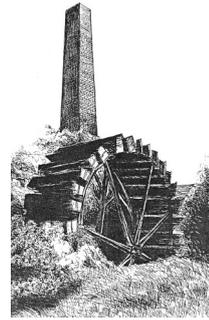


WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM



BULLETIN



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WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

Founded in 1983

PRESIDENT

Harry Galley

TRUSTEES

Nicholas Hart

John Hawks

Fr David Pennells

OPERATIONS COMMITTEE

Alison Cousins

Eric Shaw

Roger Steele

Michael Taylor

GUEST EDITOR

Michael Taylor

Editorial

It is almost the end of another year and I would like to wish you all a very Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year.

At our AGM this year we enjoyed an excellent talk by Derek Prentice from the Wimbledon Brewery. It did bring home how things will go round in full circle. Our exhibition this year 'Brewing Along the Wandle' highlighted how over a hundred years ago the larger brewers were taking over the small operators. How times have changed with many small brewers now existing and the term 'craft beer' common. I certainly enjoyed the can of the awarding winning Wimbledon Brewery 'Gold' that I drank.

A little while ago the museum was told about a company based in Lancashire and Thailand that is producing designs using the traditional method of hand block printing. Called Turnbull Prints their website makes interesting viewing (<http://www.turnbull-design.com/>).

Lastly thank you for your continued support.

Best wishes,
Mick Taylor

Cover Picture:
Our new Trustee Father David Pennells (left) is pictured with John Hawks (centre) and Nicholas Hart our existing Trustees.

Annual General Meeting

This year's AGM took place at the Vestry Hall on the 16th November. Attended by the Deputy Mayor Councillor Judy Saunders (pictured), who gave a speech in support of the work the museum does, it was an opportunity to formally introduce to our members and volunteers our new Trustee Father David Pennells. Father David, as he likes to be addressed, is vicar of St Peter & St Paul Church in Mitcham having taken office there in February 2015. Since arriving in Mitcham he has taken a keen interest in the history and heritage of the area. He introduced himself and fully endorsed the work of the museum.



Following the formal part of the meeting, where the use of our new logo (see below) was uncovered, we were given an excellent talk by Derek Prentice from Wimbledon Brewery. He gave a talk about brewing along the Wandle Valley with the main focus on his former employer Young's at Wandsworth. Wimbledon Brewery, has recently won two major prizes at the Quality Drink Awards, and Derek had brought along samples for us to try.



New Logo



The original photograph of the chimney and waterwheel.

The AGM saw the formal announcement of our new logo. The museum has been using it for a few months now. Having first used it on the pull-up banner we have it has slowly been used elsewhere including the cover of this bulletin. Taken from a drawing by the late Peter Harris, from a photograph of the remains of the waterwheel and chimney at The Willows, Mitcham, it reflects the industrial past of the Wandle Valley. The logo will appear with a pale blue, to reflect the river, or white background.

Operations Team Report for WIM AGM 2017

This has been a busy year for the team covering increased demands and dealing with conflicting interests.

AGM 2016

This was held in the Training Room of the Vestry Hall and chaired for the first time by John Hawks, who also paid a moving tribute to our former chair, the Rev. Dr. Andrew Wakefield, who had died so suddenly in October 2016. John then concluded the meeting by giving a superb talk on “The Ghost Railways of Merton”.

Outreach – Talks and Walks

This past year has seen a marked increase in external activities. We gave talks to a variety of organisations, including Merton Historical Society, Merton Vision, Sanctuary Housing (Trellis House) Purley Probus, the John Innes Society, Banstead U3A, Merton Heritage Service, the Turf Project, Royal Free Hospital Fellowship and at various libraries of Wandsworth, Sutton, and Croydon. Our talks covered subjects such as The Mills of the River Wandle, William Morris, the Surrey Iron Railway, Lavender, Merton Priory, Brewing in the Wandle Valley and The Calico People. The total audiences numbered around 450. This activity is becoming an important source of income for us and we are grateful to John Hawks for joining our team of speakers.

Walks were arranged for Bromley Adult Education, the Merton Historical Society, and as part of the Mapping the Mills Project. All were led by Mick Taylor.

