and would be interested in finding out more about her. There appears to be very little information on the internet but I see that there is a article concerning her in your newsletter for Volume 3 Issue 1 (2008) and I was wondering if it would be possible to obtain a copy. I would be very grateful for any assistance you can provide in this matter and will of course gladly pay whatever costs may be incurred.

Philip obliged, and David responded:
 Thank you so much for taking the time to scan and send this interesting article to me. I first came across V.H. in an old school book I bought called 'Short Essays by Modern

Writers' from the 1920's and I was very much taken by the style of her writing. I have since been trying to collect as much of her work as possible - though a lot of it seems to be scattered across various literary magazines of the period. She appears to have preferred the name Helen to Violet as I have a signed copy of 'Pied Piper Street' where she writes 'Helen Friedlaender'.

I have thoughts of compiling a piece on her myself at some point in the future - purely for my own amusement - and if it ever comes to anything I'll e-mail you a copy.

Many thanks for your kindness.

From: Colin Lewis
Subject: Residence in the Isle of Dogs in the 1860's

I would be grateful if you could give me any assistance in tracing my great grandparents, Thomas and Jane Lewis. The problem I have is that they lived in the Isle of Dogs in the period between the censuses of 1860 and 1870.

Thomas was born in 1831 in Ebbw Vale in South Wales. He married Jane Jones in 1862. At some unknown date after the marriage, the couple moved to the Isle of Dogs where son Thomas was born in 1865, and daughters Eliza and Annie in 1867 and 1869. They moved to Barrow-in-Furness sometime before August 1870, where another child was born. It is of course possible that they were included in the 1870 census but I have been unable to find any trace of them.

Thomas may have migrated south in search of work in the Iron industry, since Iron making was being replaced by Steel making in South Wales. I would welcome any pointers as to why he went to the Isle of Dogs and whether he was one of many. Barrow was a boom time then with the recent development of Steel and Iron production and the decision to move there would have been understandable. Again I wonder if there was any significant move of labour away from east London to Barrow.

I live in Cardiff but would welcome the opportunity to browse documents in London if there was a starting point.

Philip's reply:

Companies like Yarrow and Samuda had large shipyards on the Isle of Dogs and Westwood built bridges and shipped them throughout the Empire. However by the late 1860s these industries were declining due to competition from Glasgow and the Barrow shipyard which opened about 1870 so I suspect Thomas saw better prospects in moving to Lancashire. The census was held in 1861 and 1871 so I fear you won't find his address in London.

Colin: Thank you for your quick reply. At least I now know why they probably went to Barrow.

From: Valerie Sheekey

Subject: Cyprus Street

I have been looking at Cyprus Street in Bethnal Green and the fact that it started life as Wellington Street, but have not managed to find out much other than the pub of that name appears to have been built at the same time.

It seems to have been called Wellington Street for less than 25 years, do you know why the name was changed or do you know who might know. I know that the Archive library will be reopening soon but I could do with finding out more information before then.

Philip's reply:

Wellington Street was built 1850/51 and renamed in 1879. By 1879 the "Iron Duke" had been dead for more than 25 years and Cyprus had just (1878) come under British control.

There were plenty of other streets in East London named after Wellington so it probably just seemed like a good idea at the time!

Appeal for information about the Cyprus Street war memorial.

Do any of our readers have information about the war memorial which stands in Cyprus Street, Bethnal Green and the people listed on it? If so film makers Terry Messenger and Adam Harcourt-Webster would be interested to hear from you. The memorial commemorates 26 people from the street who lost their lives in The Great War. Terry and Adam are planning to make a film telling the story of the Cyprus Street fallen, explaining as much as possible about their lives, their deaths and the toll their loss took on their friends and families. The street was formerly known as Wellington Street. "That so many people from one small side turning should have died illustrates in vivid fashion the scale of the slaughter in WW1," said Terry, who came across the memorial while working as a reporter on the Hackney Gazette in the 80s. They plan to make the film to mark the centenary of the outbreak of war next year on July 28th. If you can help, please contact Terry Messenger, on either 07794 550173 or e-mail terrymessenger@googlemail.com



UPDATE FROM COLUMBIA ROAD WAR MEMORIAL GROUP

After a quiet period, everything seems to be happening suddenly.

