

# The Hackney Terrier

# 73

*The Friends of Hackney Archives Newsletter*

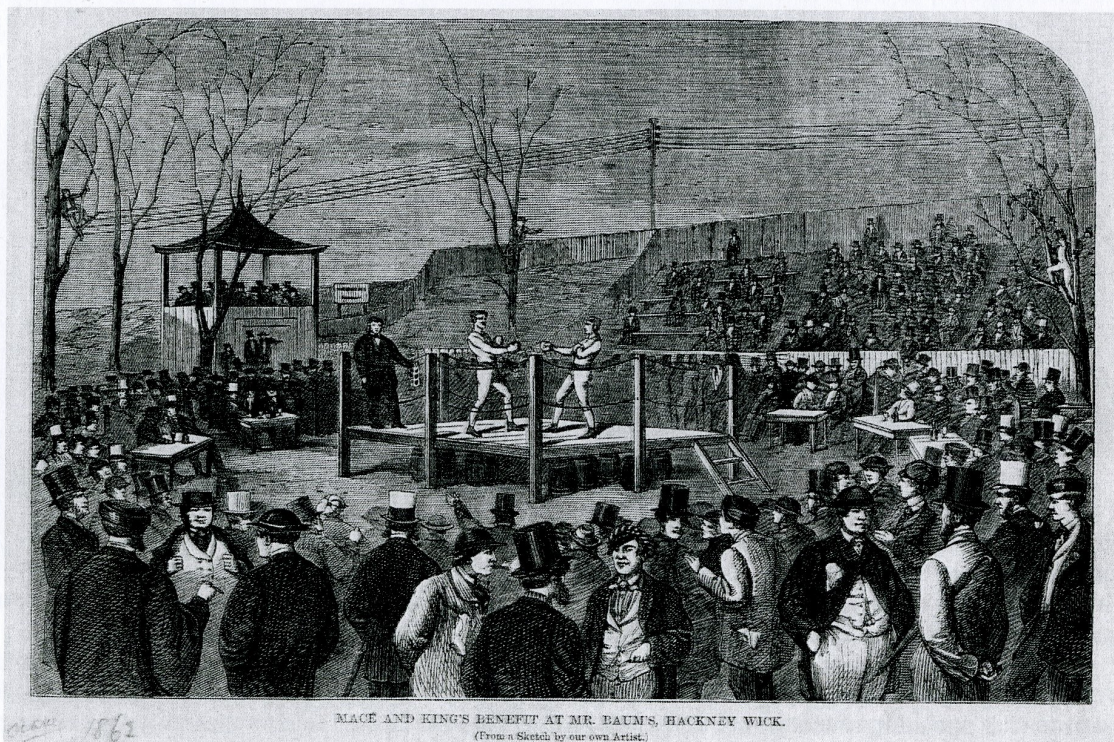
Winter 2006/7



## Sport in Hackney

Hackney Archives is currently holding an exhibition on the history of sport in the borough, which can also be seen at all seven Hackney libraries. People in Hackney have enjoyed getting involved in sports for centuries. The exhibition looks at some of the sports they have watched and taken part in, from the late 18th century up to the present day. Although the Archives doesn't have large collections just about sport, a search through the indexes soon finds plenty of interesting documents scattered through the collections of photographs, business records and personal papers. This article explores some of the highlights of the exhibition.

Before the mid-19th century blood sports were very popular. Bull baiting, badger baiting, rat killing and cock fighting were all enjoyed by ordinary people in Hackney, as well as prize fighting. Events would be set up on public holidays and the whole community would get together to watch. Hackney Marshes were a very convenient place for some of these events, as they provided plenty of room for spectators. As well as prize fighting and bull baiting, horse racing was held on the marshes. In the winter, when parts of the marsh froze over, people would go ice skating.



MAJES AND KING'S BENEFIT AT MR. BAUN'S, HACKNEY WICK.  
(From a Sketch by our own Artist.)



