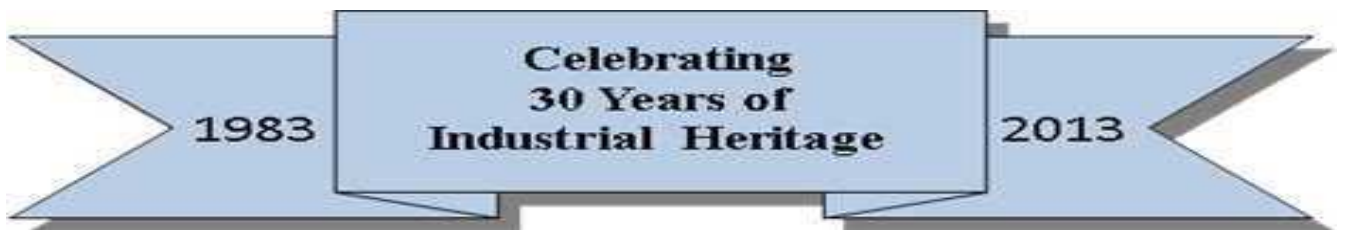




# MUSEUM



# NEWSLETTER

Issue 83

August 2013

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## 1 Newsdesk

**Comment** – This newsletter is the first for 20 odd years not put together by Sheila Harris, but a group effort by the Admin team.

**Visitors to the Museum** have been good during the summer months, and our Visitors Book shows that Sunday openings continue to be popular. We have had a visit from Garfield School for free textile workshops thanks to our Grant from The Ernest Cook Trust. We are able to continue the free visits until the end of the next academic year (not this year as mentioned in our last newsletter).

**Outreach** The printing team continue to be busy, having delivered the block printing experience over both weekends of the Wandle Valley Festival (1st to 8th June) over the Museums and Archaeology Month Weekend at The Chapter House at Merton Priory, and most recently at Kidsfest. Alison has delivered one of her Lavender talks



**Figure 1: Our block displays in the Chapter House with new improved lighting!**

to a group organised by volunteer Sheila Knight at the Vestry Hall (see her report below about these).

**Events - Past** A successful opening of our new exhibition - this year's new exhibition is "Things you may not know about the Wandle".

The exhibition was opened by the Deputy Mayor Councillor John Sargeant who was accompanied by his wife. The opening was well attended and the guests enjoyed the excellent refreshments supplied by Mary.

Good weather for both the Wimbledon Village Fair on 22nd June and the Green Day Out in Morden Hall Park on 7th July meant they were well attended.

**Events -Future** Dates for your diary

The next volunteers/members lunch is on Wednesday October 2nd.

The Annual General Meeting is on the 17th October. It will again be held in the Raynes Park Library to begin at 7.30pm. The talk will be given by Bob



**Figure 1**Cllr John Sargeant, deputy mayor, with Meg at the opening ceremony (Photo M Taylor)

Steele, who has written the latest book on the Wandle.

Other Dates for your Diary:

London Open House 21/22 September

Wandle Launch event 29 Sept

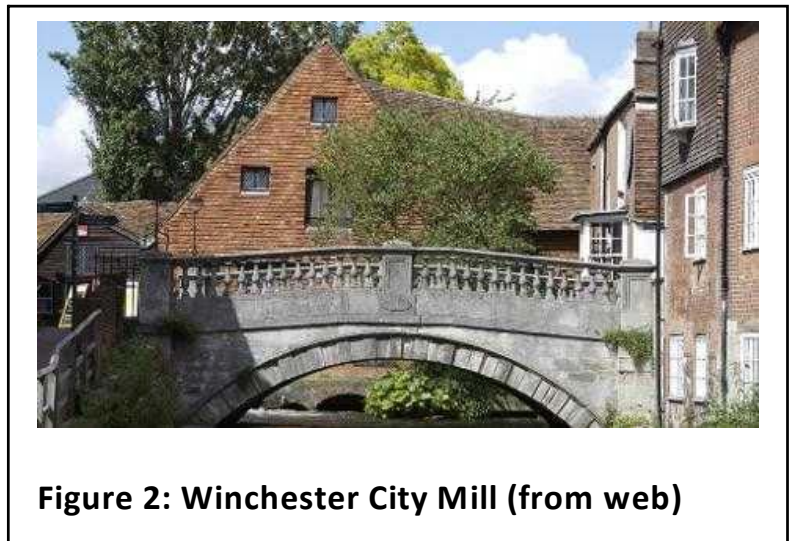
We are delighted to be able to report that Sheila Harris knee surgery was successfully completed, and, following a week of rest and recuperation on the South Coast, is now back at home.