In January Trevor Wood met with the Columbia Tenants And Residents Association who gave strong support to the memorial and a small amount of funding. Since then the research work has continued most significantly finding a further survivors account, which threw a spanner in the works about the timing of the explosion, during which research some interesting sidelines emerged including Barbara Castle coming and going rapidly.

An interim E-memorial page was created on Facebook, listing all known victims, and recently work has started on finding all the burial sites. This list is also lodged with the Imperial War Museum. Some time has also been given to try and find the lost memorial to those buried in the Mass grave at St Leonard's, Shoreditch- (attempts to find the burial place of victims has left gaps, which might suggest some victims were buried in this grave). By a complete fluke I met up with Tom Bett's (his article on BBC History started the whole thing off) cousin, when I nipped into a local pub whilst trying to find the lost memorial, so we now have contacts with at least 6 survivors. Then the quiet ended, the TRA have identified a circular garden next to SIVILL HOUSE as being believed to mark the site of the air raid shelter- unfortunately whilst in many ways the ideal site for a plaque it is part of the Hackney Rd Conservation Area. Site visits have identified a number of other possible site including one which already has a plaque to the Old market Hall. A middle of the night session produced the idea of a wreath laying ceremony on the next anniversary - significantly this being on the Saturday. This was batted back from the TRA with a Community event to be held in association with the BIRDCAGE PUB (which acted as the clearing station that night) and TOWER HAMLETS HOMES on Saturday 7th Sept 2013 between 11.00 am and 10 pm- ALL WELCOME in Ravenscroft Park off Columbia Rd. Meetings are being set up about

this, and is hoped to recruit a Volunteer Events Assistant to help. Starting with the Birdcage, collection boxes are being distributed to local pubs.

There are a few mysteries left. Firstly, why is ELIZABETH HARRIS listed at CWGC as being injured on 15 Sept at Columbia Market- a week after the bombing. And the exact timing is unresolved - ranging from late afternoon to just before midnight- the known to exist Fire Brigade report would clarify this. The only official record so far found being the Homeland security report, which erroneously places the incident as on the 8th- perhaps supporting the near to midnight survivor's account. A Manchester Guardian article of the time confirms it occurred on Saturday night ie the 7th.

And finally, in July, Facebook membership increased more than 2%

From the New Zealand Arapawa Goat Association.

Are you aware that Captain Cook had a little old English goat on board the Endeavour? She supplied milk for the officers coffee throughout the whole journey and received a silver collar when they returned to England. We have a timeline on our website: arapawagoats.org.nz that has all the references about Captain Cook and the goats that travelled with him on Endeavour and his second ship, Resolution. I have recently published a book 'Old Will, the first Arapawa goat' which tells the story of how the old English goat travelling with Captain Cook became today's 'Arapawa' goat.

Alison Sutherland

Re:John Buckley

Just to let you know that things are moving towards the memorial stone to John Buckley. Gary Stapleton of the VC Trust e mailed me

last week to say that he was waiting for the RLC (who hold the medal) to let him know when they are going to construct the footpath. Will keep you in touch. No word yet of John Buckley's son.

Joan Soole

Isaac Rosenberg to be honoured with a Statue?

A Meeting was held at Whitechapel Art Gallery to formulate a plan for raising funds to erect a statue in honour of World War I poet and painter whose life tragically ended on the Somme on 1st April 1918. His legacy, his paintings, and some of the most beautiful poetry to emerge from the war.

Rosenberg was raised in Stepney, and lived with his parents at 47 Cable Street. His early schooling was at St Paul's School in Welleclose Square, before continuing at a council school in Stepney. At 14 he left school in order to earn a living to augment the family earnings. But his talent soon attracted attention and he studied at Stepney Green Crafts School and then Birkbeck College. He joined a group of young artists who met at Whitechapel Library, where his talents as both artist and poet blossomed. Ill health forced him to leave the East End in 1913, and he joined his sister Mina in Cape Town. His successful career in South Africa was cut short when he took the fateful decision to return to London and enlist in the army. With the 12th Suffolk Folk Regiment he was shipped to the Western Front, and was killed on Dawn Patrol. His grave is in France, along with so many others.

