

*Winter 92*

*No 2*

# THE WANDLE INDUSTRIAL MUSEUM

## Newsletter



The Vestry Hall Annexe, London Road,  
Mitcham, Surrey, CR4 5UD Tel 081 648 0127

OPEN: Every Weds 1-4pm,  
First Sun of each month 2 -5pm.

The museum is also open to schools and groups by appointment.  
Admission: Adults 20p, Children & Senior Citizens 10p.

## *To Report:*

The Museum recently provided displays and sales stalls at a number of appropriate events, including:

1. Merton's 1st Green Fair, London Road Playing Fields, Mitcham.
2. 'Researching South London Labour and Co-operative History' Conference, Vauxhall St; Peters Heritage Centre.
3. Vestry Hall Christmas Bazaar, Vestry Hall, Mitcham - we also opened the Museum to coincide with this event and thus attracted a number of new visitors to the Museum.

Thank you to all those who helped out at the above events.

The Museums Educational work continues, both through school parties visiting the Museum, and Museum Staff and volunteers visiting schools.

### MUSEUM SHOP;

The stock in the Museum shop has been considerably expanded over recent months. As well as the Museum's own publications, and a variety of Shire Publications, the Museum now also stocks the following:

From Merton Library Service: Mitcham Bookmarks -30p, Mitcham Postcards (set of 4 views) -60p, Heritage Packs (see review) -£1.95, Heritage Trails (a set of 5 walks around the Borough) -£1.95, 'A Century of Change' (Schools Resource Pack- see review) -£5.00, Historic River Wandle, Merton Section by Peter Harris (see review) -£1.25, and the 1993 'Yesterdays' Calendar -£2.95 (a limited supply).

Other recent additions include our own W.I.M. pens at 30p each, a new Shire publication on Textile Machines -£1.95, and Shire's 'Discovering Walks in Surrey' -£2.25.

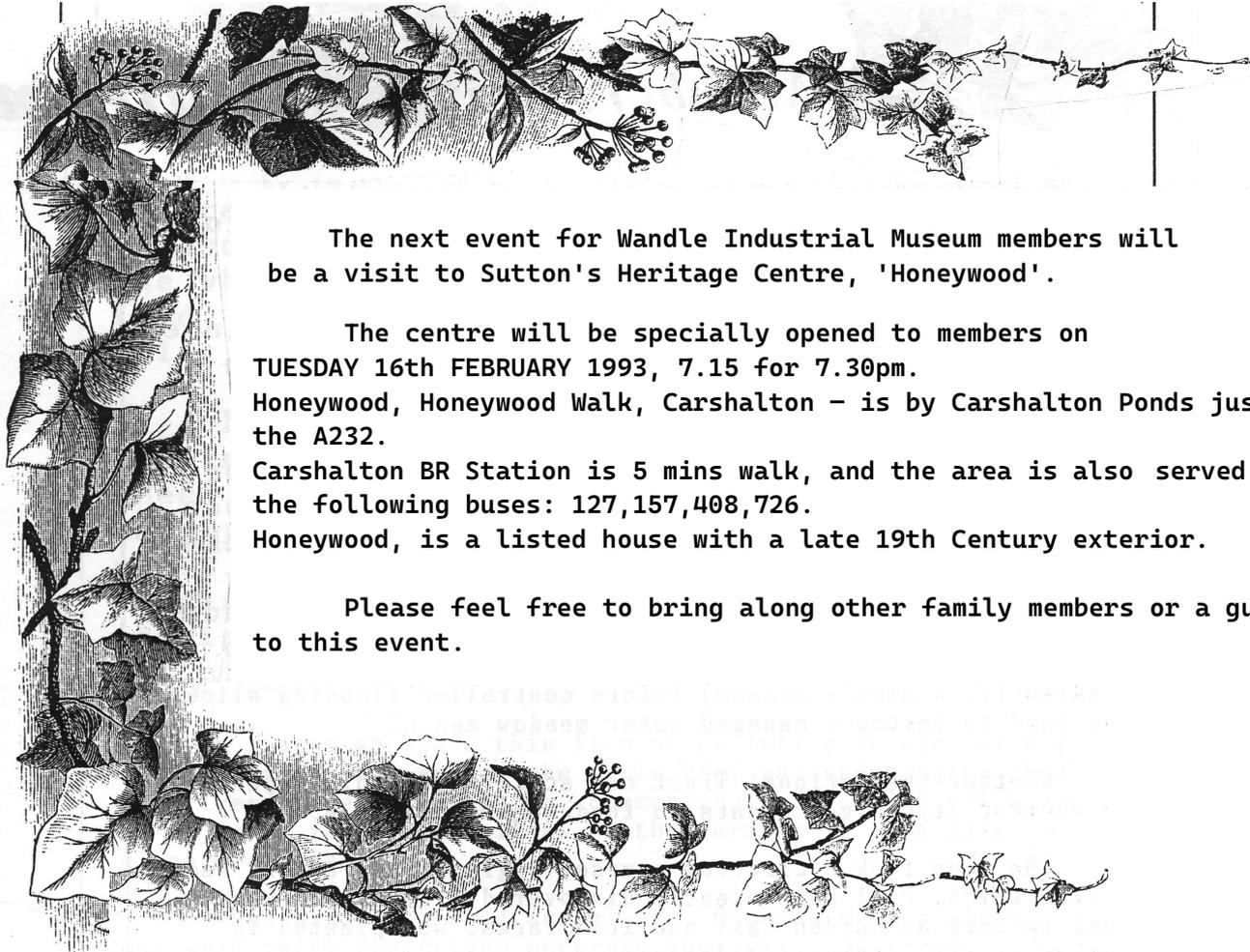
We also now stock 'Living History Publications' book - 'Retracing Canals to Croydon and Camberwell -£2.40, which links in with their publication on the Surrey Iron Railway - 'Retracing the First Public Railway'.