Outreach - Schools

We hosted or visited 5 schools and 7 classes giving a total of 271 pupils and 27 teachers and assistants. Block printing sessions are given to all by Roger Steele, Mick Taylor, and Alison Cousins.

Visitors

Rethink Mental Health Group, Friends of Wandle Park, the Squad (club for people with learning disabilities), and Norwood U3A, were our main group visitors.

Open Days

We were again open all day to support Mitcham Heritage Day and this year did likewise for the Wandsworth Heritage Festival.

Liaison with Other “Wandle” Groups

We have maintained a close link with the Living Wandle Partnership and offer help and advice for a number of their projects. These include the Mapping the Mills Project, which we are closely involved in. We continue to have a good working relationship with the Merton Historical Society and the Merton Local Studies and Heritage Centre.

Volunteers

We welcomed Steven Purvey as our new Administrator, Jacqui Godrey as a new Sunday volunteer, and as a Marketing / Publicity Assistant, Kavi Amalakumar. Sadly Sheila Knight, a long-standing Sunday volunteer, passed away in October.

We organised a walk in the Morden Hall Park wetlands to thank our volunteers, and having chosen one of the hottest days of the year, plied them with ice-cream. The annual New Year lunch at Park Place was again a great success.

We are still experiencing problems in finding cover for Sunday opening.

Exhibitions

The display relating to Young’s Brewery was replaced by a wider coverage and converted into “ Brewing Along the Wandle Valley “,by Siobhan Kneale, our exhibitions curator. We were delighted to welcome Councillor Marsie Skeete as the new Mayor, to open it officially.

Martin Roberts completed the refurbishment of the model of the William Morris works and we held an official unveiling of the repainted Wandle Valley relief map with the honour falling to Joyce Bellamy whose generosity had provided for this work.

Eric Shaw continues to turn his hand at a variety of projects including the framing of an artwork donated to us by the Turf project and this joins the River and Cloth exhibit on the front exterior of the building while we are open.

Out and About

We again took part in the annual Discovery Day at the Heritage Centre within Morden Library. This year our display gave details of all the talks we offer, which could have accounted for the increased uptake. Siobhan Kneale and Alison Cousins attended the Museums and Heritage Show at Olympia, We also continue to support the South East London Museums Network organised by our Museum Development Officer Yvette Shepherd.

Behind the Scenes

Bianca Harrisskit, a Sunday volunteer, is working on an audio app. of the Wandle Trail which will supply extra text to that of the print version. Martin Roberts is preparing a teaching support packs to support our work with schools, starting with William Morris and Liberty. The museum has engaged the Social Media world and we now have Instagram and Twitter accounts.

The Building

Redecoration of the outside of the building has resumed thanks to the mild autumn weather and we are currently looking into a grant to get some decoration on to the panels which currently protect the windows. The condition of the ceiling in the office section caused some concern earlier in the year, but this seems to have settled of late.

Meetings

The Operations Team hold regular formal meetings and meet a minimum of twice a year with our Trustees. We also went to the British Postal Museum to meet with our Museum Mentor, Chris Taft.

With Sadness



We were sorry to report the passing of our volunteer Sheila Knight. A former Mayor of Merton and Labour Councillor she was a well known public figure, and a supporter of the Museum for many years. Her funeral took place on Tuesday 31st October at Lambeth Crematorium and was well attended by councillors and MPs from all sides of the political divide along with members from Merton Mind which she helped found.

We also have to report the passing of our former member Shirley Ford who along with her husband Charles were members and supporters of the museum for a number of years. Shirley is pictured here (right) with her husband Charles and our volunteer Mary Hart.



ERIC SHAW recalls responsibilities at Tandem works and A TASK UNFULFILLED

I worked at the Tandem works of Fry's Metals Ltd from 1972 until retiring in 1997. One of the positions I held was Hygiene Officer, which required me to take atmospheric samples for analysis. These were needed because the operations carried out involved lead or alloys containing lead. A sample was taken by using a pump to draw the atmosphere of interest through a fine filter paper, which trapped any particulate matter, and was then sent to the laboratories for analysis.