## Boxing and athletics at Hackney Wick

Prize fighting (boxing) was popular throughout the 19th century, although some magistrates tried to crack down on it by treating it as a 'breach of the peace'. The match pictured on the previous page took place at the White Lion, Hackney Wick. The publican during the 1860s was James Baum. He knew how to make a pub popular and attracted customers by putting on a number of sports events, for which he would usually charge an entrance fee.

Boxing and wrestling were regular features, but the White Lion was best known for its athletics track. In the mid-19th century, when athletics was known as 'pedestrianism', the 'pedestrians' consisted of a few amateurs in the universities, and a number of professionals. Among these was Deerfoot, the celebrated American Indian runner, who arrived in Britain in 1861. During his stay he competed all over the country, but his most important races took place at the well known track at the White Lion. In the autumn and winter of 1861-2 he had three major races there and broke the world record for the greatest distance run in one hour. Despite beating many of the best British runners he became very popular with the crowds, and as many as 10,000 people flocked to Hackney Wick to watch him.

The last time Deerfoot raced in Britain (and in Hackney) was in May 1863, when John White, the 'Gateshead Clipper', finally beat him. White ran the first six miles of the race in 29 minutes fifty seconds – a British record which remained unbroken for over 70 years.

## Clubs

From the 1860s onwards regular local sports teams became a lot more common. In Hackney there were clubs for rugby, cricket, cycling, bowling, hockey, gymnastics and rifle shooting, among other sports. Clapton Orient Football Club (later to be renamed Leyton Orient after it moved out of the borough) was founded in the 1880s, and scores of rowing clubs came and went on the River Lea.

Some of these teams were founded by local businesses, such as the matchmakers Bryant & May, who realised that a sports club encouraged team work and loyalty. Others were attached to churches or were just founded by groups of friends who had a common interest.

**DEERFOOT**  
The RENOWNED INDIAN RUNNER, and the  
**ENGLISH CHAMPIONS**  
FOR THE  
**10 MILES CHAMPION BELT,**  
Of 50 Guineas, Second, £5; Third, £3; Fourth, £2.

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**HACKNEY WICK,**  
**VICTORIA PARK STATION,**  
**MONDAY, MAY 11th, 1863.**  
The last RACE of the SENECA INDIAN before his departure for the  
**WESTERN PRARIES.**

The truly great powers of the celebrated DEERFOOT, and before his departure from our shores, added to the fact that his stay could not be prolonged to enable him to "hold the Ten Miles Champion Cup," this beautiful belt will be given by Mr. BAUER, of the value of FIFTY GUINEAS to act as test the pretensions of the fastest man of Seneca. To prove the genuineness of the transaction, the entries are thrown open free to the whole world, and whoever he may be, and wherever his country may be, who proves the winner on MAY the 11th, will at once receive the beautiful trophy so become his own for ever. Other liberal prizes, are added up to the fourth in the race, and such liberality will produce a contest unprecedented before, as fully evidenced by the names of those given below who will arrive for the mystery with the REDOUTABLE INDIAN.

**E. NILES, (Young England), the 6 Miles Champion,**  
**W. LANG, (Crow-catcher), the 10 Miles Champion,**  
**J. WHITE, The Gateshead Clipper,**  
**J. BRIGHTON, of Norwich, the Four Miles Champion,**  
**PATRICK STAPLETON, the One Mile Champion,**  
**SAMUEL BARKER, the Indomitable, H. ANDREWS, the Untiring,**  
**W. RICHARDS, the Speedy Welshman, and others: "Good Men & True."**

Whether the above Noble Prize is destined to adorn the wigwag of the Redskin, or whether it shall be won by a Pale-face, the 11th, of May will decide. It will be DEERFOOT'S.

**LAST APPEARANCE IN ENGLAND**  
And no doubt that many thousands will be there to cheer the Stranger on in his struggle for victory, or if defeated, in the spirit of Englishmen, will to award the full amount of tribute to one who has dared, and successfully dared, to compete with Britons in one of the most popular and manly games of the country. The names and the pretensions of the English Champions need no mention, only to foreshadow the nature of the Contest to be expected.

**TO START AT 6 o'clock.**  
**ADMISSION One Shilling.**  
Trains every 15 Minutes by North London Railway from Fenchurch St. and Camden Town— Return Tickets only 5d.  
**W. A. LUKE, MACHINE PRINTER, HACKNEY WICK.**



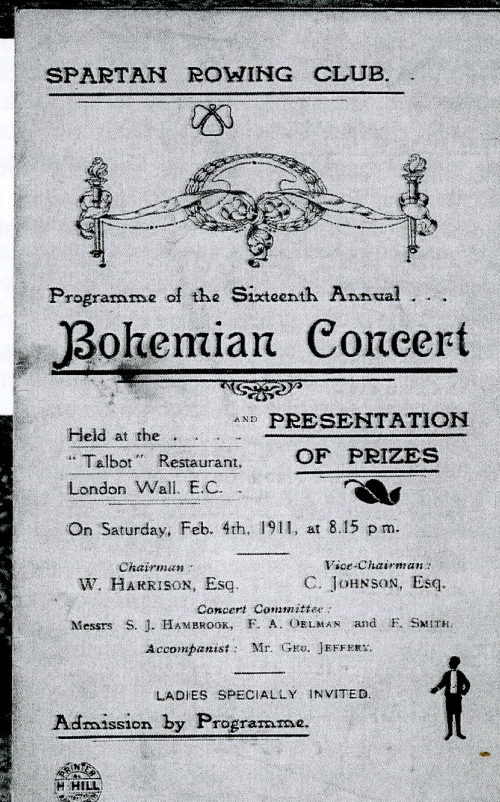
## The Stoke Newington Cycling Club

During the second half of the 19th century the number of sports-related clubs increased greatly, both in Hackney and in the country as a whole. Local clubs sprang up for all different types of activities. In Hackney there were clubs for rugby, cricket, cycling, bowling, hockey, gymnastics and rifle shooting, among other sports. Clapton Orient Football Club (later to be renamed Leyton Orient after it moved out of the Borough) was founded in the 1880s and scores of rowing clubs came and went on the River Lea. The photograph opposite, which dates from 1886 or 1887, shows the Stoke Newington Cycling Club outside their headquarters at the Swan Public House in Upper Clapton.



## The Spartan Rowing Club

Local sports clubs were never just about competing, they were also about socialising. Many clubs held regular annual events such as plays, concerts and fetes. The Spartan Rowing Club - see concert programme on the right - were based at Radleys boathouse near Lea Bridge, one of a large number of rowing clubs that have come and gone on the River Lea over the past century and more. The programme was found among the papers of W.J. Rawlings (1886-1973), an enthusiastic amateur rower.



## The Stoke Newington Occupational Centre Cricket Club

The photograph above, probably from the 1920s, is one of five of the cricket team in various poses demonstrating batting and bowling techniques. However nothing in the Archives has yet revealed what the Stoke Newington Occupational Centre actually was, or why they took these rather unusual photographs. The five photographs were transferred to the Archives from Stoke Newington Library some years ago and can be found in the images collection.



## Using Hackney Archives: have your say

Which of Hackney Archives Department's past projects and activities have you particularly enjoyed or found useful? Are there any activities we have not undertaken before, but which you would like us to try? This can include anything, from information on the website, to publications and leaflets, or events, such as open days and exhibitions.

We are putting together a plan for the promotion of the service to new users, and want to consult you, as users of the Archives. What you say will help us in formulating the plan.

You can give us your views by emailing your comments to [archivesfeedback@hackney.gov.uk](mailto:archivesfeedback@hackney.gov.uk), or, if you prefer, writing - by the end of January, please - to the address on page 8. If you prefer to write, we suggest you send us your views along with your subscription renewal.

We'll report the outcome to you in a future *Hackney Terrier*.

## News from the Archives

### The Online Catalogue

The online catalogue on the Hackney Archives website has been unavailable recently due to the upgrade of the database. The catalogue is now up and running again and the Archives apologise for the temporary inconvenience. However, the best place to search the archives lists online is still the Access to Archives (A2A) website, available at <http://www.a2a.org.uk> (select 'Hackney Archives Department' from the 'Location of Archives' drop-down menu).

The next step in developing the online catalogue will be the transfer of the remaining archives lists to the online catalogue. This work is expected to begin early next year.

### Searching the catalogue

In the new version of the catalogue, there are now three search options to choose from – simple, advanced and expert.

When you start, the first screen you see is for a 'simple' search. Choose **simple** if you wish to search for just a surname or an exact business name. But if you are unsure of your search term, and it is not exactly as the database has it recorded, you may get no result.

It is **strongly recommend** that you select the **advanced** option, as this allows you to structure exactly which terms, and parts of a record, you wish to search. (You can use the **expert** option for Boolean searches, with connectors such as AND or NOT.)

Full guidelines for searching the catalogue, with notes on how to get the most out of it, are on the website at <http://www.hackney.gov.uk/index.htm/ca-archives/c-archives-webcat.htm>. (It may be easiest to go into the council's website and go to 'Archives' via the A to Z list.)

If you have any comments about using the catalogue, please let any of the Archives staff know, as it will help them in planning for developing it further next year.

### School visit

A group of pupils, with three teachers, from Hackney Free and Parochial School, visited the Archives in November to explore the history of the site of their school. The children looked at maps of the area to see how it had changed and developed, and enjoyed browsing the photographs on the image database.

This is the first school visit the Archives has been able to host for some time, and staff hope to be able to arrange more such visits in the future.

### U3A Local History Group

The University of the Third Age in Hackney has recently set up a local history group. The first meeting was held at the Hackney Museum on Thursday 30 November. The meeting itself was followed by a tour of the Museum. A representative from Hackney Archives attended the meeting and it is hoped to be able to welcome the group to the Archives in the near future, as well as to work out ways in which the Archives can provide support and advice to the group.



### Friends' visit to the Post Office Archives

In September, a group of Friends visited the Post Office archives at the Postal Heritage Museum in Clerkenwell. This included an introduction to the contents of the archive, and a visit to the strongroom, as well as the opportunity to look at some choice museum items (hats and piggy banks a specialty). We were given a warm welcome and a good steer as to the content of the collection. If you were unable to come in September, you might want to join one of the regular public tours which are run on the last Thursday of each month (except December). To use the Post Office archives, appointments aren't required, but proof of identity is, and ringing to check that what you have in mind is available is always a good idea. There is an excellent website at <http://www.postalheritage.org.uk>, and the telephone number is (020) 7239 2570.

Ideas for future visits are always welcome. If there's somewhere you would like to know better, and perhaps see behind the scenes, please get in touch.

Isobel Watson  
[isobelwatson@hotmail.com](mailto:isobelwatson@hotmail.com)

### Bookstalls

During 2006 the Friends held, as in past years, successful bookstalls at the St John-at-Hackney church fete as well as the London and Middlesex Archaeological Society's enjoyable November conference. The next one will be throughout the day of the East of London Family History Society's annual meeting, on Saturday 20 January 2007 at Barking Abbey School, Sandringham Road, Barking, IG11 9AG.

### St Augustine's Tower

The Tower is now being regularly opened by Hackney Historic Buildings Trust following the completion of Heritage Lottery Funded works. It will be open every last Sunday of each month, between 2.00 and 4.30pm, December excepted. It is also open to schools and organised groups by appointment, and an education pack will be available for schools. For further information call 0208 985 2971 or visit [www.hhbt.org.uk](http://www.hhbt.org.uk). Many of the images on the website, as well as those used on site, come from the Hackney Archives collection.

### Requests for information

We are happy to publish requests for information made by members of the Friends. Please reply directly to the address below, not to Hackney Archives. If you would like us to publish a request, please write - with your contact details - to Hackney Archives (address, email and fax on the last page).

Margaret O'Sullivan writes -

*We are trying to trace anyone who knew Rose Parrott, born on 18.05.1909 in 78 Longfellow Road, Mile End Old Town and married Albert Edward Bailey on 16 Feb. 1930 in St. Columba, Haggerston.*

*I was told that they had a son called Ronald in 1931/32. I would dearly love a photo of Rose and Albert as mum (Rose) died when I was 5 years old and I have no recall of her at all. Also Albert Edward, if anyone can help with either information or photos we would be really happy.*

Please reply to -

21 Chamberlain Crescent, West Wickham, Kent BR4 0LJ; tel.: 020 87776509; email: [maggiemaywww@aol.com](mailto:maggiemaywww@aol.com).

### Archives acquisitions

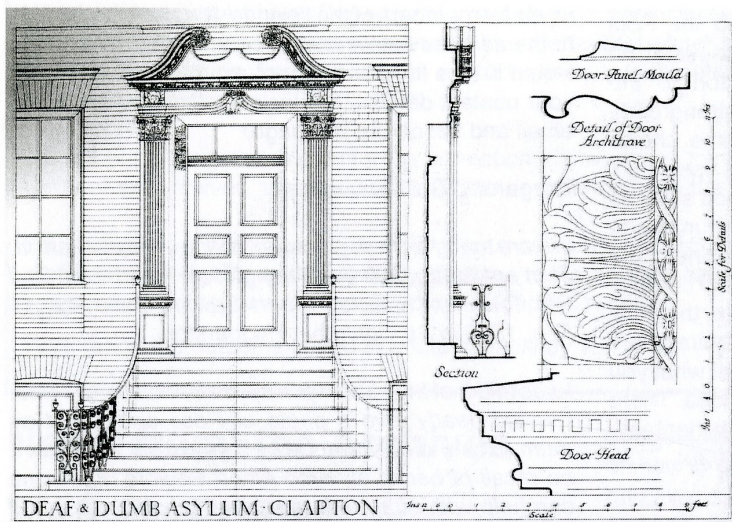
In August, relatives of Sir Lou and Lady Sherman offered the Archives a small collection of their papers. Both were council members of the metropolitan borough of Hackney from 1953 to 1965, and of the London borough from 1965 to 1978. In addition, Sally Sherman was mayor of Hackney 1960-1, and then lady mayoress the following year when her husband succeeded her as mayor. The collection includes scrapbooks of their times as mayor, programmes for official events and photographs.

St. Peter's Church, De Beauvoir Town, has deposited administrative records at the Department. The records include vestry and parochial church council minutes dating from the foundation of the church in 1841.

Both of these collections will be catalogued early in 2007.



## Local studies library acquisitions



### Houses of the Wren and Georgian periods

Tunstall Small and Christopher Woodbridge, 1928

This 1928 volume, published by the Architectural Press, was recently purchased for the local studies library. It contains a chapter on the former Deaf and Dumb Asylum at 179 Lower Clapton Road (see illustration above) which was demolished in the 1930s. It includes interior and exterior photographs and a number of measured plans, and is a welcome addition to other images of the building already held by the Archives.

### The Girl's Own Annual

1896

This volume, recently purchased by the Friends, complements the Bryant and May company archives in the Hackney collection as it includes an article

describing a visit to the company's match factory to see the 'Cinderellas of the national household' at work. There is clearly a demarcation between 'our girls' - the readers of *The Girl's Own Paper* - and 'your girls' - the factory workers, and the author doesn't appear to have found it necessary to talk to the match-girls themselves, relying instead upon their supervisors for information. However, the piece still offers a valuable glimpse into the Fairfield factory, its processes, and the doubtless somewhat saccharined lives of the 'white-aproned, dauntless damsels' employed there.

### Behind the veneer : the South Shoreditch furniture trade and its buildings

Joanna Smith and Ray Rogers  
English Heritage, 2008

A book derived from an English Heritage report on the industrial buildings of South Shoreditch (see *Hackney Terrier* 69, Summer 2005, p. 7) has now been produced by Joanna Smith of English Heritage and Ray Rogers, the borough's head of conservation. This helps fill a gap in published material on the history of Shoreditch.

Fully illustrated with historic and contemporary images, *Behind the veneer* focuses on the history of the area's furniture trade and its associated buildings, charting the development of the industrial quarter in the mid 19<sup>th</sup> century through to the demise of the trade in the 1980s. The historic character and significance of surviving architecture is appraised, and the book concludes with an assessment of planning and conservation issues.

## Off the shelf: books on house history in the local studies library

For a long time there was relatively little published material to help with archival research into buildings. Most titles concentrated on decoding architectural features, with little about using documents. House history, however, seems suddenly to be fashionable. The last twelve months has seen the publication of three new titles, and the updating of a fourth, all mainly concerned with record sources. So this is a good moment to take stock of the works at present available for consultation on this subject at Hackney Archives, and the particular strengths, from a Hackney perspective, of each.



**Researching London's houses: an archives guide** by **Colin Thom**, a senior historian with the Survey of London, stands out as being designed specifically round London sources. Most of the other titles acknowledge the existence of a stream of archive material for London, but do not explore it in depth, if at all. This book, while also covering a full range of general sources, gives due weight to material generated by London-wide regulation and government since the mid-19<sup>th</sup> century. These include district surveyors' returns and the drainage, street-naming and Building Act files of the Metropolitan Board of Works and its successors. The book also considers the role of large estate-owners in London, and a strategy for handling the vast richness of the Middlesex Deeds Register (MDR) at London Metropolitan Archives (LMA). The monster which is the MDR is described as 'probably the most valuable ... source ... for those researching the changing ownership of houses and other property north of the Thames'. There is also a guide to the interpretation of illustrations, and a concise but thorough introductory chapter outlining the development of house types, and special features of the building process in the capital.

Three other new books, though for the most part silent about London, deal with the same range of national sources. **Nick Barratt's *Tracing the history of your house*** is a new edition of an earlier work, which until recently had this field almost to itself. London sources apart, it is still the most comprehensive work available, mainly because of its focus on material at the National Archives at Kew. (There is a great deal in this book about court records, for example, which won't be found in the others.) This emphasis can be misleading, as the best places to start looking are always nearer at hand. For a house in Hackney, most material is likely to be found at Hackney Archives and (as with any other London house) the LMA, and if there is material elsewhere it may not all be at Kew. Whether Kew can produce anything more of moment, besides perhaps a tithe survey and the field book for the Valuation Office survey of 1910-1915 (if you are lucky and the index map survives), is likely to be hit-and-miss. The book is also weak on fire insurance records, the country's best collection of which are at Guildhall Library; but its pages are always worth a check through.

Two other new publications strike into slightly different territory from those mentioned above, being more evidently aimed at beginners. Picking up **Anthony Adolph's *Tracing your home's history*** for the first time, you wonder whether the publishers intended a

coffee table book. This, you soon find, is unfair, as the book is serious in intent, and works well in practice; the beautiful illustrations are a real bonus. It is strong on methodology, proposing that there is no 'correct' way to approach research, but giving innovative and well-laid out charts and timelines which could be very helpful in structuring a project as it develops. The material is well-organised and the sources are clearly if simply described, in a way which benefits from the author's experience as a family historian. (There may be something of a family history bias in the several short case studies – one of which, readers will note with interest, concerns the former Church Row in Stoke Newington.) It is unique amongst the present batch of books in the way it cheerfully embraces internet resources, sprinkling the text with URLs so as to tend, I would guess, to limit its shelf-life. (In the same vein, it is the only one to mention Google Earth.) It could be very useful sitting beside the PC of someone working at home out of record office hours. A peculiarity perhaps best passed over is a chapter on ghosts.

Adolph's *Tracing your home's history* has emerged from the press more or less simultaneously with ***House History for Beginners*** by **Colin and O-lan Style**. This one really is for record office novices, beginning with sage advice about making appointments and working with pencils. For the most part the sources are treated with a broad brush. The material is organised on a different basis from all the others: the authors suggest working in three broad periods, beginning with maps in the 19<sup>th</sup> century, then working back to the 17<sup>th</sup> century, then forward to the early 20<sup>th</sup>. About half the book then examines special cases – farms, cottages, manor houses, mills, inns. This is not a particularly inner London focus (the chapter on former church property may sometimes be more in point), but problems are addressed which are not tackled elsewhere – decoding early rating records if they are not self-explanatory (though Hackney's usually are), and getting information from recent local authority records. There is discussion of the interplay between records and architectural evidence, and a basic guide to obsolete date- and measurement-systems.

Deeds are the most likely source of bafflement for the novice (and indeed the experienced) house historian. The researcher will get only rudimentary help on this from Adolph. Thom offers a useful approach to deconstructing the contents of deeds, and Barratt a guide to what can be found and where. The Styles offer little beyond listing some types of deed, and claim that 'deeds can be difficult to access', which (in whichever



sense this is meant) is undeniably true. They go on 'Middlesex for example has [deeds] registers from 1709-1938. These are arranged chronologically but not indexed'. The statement which I have emphasised here is wildly wrong, as evidenced by the final entrant in this beauty parade, **N.W. Alcock's Documenting the History of Houses**, published in 2003 by the British Records Association. Though virtually ignoring local government sources, this slim volume is strong on deeds, taking the reader stage by stage and term by term through a typical post-medieval example. There is also an apposite case study, which makes good use of the extensive (if imperfect) indexes to the MDR, at the same time making it clear that their use can involve considerable effort. Hackney readers may find this case study outstandingly instructive, as it concerns Malvern Road, on the Rhodes estate in E8.

Isobel Watson

Two of the works discussed - *Researching London's Houses* by Colin Thom (2005, paperback, Historical Publications, £13.95, postage £2.70) and *House History for Beginners* by Colin and O-lan Style (2006, hardback, Phillimore, £15.99, postage £2.50) - are on sale at Hackney Archives Department, and available by post.

## Obituary

### Philip Plumb (1925-2006)

Philip Plumb, who died on 22 September, played an important part at Hackney Archives, helping create the first electronic catalogue records, and has been a valued contributor to *Hackney History*.

Philip began his library career in Hertfordshire County Libraries and ended it, after war service in Burma and a spell as a lecturer, as chief librarian to the North East London Polytechnic. But Buntingford, Hertfordshire, was the focus of his life. A leading light in local football, drama and theatricals, he was also a magistrate and prominent local historian. He helped found the W.S. Gilbert Society in 1985, becoming its chairman (he later shared his expertise as adviser on the Mike Leigh film *Topsy Turvy*, about Gilbert's role in the first production of *The Mikado*).

I first encountered Philip in 1976, when he was preparing a commemorative centennial booklet for the Library Association. I was at North London Polytechnic's Library School, and looking for summer employment. Philip gave me my first opportunity, as a picture researcher in a range of specialist libraries.

It was some 17 years later that our paths crossed again. I was looking to try to bring in some funding to deal with what were then uncatalogued collections at Hackney Archives, including the extraordinary seam of religious writings which formed part of the old Tyssen Library. It was almost in a spirit of mischief that I put together a bid to the British Library to pay for a contract cataloguer, who would re-accession and catalogue the works. The bid was duly successful and we set out a tender for a self employed cataloguer. Luckily our advert had caught Philip's eye. (It was only after the interview that I recalled we had met before – Philip tactfully waiting until I recalled it!)

He went to work with a will, putting in many more hours than we were paying for. The project helped unlock some 3,000 pamphlets and books, and put some of Hackney's churchmen, nonconformist ministers and writers into a national context.

Philip got on well with almost everyone he met – I cannot speak for those who came up before him on the Hertfordshire bench – and enjoyed his time with HAD. In turn he was helpful to me when I plunged into Hertfordshire to produce a photograph book for Sutton Publishing. Philip joined us for celebrations, launches and other events. He was always good company, generous of his time and advice, and had a lovely sense of humour. There will be many a gathering that will be the poorer without him.

David Mander

Many other tributes to Philip appear in the November 2006 issue of the *Buntingford Journal*, on which this appreciation has gratefully drawn.

#### Credits & Contacts

*The Hackney Terrier*, which appears at least three times a year, is published by the Friends of Hackney Archives and produced by Elizabeth Green.

The Friends constitute an independent charity (no. 1074493) and membership is open to all. The subscription is £10 in the UK (plus £2 for each additional member at the same address) and £20 sterling overseas. Subscriptions run for a calendar year and include a copy of the journal *Hackney History*.

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