Our latest addition is copies of the National Trust's Postcards of Morden Hall Park's Snuff Mill and Weir at 20p each.

We also have a limited supply of W.I.M. Christmas Cards, featuring a sketch of Morden Hall at 30p each, or 4 for £1.00.

The Museum will open as normal over the Christmas/New Year period. As a Christmas bonus members may bring other members of their family into the Museum for free.

## *Forthcoming Event*



The next event for Wandle Industrial Museum members will be a visit to Sutton's Heritage Centre, 'Honeywood'.

The centre will be specially opened to members on TUESDAY 16th FEBRUARY 1993, 7.15 for 7.30pm. Honeywood, Honeywood Walk, Carshalton - is by Carshalton Ponds just off the A232. Carshalton BR Station is 5 mins walk, and the area is also served by the following buses: 127,157,408,726. Honeywood, is a listed house with a late 19th Century exterior.

Please feel free to bring along other family members or a guest to this event.

## *New Archive Dept. for Sutton*

The London Borough of Sutton recently opened its new Archive and Local Studies Department. Housed on the 5th Floor, West Side of the Central Library, St Nicholas Way, Sutton, it is open during the following hours:-

Tuesday; 9.30 - 12.00  
Wednesday; 14.00 - 19.30  
Thursday; 14.00 - 19.30  
Friday; 9.30 - 12.00

1st and 3rd Saturday of each month ; 9.30 - 13.00, 14.00 - 16.45.

Appointments will still be needed to consult the Borough's Archives and it is advisable to book microfiche readers to consult Surrey parish registers and the 1891 census for Sutton.

The new Department's telephone number is 081 770 4747



## *Members visit to the Waterm*

On the first Saturday of September a small and select group ; (O.K. where were the rest of you?) met Paul Rutter, the National Trust Warden, for a guided tour of the Watermeads.

I had not been in the Watermeads for some time - not since before the storms of a few years ago and the effects of them are still noticeable.

The National Trust hope to establish a water meadow type habitat which will be an interesting addition to Merton's open spaces, but it will also require a lot of work. Basically, the necessary engineering - ditches, sluices and so on - already exists, and has done since the Watermeads were last farm lands. It will, however have to be entirely renovated and the scrub cleared (in a single season) before controlled flooding allows the land to become a managed water meadow again.

Whether the National-Trust can achieve all this depends on whether it can get grants to fund the necessary work.

The tour took a circular course, beginning and ending near a tree which, Paul has recently discovered from people who used to work at Morden Hall and it's farms, was planted in memory of one of their colleagues.