Pumps were of various sizes, and could be powered by batteries (all of which I had to keep charged) or run from the mains. Taking samples from a worker involved attaching the smallest size of pump to their belt, with the intake probe clipped as near to their nose as possible, so it was usually fixed on their collar. (With ladies this operation could be a little delicate.) They would wear this for an hour or so, after which I retrieved it. A rather larger pump was used to sample the area in which they were working. I carried out these operations not only at the Tandem works and at the Willow Lane depot and foundry, but also in Kidderminster, Rochdale, Glasgow and sometimes (once a year) in Dublin, where branches of Fry's were located. (The Willow Lane site, on the corner with Waites Way, had been a Ministry of Supply works for scrapping aircraft fuselages, and was later passed to Fry's.)

When I was at any of the branches I also sampled the emissions from the Filter / Cyclone stacks (chimneys). Once a month I sampled the emissions from the main stack at Tandem works over a twenty-four hour period. Interestingly, this stack was made of steel, all others on the site being built of bricks. Sampling was from a position 60 feet high up the stack, and used our largest pump, which was far too heavy for me to carry. There was a derrick (small crane) attached to the stack, and I would use this to haul the pump up to working height and then to swing it onto my working platform. I climbed up to the platform on a steel ladder permanently fixed to the stack, wearing my 'safety devices' – works overall, gloves and a hard hat. There was a four-inch diameter sampling port in the stack, normally closed with a plug. For sampling, I replaced this with another one, with a hole in it to admit the probe. My interest in the weather started from this time because there was no way that I was going to take samples if there was rain forecast during the next twenty-four hours. The views from 60 feet up were interesting, especially when Savacentre and Merantun Way were being built. I took several

photographs from this point, using the works camera (which I also had in my charge). Wandle Industrial Museum now hold my photos in their archive.

Samples were also taken from the surrounding streets. This was when leaded petrol was used to power vehicles. We could differentiate between our emissions and those from road traffic, because our emissions contained other metallic elements in addition to lead, whereas traffic emissions contained lead only. Our emissions were usually within the limits imposed: we were periodically inspected by the Alkali Inspectorate. Traffic emissions were not analysed. What a difference now with Diesel fuel!

I also used to visit some of the London newspapers at night, in the days of 'hot metal' printing, to take atmospheric samples from and around the areas where the metal print was being cast. Various stained glass workshops (mainly in the Isleworth area) were also visited, because of the fumes from soldering the lead frames, again to take samples for analysis. Fry's provided this service for their customers.

Potentially the most interesting project that I would have had was in the crypt at Christchurch, Spitalfields. The crypt was being cleared for a day-centre and contained many lead coffins. The local Factory Inspector was concerned about lead levels while the coffins were being cleared. Fry's was on his list of companies who provided a sampling service. Because some of the bodies in the coffins died from smallpox I would have had to have been inoculated. By the time this would have happened the crypt was cleared, so I never went. Subsequently it was found that there was no risk from smallpox. In one of their *Chronicle* series the BBC produced a programme called 'The Skeletons of Spitalfields' about the crypt clearance and the re-interment of the bodies. It is an interesting programme of which I have a copy to remind me of a project which I never carried out.

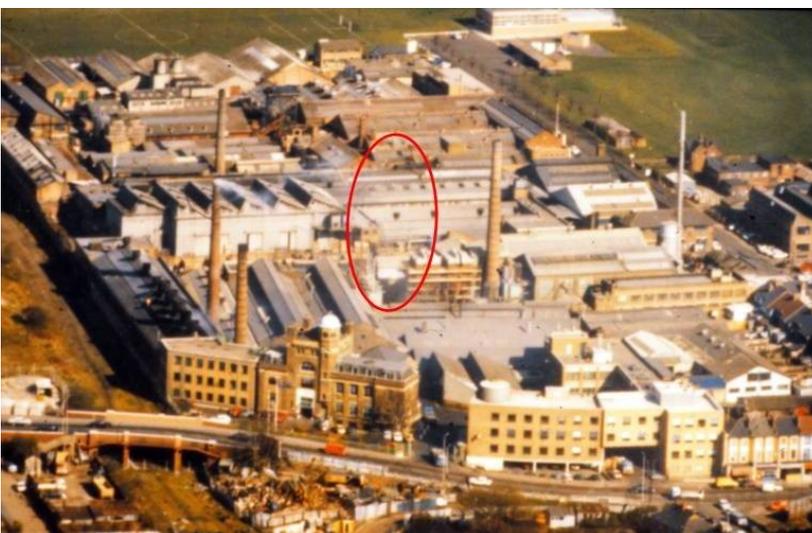
This article has also appeared in the December 2017 Merton Historical Society Bulletin.