Admin Team

## 2. Curator's Report

The museum has recently joined the mills section of SPAB, the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings.

Jeanne and I visited the Winchester City Mill which is run by The National Trust and manned by volunteers, of course! The mill has been restored as a working mill and produces flour which is sold in the mill shop. The mill's website has a short film showing the mill working, go to Winchester City Mill Visitor Information .



**Figure 2: Winchester City Mill (from web)**

The talk gave an insight into the work needed to restore a mill and how much it costs. Especially if the restoration is to be as accurate as possible, using the correct materials, some of which are now less easily obtained. To Ian Clark who led the restoration work it was clearly a labour of love.

Meg Thomas



## New Morris Resource

We have just purchased a new and much expanded edition of Linda Parry's book - William Morris Textiles. It includes some previously unpublished patterns from Morris & Co. and information from letters and biographies published over the last 30 years.

## Misc. Reports

### Suffragettes Remembered

To commemorate the centenary of the suffragette march culminating at Hyde Park on July 26th 1913, Melanie Nunzet organised a group walk from The Canons to Mitcham Common one hundred years to the day. We were encouraged to wear suffragette colours or costumes, and most people did just that. We finished the evening off at Park Place where the staff, to their credit, happily served alcohol to the mere women in the group.



**Figure 4 The Suffragette walkers, with our own Alison Cousins in full suffragette gear! (photo M Nunzet)**

### Lavender talks

It has been a wonderful summer for lavender, so our talks have been very timely, and interest continues to grow. The first was to the residents of Trellis House on Merton High Street, after which our entire stock of embroidered bookmarks was sold. The second was to a group of carers at

their monthly meeting in Vestry Hall, who were very generous in their donation.

### National Trust Green Day Out

We had to compete with the start of the good weather and the fact that a certain Scot was playing his heart out at Wimbledon on July 7th so it was not a hugely profitable day for us. Attendance at the event was fairly low due no doubt to the lack of external advertising, which is becoming a regular occurrence, and on which we and other organisations commented. We had an excellent pitch at the entrance to the area, and this improved even more when the pancake stall decided to move right beside us.

### Block Printing

The team was present at the Merton Priory Chapter House for the Festival of British Archaeology at the end of July, and most recently supporting the Kidsfest on Bank Holiday Monday at Merton Abbey Mills. Future block printing will take place in the Chapter House during the annual London Open House weekend ( September 21st and 22nd) and for the launch of the Wandle Project on September 29th in Morden Hall Park (precise location TBC).

## **4 Other Museum News**

Kidsfest at Merton Abbey Mills is the traditional closing event for the Abbeyfest events that take place throughout the summer. For the last few years the Museum's print team has provided block printing for children of all ages at Kidsfest, with the move to the new small blocks creating great interest.

Last year, with one person printing and 2 helping 180 new printers were able to take away a specimen print - spread over 5 hours that was one print every couple of minutes, non-stop!

Learning from that, the team this year worked in pairs, each with a set of blocks, which not only gave us time to breathe, but still delivered 200 prints during the day. Much thanks and applause are due



**Figure 5 The print team line up at Merton Abbey Mills for Kidsfest (photo Kirby/Hart)**

to Alison and Michael, who were the printer-tutors on the day and handled all comers with great good humour and skill, with Mary and I as their assistants, rolling up the prints and giving them out with instructions (with much shouting - we were beside the bandstand which was the source of much loud music throughout the day.)

Our thanks to Cllr Linda Kirby for taking this picture of the team.

Local News: We see from the newspapers that work to build a new multi-million pound fire station in Mitcham will start in September, opening likely to be autumn next year. Currently the fire fighters are our close neighbours opposite the Cricket Green and will remain there until then. No news on the



future of that building, although it has been suggested rather mischievously that this could be our new home if Ravensbury falls through for any reason.

The new station will be in London Road, just south of the Mitcham Tramlink Station, and it appears will have a community centre built into the design, although it is difficult to see how this would work in practice. This used to be the site of the Mitcham Brewery. See our new exhibition for a picture of it as it was then.



**Figure 6 design for the new Mitcham fire station (Wimbledon Guardian)**

In the last newsletter we were able to announce the success of the Lottery bid for the Wandle Valley Landscape Partnership (WVLP).

Things are progressing, and there will be a public launch event on Sept 29th (see inside back page for a copy of the flyer).

We will have a presence at that event as part of the entertainment to draw in the crowds, but its main purpose is to drum up volunteers for the various projects up and down the Wandle which will use this money.

Although Ravensbury has moved too slowly for us to be included in a list of these projects, we expect to contribute to them as much as we can, and anyone with spare time that they may be able to give should come to the launch and see which projects interest them.

Ed.

There will be many copies of the leaflet and brochure describing these projects for distribution during September, but we have electronic copies if anyone wants to look through these in advance.

## 5 SPAB

The Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings

On the 6th March 1877 Morris published an attack in the Athenaeum on the proposed “restoration” by Sir Gilbert Scott of Tewkesbury Minster. He called for “ an association..... to keep a watch on old monuments, (and) to protest against all “restoration” that means more than keeping out wind and weather”

On March 22nd of that year William Morris with other members of the Pre Raphaelite brother hood held a meeting to set up the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings. The use of the word protection and not preservation of ancient buildings was important. The society wished to protect buildings from overzealous restoration which meant scraping away historic fabric.

By 1880 the society had a membership of 372, the subscription was £1 a year (about £400 in today’s money). In 1896 SPAB hosted a conference with the London County Council to set up a register of ancient buildings in London to make Londoners aware of the architectural treasures in their city. It would be 62 years before Listed Building status as we know it became law.

The same year the National Trust was founded and adopted SPAB’s approach to conservative repair.



**BOOK ONLINE NOW**

**Weekend Tour  
Sussex Mills**  
5-8 September 2013

**One-day courses  
Practical Flour Milling  
Owing a Mill**  
27 September 2013

**Figure 7 The Mills section of SPAB runs many useful courses as this illustrates. (web)**

**William Morris pops up everywhere.**

**The Hall in the Surrey town of Haslemere celebrates its centenary next year.**

**The hall was designed by the architect Annesley Brownrigg F.R.I.B.A.**

**It is of interest to the museum because the design was influenced by William Morris and the Arts and Crafts Movement. True to Morris' ideas on protection the hall has managed to stay mostly unaltered, and is still at the centre of local activities.**

**Meg Thomas**



**Figure 8 Haslemere Hall 1914 (from web)**

In 1929 SPAB with the support of The Daily Mail and The Times carried out a survey of ancient wind and water mills, and the mills section was born. Today the mills section is active in conserving mills, educating millwrights and encouraging public access.

SPAB has not only continued to work to safe guard the important and historic buildings, both large and small from

intrusive and destructive “restoration”, but has set up training programmes to ensure that the skills needed to maintain these buildings are not lost.

This recounts only a small part of the important role SPAB has played in preventing the loss of some of our most treasured buildings.

Meg Thomas

## **6 William Morris in The Times**

Under the heading “” William Morris feature in a large 2 page spread in the Times of 21 June this year. In a well-researched article by Carol Lewis (the

cutting now hangs in the Chapter House) much was made of Morris designs and their continuing relevance today. Below is a small extract from the article, covering the history of the design archive in the 20<sup>th</sup> Century.

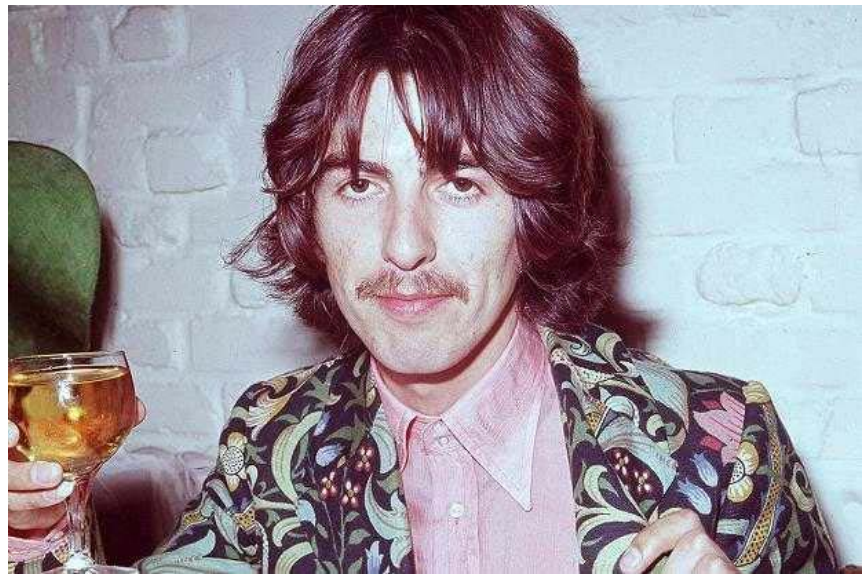
“More than 150 years after Morris started his commercial design career as one of the founding members of the decorative arts co-operative Morris, Marshall, Faulkner & Co, his designs are studied by schoolchildren as part of the British national curriculum, American fashion designers incorporate his patterns into their catwalk collections, European artists gain inspiration from his prints and Japanese consumers can’t get enough of his design-inspired homewares. Then

earlier this month the William Morris Gallery in Walthamstow won the £100,000 Art Fund Prize for Museum of the Year. Morris is definitely a man of the moment.

It is a far cry from 1940 when, with the advent of war, his textiles and wallpapers were

considered outdated and the handmade craftsmanship too expensive. The designer’s company, then known as Morris & Co Artworkers Ltd, went into receivership to be bought by the wallpaper company Arthur Sanderson & Sons — probably its largest creditor — for just £400.

Michael Parry, archivist at Morris & Co and the company’s former managing director, says that Sanderson initially “stifled” the designs which didn’t make reappearance until 1956 “when they began to appear indiscriminately in



**Figure 9: George Harrison in the 1960’s wearing his Wm Morris ‘Golden Lily’ pattern jacket**

Sanderson wallpaper catalogues. Then in the 1960s Sanderson reinterpreted some of the designs as textiles and they hit it just at the right time,” Parry says.

During the Swinging Sixties “Golden Lily by Arthur Sanderson” — William Morris wasn’t credited — became a hit when George Harrison, the Beatles star, was photographed wearing a jacket made in the fabric from the famously hip boutique Granny Takes A Trip.”

## **7 The Museum and Social Media**

Facebook, Twitter, You Tube, Blogs are examples of social media. Some of these because of the press and the way they have been used have received negative press. However it doesn’t all have to be negative. They are a very positive way to get information out to a wider audience and to share experiences. At the museum we make use of the following media channels: Facebook, You Tube and Flickr. These are of course on top of the normal web page that is expected these days.

The museum uses Facebook to get messages out about events that we holding or taking part in. This information is included in the newsletter which is aimed mainly at members. We do have a number of people following our page who do not currently have an active involvement in the museum. These people do however have an interest in the work we do and like to be informed about our activities.

Flickr is an opportunity for people to share photographs of the river, its industries, its people and activities. Our group on Flickr again, whilst not

**Carol Lewis’ list of Morris & Co’s UK top selling wallpaper designs in 2013 (with colour):**

- 1. Golden Lily (green/red)**
- 2. Golden Lily (pale biscuit)**
- 3. Golden Lily (biscuit/brick)**
- 4. Fruit (limestone/artichoke)**
- 5. Golden Lily (slate/manila)**
- 6. Pimpernel (olive/brick)**
- 7. Pimpernel (bullrush/russet)**
- 8. Fruit (slate/thyme)**
- 9. Scroll (thyme/pear)**
- 10. Golden Lily (indigo)**

large, has a number of non-members. Our group isn't the only one to cover the River Wandle. The great thing about Flickr is that you don't have to be a member of Flickr to view the pictures. Over time I would expect this type of media to take on more importance as places change, look different or even disappear.

The last channel we use is You Tube. Currently we have four films on our You Tube Channel. It is this media channel that has received the most visitors. Nearly 300 people have viewed the films we have on there. You Tube is a great way for us to provide a further pictorial view of the river, its industries and people. If anyone out there has any videos or reel films to do with the river then please let us know.

Finally there is one group of people who will never use any of these channels and that is those who do not have a computer! So whilst new technology is moving forward there is still a need for the old method of printed material.

Michael Taylor

## **8 Wandle Launch event 29 Sept**

For more information about the Living Wandle projects of the Wandle Valley Landscape Partnership, go to the website:

<http://www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk/Projects/Living-Wandle>

where these are listed with some detail, and contact information.

Our Wandle Trail Map is being used as the base for the graphic illustrations where the projects are to take place, again, and our copyright has been acknowledged (although this doesn't appear in the print version for some reason)

Come and celebrate

# THE LIVING WANDLE

Sunday 29th September  
Morden Hall Park 11am - 4pm

Find out what's happening along the River Wandle! History, nature, craft, wildlife activities for everyone.



[www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk](http://www.wandlevalleypark.co.uk)

## LIVING WANDLE ACTIVITIES AT MERTON ABBEY MILLS SW19 2RD

### Wandle Young Piscators

12 - 5pm  
Is fishing for you? Find out at our free fishing taster sessions with qualified angling coaches. All bait and tackle will be supplied.

William Tail, Wandle Piscators  
Email: [wyp@wandlepiscators.net](mailto:wyp@wandlepiscators.net)  
Tel: 07710 322800.  
[www.wandlepiscators.net](http://www.wandlepiscators.net)

### Wandle Trust

12 - 5pm William Morris Pub  
Find out how you can be part of our work along the river. Get involved in the Environment Agency's pioneering pollution monitoring scheme, now being developed on the Wandle before being rolled out to other urban rivers.

### Wandle Piscators

Riverly monitoring and all things fishing: float making, dyeing and blending materials, fly tying with the Fly Dressers' Guild. Book signings by Dominic Garnett and local author Theo Pike.

### Chapter House

11am-5pm  
Explore Merton's rich history through the excavated remains of the Chapter House, archaeology finds and historic records. Also on show: Merton Arts Trail Exhibition.  
Merton Priority Trust.  
[www.mertonpriority.org](http://www.mertonpriority.org)

## LIVING WANDLE WALKS

### Wandle Landscapes Walk

11am - approximately 1pm  
Walk to Caishallon, via Beddington Farmlands and Beddington Park.  
Bird-watching may be possible! Finish at Caishallon Station. 3-4 mile easy linear walk.  
Meet at Mitcham Junction Station.  
Led by Melanie Minziet (Sutton & Wandle Valley Ramblers).  
Contact: 07944 833605.

### Guided walk of Watermeads

1pm for approximately 1 hour.  
Highlights the history and importance of Watermeads and future plans over the next 2 years.  
Meet at The Hub (parking available) Imperial Fields, Bishopsford Rd, Morden London, SM4 6BF.  
Led by Nick Allison, (Park and Gardens Manager, Morden Hall Park).

### Go Batty at the end of the day

6:30 pm - 9pm.  
Join a bat walk around Ravensbury Park.  
Meet at the Wandle Road entrance to Ravensbury Park.  
Led by Derek Coleman (Sutton Group of the London Wildlife Trust).





A full colour version of this newsletter is available online at [www.wandle.org](http://www.wandle.org). If any subscriber is happy to receive the newsletter by email, could you please send a request to [office@wandle.org](mailto: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.**

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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.

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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 [ndhart@wandle.org](mailto:ndhart@wandle.org)