*eads*

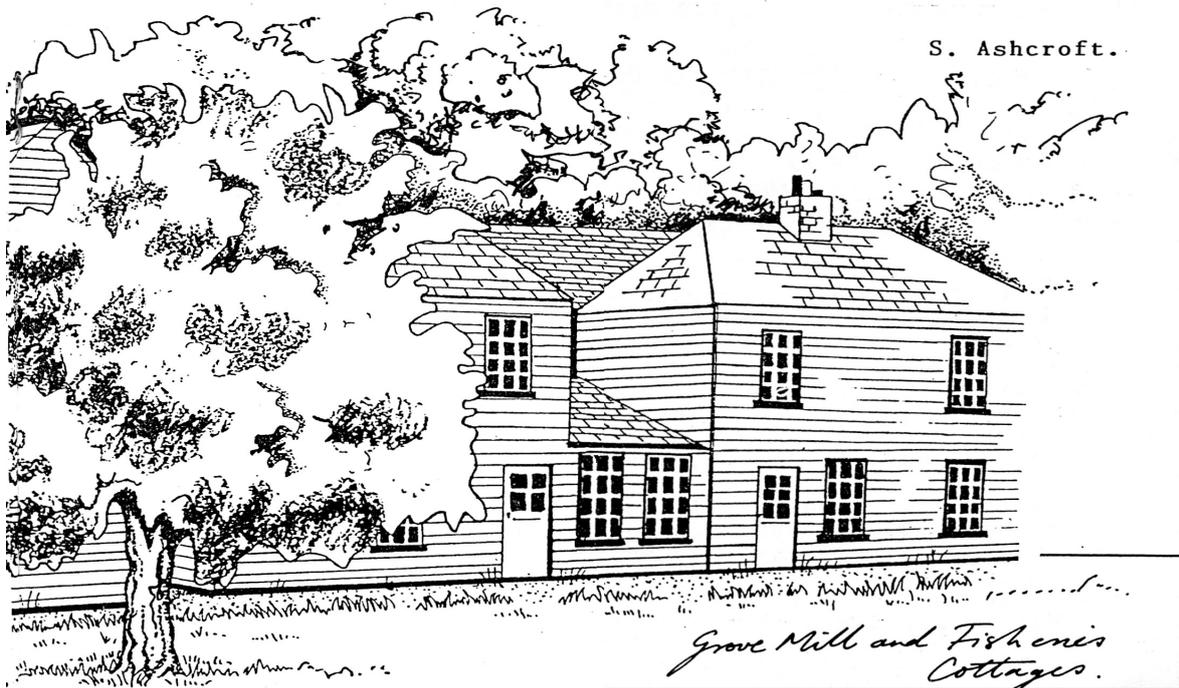


Near by is the bed of an old water wheel. The wheel has entirely disappeared, but you can see where the water ran in at about the level of the axle and fell in a cascade behind the wheel to the bottom of its circle where it flowed below (and, of course, pushed against) the paddles at their lowest point. Does this count as a breast-shot or an under-shot wheel?

By chance I recently saw a wheel which worked in just this way in the garden of a Cotswolds pub. Whereas the Watermeads wheel was clearly a large one, the one in the Cotswolds was hardly twice the size of, and no wider than, the wooden model which stands outside our Museum when it is open. Even so, I imagine this design, with the water cascading down to its-meeting with the wheel's paddles, must have generated quite a lot of power. .

In places we saw a thin film of pollution on the river - not a great deal - and on the whole Paul was encouraging about the rivers general condition, commenting on the fish which are to be found in it, as well as on the variety of bird life along its banks.

We happy few enjoyed ourseleves. Other Museum members may well think themselves accursed they were not there.



## YOUR HERITAGE IN DANGER.

The London Borough of Sutton has just issued a 'Further Budget Consultation Report' giving options for saving money to meet the government's expected requirements in excess of those already put forward in September.

For Leisure Services it proposes only two options. One is to cease the maintenance of two parks. The other is to cut the Heritage Service by half. This will put historic buildings, archaeological sites and the Borough's treasures at risk (It already proposes to sell £20,000 worth of Heritage 'artefacts'.)

If these cuts are implemented the following will be affected.

- \* The newly opened Heritage Centre will be understaffed and unable to function fully.
- \* The new Heritage Library archive service will be cut.
- \* Carew Manor and the Dovecote will be inaccessible to the public (the Borough's only Grade I building plus a Scheduled Ancient Monument).
- \* There will be no more local history walks, talks, guided tours for the public or for local groups. Services to Schools will be cut.

Those people wishing to protest against the proposed cuts should write to : The Chief Executive, Patricia Hughes,  
The Leader of the Council, Cllr Graham Tope,  
The Chairman of Leisure Services, Cllr Terry Woods,  
Your local Ward Councillor/s  
and contact the Friends of the Heritage Centre,  
Secretary: Sue Horne (081) 773 0185

THE FULL COUNCIL MEETING IS ON 11TH JANUARY 1993

## *Book Reviews*

HERITAGE PACKS - Merton Library Service - £1.95.