Note: Eric has volunteered at the museum for over 30 years. We would like to congratulate Eric and his wife Jean on recently celebrating their Diamond Wedding Anniversary.



Savacentre under Construction Eric took this photo prior to the opening of Merantun Way in 1986, so in 1984 or 1985.

*View looking west
The ornamental dome atop the tower of the Tandem main office block is centre right. Merton Abbey Mills can be seen in the background along with Runnymede (left). As the Savacentre and Merantun Way are open, Eric probably took this photo in 1987 or 1988. The open area in the centre of the picture has now been built on.*



*Tandem Works
An aerial view showing nearly all the chimneys. The one that Eric used to climb had not been built when this photo was taken, so its position is shown by the oval outline. Photo © Fry's Metals Ltd (now Alpha Fry Ltd)*

Family Links

My wife and I are regular visitors to the National Portrait Gallery in London. On our last visit I looked at a portrait of the writer Rudyard Kipling. However, for what ever reason I had never looked before, I looked at the name of the artist who was Philip Burne Jones. Philip is the son of Edward Burne-Jones, friend and colleague of William Morris, and his wife Georgiana MacDonald.

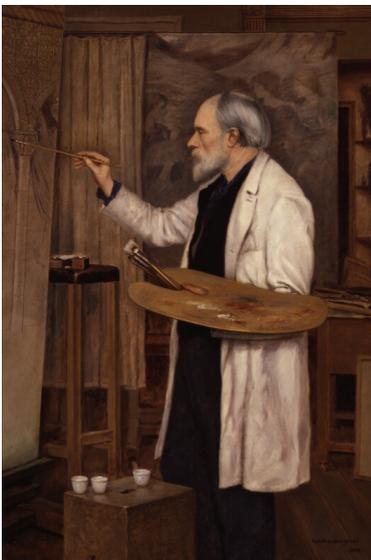


*Philip Burne-Jones
c1900*

Georgiana is one of seven daughters and our sons born to the Rev George Browne MacDonald and Hannah Jones from Wolverhampton. Alice MacDonald married John Lockwood Kipling and were the mother and father of Rudyard Kipling. Thus making Philip and Rudyard cousins. Louisa MacDonald married Alfred Baldwin and their son Stanley Baldwin, also a cousin to Philip and Rudyard, went on to become Prime Minister. A further daughter Agnes married Sir Edward Poynter who was an English painter, designer, and draughtsman who served as President of the Royal Academy.

Margaret the daughter of Edward Burne-Jones and Georgiana married John William MacKail who had written a biography on William Morris. Their son Denis went on to write a biography of JM Barrie.

As to Philip it is said that he found it hard to work in the shadow of his famous father, and his life is a rather sad catalogue of wasted talents and opportunities. Whilst he was educated at Marlborough (William Morris's old school) and at University College, Oxford, he had no academic



success. With a gift for comic drawing his father begged him to work only as a serious artist. He did exhibit, but ended only producing caricatures for friends, and died, a disappointed man, aged sixty four. Today most of the information about him may only be found in articles about his father. His portraits of Rudyard Kipling and Sir Edward Poynter may be found at the National Portrait Gallery.

Philip's portrait of his father Edward.
This picture is on display in the
Fundacion Juan March, Madrid.

Mick Taylor

HONORARY FREEDOM OF THE BOROUGH

At a meeting of Merton Council on the 22nd November 2017 it was put forward that our late Chair of Trustees Rev. Dr. Andrew Wakefield be granted the Freedom of the Borough of Merton. We are pleased to announce that this was unanimously granted.