The proposal is to place a statue in Birbeck College where his talent was nurtured.

End of an Era

At the furthest extent of Spitalfields where it meets Aldgate is Tubby Isaac's Jellied Eel Stall, run today by Paul Simpson, fourth generation in this celebrated business founded in 1919, still selling the fresh seafood that was once the staple diet in this neighbourhood.

Here where the traffic thunders down Aldgate High St, tucked round the corner of Goulston St, Tubby Isaac's stall shelters from the hurly-burly. And one morning, Paul told me the story of his world-famous stall as he set up for the day, while I savoured the salty-sweet seaweed scent of the seafood and eager customers arrived to eat that famous East End delicacy, jellied eels for breakfast.

"I'll be the last one ever to do this!" Paul confessed to me with pride tinged by melancholy, as he pulled a huge bowl of eels from the fridge, "My father, Ted Simpson, had the business before me, he got it from his Uncle Solly who took over from Tubby Isaac, who opened the first stall in 1919. Isaac ran it until 1939 when he got a whiff of another war coming and emigrated to America with his boys, so they would not be conscripted – but then they got enlisted over there instead. And when Isaac left, his nephew Solly took over the business and ran it until he died in 1975. Then my dad ran it from 1975 'til 1989, and I've been here ever since."

"I began working at the Walthamstow stall when I was fourteen – as a runner, cleaning, washing up, cutting bread, getting the beers, buying the coffees, collecting the bacon sandwiches, and sweeping up. The business isn't what it was years ago, all the eels stalls along Roman Road and Brick Lane – they were here for a long, long time and they've closed. It's a sign of the times," he informed me plainly.

Yet Paul Simpson is steadfast and philosophical, serving his regular customers daily, and taking consolation from their devotion to his stall. In fact, "Regular customers are my only customers" he admitted

to me with a weary smile, "and some of them are in their eighties and nineties who used to come here with their parents!"

Understandably, Paul takes his eels very seriously. Divulging something of the magic of the preparation of this mysterious fish, he explained that when eels are boiled, the jelly exuded during the cooking sets to create a natural preservative.

"Look, it creates its own jelly!" declared Paul, holding up the huge bowl of eels to show me and letting it quiver enticingly for my pleasure. The jelly was a crucial factor before refrigeration, when a family could eat from a bowl of jellied eels and then put the dish in a cold pantry, where the jelly would reset preserving it for the next day. Paul was insistent that he only sells top-quality eels, always fresh never frozen, and after a lifetime on the stall, being particular about seafood is almost his religion. "If you sell good stuff, they will come," he reassured me, seeing that I was now anxious about the future of his stall after what he had revealed earlier.

Resuming work, removing bowls of winkles, cockles, prawns and mussels from the fridge, "It ain't a job of enjoyment, it's a job of necessity," protested Paul, turning morose again, sighing as he arranged oysters in a tray, "It's what I know, it's what pays the bills but it ain't the kind of job you want your kids to do, when there's no reward for working your guts off."

Yet in spite of this bluster, it was apparent Peter harbours a self-respecting sense of independence at holding out against history, after lesser eel sellers shut up shop. "When it turns cold, I put so many clothes on I look like the Michelin man by the end of the day!" he boasted to me with a swagger, as if to convince me of his survival ability.

Then Jim arrived, one of Tubby Isaac's regulars, a cab driver who wolfed a dish of eels doused in vinegar and liberally sprinkled with pepper, taking a couple of lobster tails

with him for a snack later. Paul brightened at once to greet Jim and they fell into hasty familiar chit-chat, the football, the weather and the day's rounds, and Jim got back on the road before the traffic warden came along. "It's like a pub here, the regulars come all day." Paul confided to me with a residual smile. And I saw there was a certain beauty to the oasis of civility that Tubby Isaac's manifests, where old friends can return regularly over an entire lifetime, a landmark of continuity in existence.

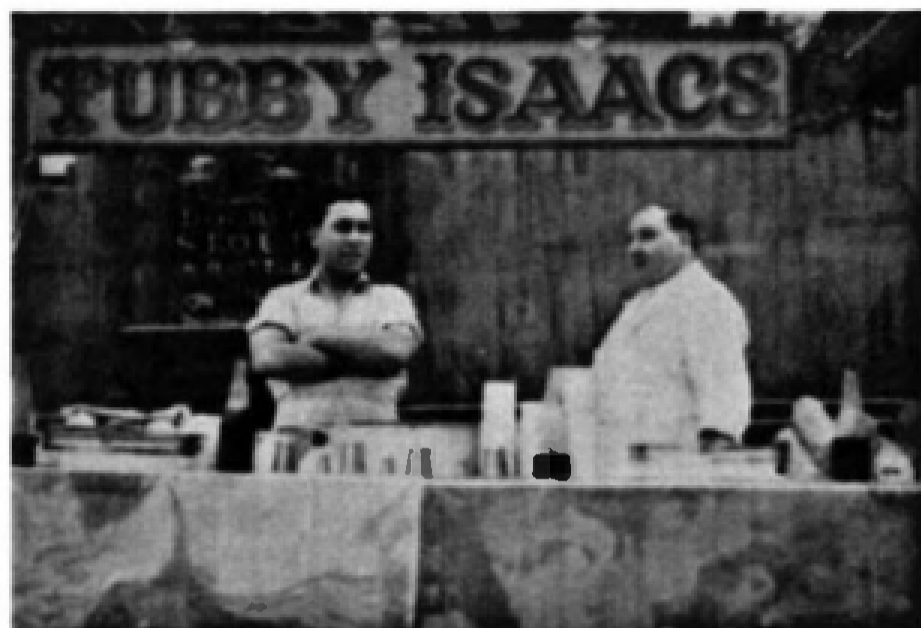
It is a testament to Paul Simpson's tenacity and the quality of his fish that Tubby Isaac's lasted so long, now that this once densely populated former Jewish neighbourhood has emptied out and the culture of which jellied eels was a part has almost vanished. Tubby Isaac's was a stubborn fragment of an earlier world, carrying the lively history of the society it once served now all the other jellied eels stalls in Aldgate are gone and the street is no longer full with people enjoying eels.

Sadly, Paul shut down his stall at the end of the week and is no longer selling his delicious and healthy non-fattening food. The end of an era!

The Gentle Author

The writer is the author of Spitalfields Life and his new publication, due out in October 2013, is titled: The Gentle Author's London Album'.

(Photographs of 'Tubby' Isaac overleaf)



'Tubby' Isaac Brenner and his son



'Tubby' Isaac Brenner who founded the stall in 1919

Tours: Behind the scenes at the Archaeological Archive

Are you interested in a 'behind the scenes' tour of the Museum of London's Archaeological Archive? This is a unique opportunity to look at and handle a selection of objects from London's past. The Museum offers tours for up to 20 people on a group tour.

A taste of what is on offer:

First Friday and Saturday of every month.

11am – 12.30pm & 2-3.30pm

History, right under your feet- Descend into London's past with our hands-on interactive tours of the World's largest Archaeological Archive. Explore some of the millions of finds not yet in the Museum's galleries, uncover their hidden meanings and discover how we work to preserve them.

Diamonds in the rough

Fri 4 Oct & Sat 5 Oct, 11am – 12.30pm & 2-3.30pm

Be dazzled by 2,000 year old gold & emerald earrings, ornate hair pins and jet pendants and explore how jewellery and personal adornment shine in the museum's archaeological archive.

TOUR Mortimer Wheeler House

Book in advance £5: Fri 4 Oct or Sat 5 Oct

Ritual and magic

Fri 1 & Sat 2 Nov, 11am – 12.30pm & 2-3.30pm

Delve into the supernatural side of the archive and discover all about slashed shoes in chimneys, leaky pots in wells and witch-bottles in attics.

TOUR Mortimer Wheeler House

Book in advance £5: Fri 1 Nov or Sat 2 Nov

Eat, drink and be merry!

Fri 6 & Sat 7 Dec, 11am – 12.30pm & 2-3.30pm

Enjoy drinking like a Tudor or gorging like a Roman? Whatever your taste, explore our collection of ancient dining ware and discover the sometimes strange eating habits of our ancestors.

TOUR Mortimer Wheeler House

Book in advance £5: Fri 6 Dec or Sat 7 Dec

Please speak to Philip Mernick at the Lectures, or email him to express your interest.