At under £2.00 I found this pack excellent value for money. As a non-local, what appealed to me most were the notes dedicated to the specific villages comprising Merton.

My criticisms of the pack are all linked with its practicability in use. The outer folder is very attractive, with colourful photographs- that would have been easier to identify if they had been listed inside the cover, instead of on a separate sheet.

I found the map difficult to consult without removing the reference sheets, (a task made more difficult if used outside on a windy day). The map was also not detailed enough to enable visitors to locate places mentioned e.g. the site of Nelson's former home. Local people might be at home with the present map but visitors would experience difficulty.

'A CENTURY OF CHANGE' - (Schools Resource Pack) - Merton Library  
Service.  
£5.00.

If I were teaching Local History I would find this pack very good indeed. I can see children learning much and enjoying it. However, much of course depends on local knowledge and enthusiasm of teachers using the pack.

What I particularly liked about this pack was the use of old local adverts, maps, photographs and 'Old Kelly's Street Directory'. Unfortunately, here again my biggest criticism is that I would have liked these locations identified on the current map.

Friends, interested in Local History here in Hounslow thought both packs were very good. But how much would a class set of, say 25 packs cost? If at a similar cost to the 'Heritage Pack', it would be money well spent.

Reviewer - Vin Classick  
Former Head of History  
St. Mark's Catholic School  
Hounslow.

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THE HISTORIC RIVER WANDLE - THE MERTON SECTION.  
DESIGNED & ILLUSTRATED BY PETER D HARRIS.

Published by Merton Historical Society. Produced in conjunction  
with Merton Library Service. £1.25.

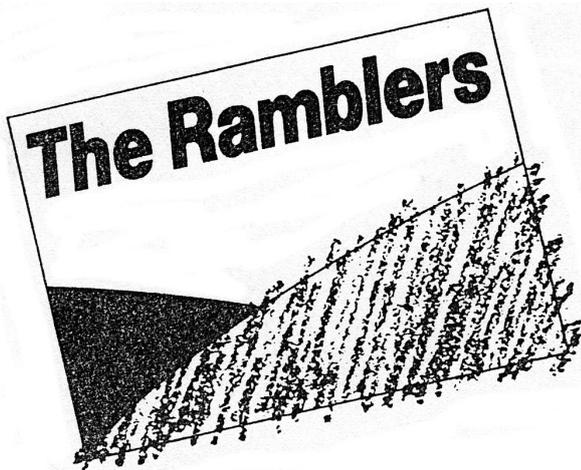
This booklet covers the Wandle between Morden Hall Park and Earlsfield. It presents notes on and pictures of seven mills, mostly in the Merton Abbey area; Priory gateway which used to stand in Station Road is also featured and there is a sketch of the old "Anglers' Bridge".

The notes follow a fairly uniform pattern, each dealing first with the location of the site and then briefly discussing what is known of its history. Sometimes a chronological list of owners ends the treatise. Typically, all this will take one page of the booklet.

This format can make for rather a dry procession of facts, though the chapters on the William Morris Works (which gives us more than Morris the man) and on the Liberty Print Works demand the adjective 'lively'. Even in the briefest of the notes the reader is aware that he is being made the beneficiary of painstaking, detailed and meticulous research. If you want to be given reliable facts about the mills on the Wandle in Merton in brief and easily digestible form, this booklet is for you.

The booklet's most attractive features, however, are Peter's attractive line drawings of the buildings he discusses. They are based on old photographs and drawings and by themselves make the booklet a bargain.

Reviewer - S. Ashcroft



WHAT'S ON!

The Ramblers Association have organised a guided Wandle Walk on SUNDAY 27th DECEMBER 1992. Meeting points are scheduled for 9.15am at Waddon Station or 10.15am at Carshalton Station. There will be a stop for lunch at the Morden Hall National Trust Cafe, thereafter the walk will continue along the river and finish at either Earlsfield or Wandsworth Town BR Stations depending on how far walkers progress before dusk!



#### SUTTON HERITAGE CENTRE.

The Sutton Heritage Centre is normally open between 10am and 5.30pm. Additionally it will be open from 10am until 9pm on Thursday 10th and 17th December. It will close from 5.30pm on Wednesday 23rd December, re-opening at 10am on Tuesday 29th, and will be closed all day on Friday 1 January 1993. And don't forget we have a members only visit on the 16th February - see inside for details.

### Any Suggestions?

What events would you like arranged for Museum members?

If you can suggest speakers to invite or places to visit, or if you know of organisations whose aims are similar to our own (or, come to that, if you can offer something yourself), please let us know.