At the meeting a large number of people from different political and religious groups spoke about Andrew and the work that he had done across Merton. For those of you who reading this bulletin online these can be found at: <https://democracy.merton.gov.uk/mgAi.aspx?ID=8077> For those of you who are offline who wish to see the comments these are available to view at the museum.

Oral History

The museum would like to capture the stories of people who worked in the industries along the Wandle Valley. Did you work in one of the firms that occupied the banks of the river or do you know someone who did.

If yes then please get in contact with us. We would love to capture your memories before they are lost forever. You may think what you have to say is unimportant but to future generations they will be very interesting.



Museum Building

If you visited the museum over the last few months you would have seen the wooden panels that are covering a number of the windows. This now includes the toilet window at the rear of the museum. We did request that the council cover it with a perspex sheet so light could still come in but our request was ignored.

That is not to say we are not doing anything to improve the building. Painting of the outside walls has started. It is a time consuming job so any help that anyone can offer to help complete the job is welcome.

With the help of Siobhan we are applying for funding to enable us to decorate the wooden window panels with suitable designs to reflect the heritage and history of the industries of the Wandle Valley. Siobhan is engaging with a local artist on this work.

Some of you may also recall our attempts to create a garden at the front of the museum. The cars at the time destroyed this by driving over the area. We do now have the barriers to prevent cars getting into the area and now it is only the council allowing workmen to park there that we get vehicles in front of the museum. Our plans are to build two raised beds in front of the museum and again funding is being applied for.

The one thing that we have done is added a new panel to the front of the building. This only appears when we are open. The contents of the panel were supplied by Turf Projects from Croydon. They produced a number of panels, using a Japanese method of dyeing, inspired by the textile work of the industries of the River Wandle. The work was produced by a group who have learning difficulties. We are very happy to have one of the panels on display at the museum. The panel (pictured here) was fitted into a frame by Eric Shaw.



Talks, Walks and Prints

The museum has a number of talks on offer as listed below. In addition we can arrange bespoke walks along the river. We also offer the opportunity for groups to learn about block printing and print their own piece. Whilst we charge for the printing sessions the talks and walks are free with donations to the museum always welcome.

If you belong to or know a group that would welcome us then please ask them to get in touch with us.



The following talks are available:

- Mills of the River Wandle
- Lavender Industries of Mitcham
- Brewing along the Wandle Valley
- Surrey Iron Railway
- Merton Priory
- Ghost Trains of Merton
- William Morris
- Merton Abbey Mills
- The Calico People

For more information please visit our website or call the museum.

Peter Murdoch—Chair Thing

Peter Murdoch, born 1940 designed an item known as ‘The Chair Thing’ and other titles such as ‘Stool Thing’ and ‘Table Thing’. All were self assembly products in folded, polyurethane coated, laminated paper. Peter Murdoch's designs were mass produced and approximately 76,000 pieces were sold over a six month period in 1967, retailing for less than £1 each. Despite the large numbers sold, few survived, owing to the nature of the material and the intended disposability of the pieces. The chair won the Council of Industrial Design Award in 1968, an award which sought to promote the improvement of British product design.

Early versions of the paper chairs were made in the USA, while Murdoch was still a student. Perspective Designs, a company established by Philip Bidwell in 1966 to promote young British designers, commissioned Murdoch to design a new range in 1967. These were manufactured by New Merton Board Mills.



The Chair Thing



This pair of chairs were up for sale at a cost of £1736 per item. A bit more than the original £1 they may have cost!



Other examples of Murdoch's paper furniture range.



Dates for the Diary

20th December 2017

Volunteers are invited to join us at the museum for a glass of wine and a mince pie from noon.

Christmas and New Year Closure

Our last of opening this year will be Wednesday 20th December.

We will reopen on Wednesday 17th January 2018.

Members New Year Lunch



This will take place on Wednesday 10th January 2018 at Park Place, Mitcham meeting at 12:30 for lunch at 1pm.

Information has been sent separately to this bulletin.

To all our members, volunteers and followers we would like to wish you a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year. We look forward to seeing you in 2018.



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

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

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

Company No 01792482, Charity No 288655.



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

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



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

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

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

You can find us on:

