



# NEWSLETTER

JANUARY 2021

## Letter from the Editor

Hello and Happy New Year to you!

We have another bumper issue for you this month with a fascinating article from Claire Hooper and Lee Joyce on 'The Mystery of the Indian Princesses in Doddinghurst'.

We kick off our 2021 lecture program on Monday 11th with Georgina Green talking about Humphrey Repton at Highams House. We look forward to you joining us via Zoom and will be sending out the joining instructions in a separate email. Plus look out at the bottom of the newsletter for the 'Mini Green Book' Copped Hall calendar of events.

Also, on behalf of Sally Anderson I would like to draw your attention to the **Parndon Mill Trustee Appeal**.

### **PARNDON MILL TRUSTEE APPEAL**

*Parndon Mill became a charitable trust in 2016, its objectives essentially seeking to advance the arts, culture and heritage in Harlow and the surrounding area.*

*Recently the Trust successfully applied for funding from Arts Council England. With these funds plans that will ensure a sustainable future for Parndon Mill have been made. It is envisaged that, through the development of both the physical site and partnerships with local organisations and businesses, we will be able to develop opportunities and schemes that will allow our hub of creativity to offer a greater range of arts engagements to our rapidly expanding and increasingly diverse community.*

*In order to realise these plans we are seeking more trustees.*

*We feel that the effectiveness of a board of trustees is enhanced by the presence of variety of skills and knowledge - trustees do not need to be practising artists. If you value the importance of the arts within a happy society and would like to be part of guiding Parndon Mill's development as a trustee, please contact Roger or Sally at [info@parndonmill.co.uk](mailto:info@parndonmill.co.uk) in the first instance.*

*Activating the plans for the future will involve a lot of work. Roger and Sally who are now getting on in years would be extremely grateful for any help you could offer, both for paperwork in the office and the physical work of clearing up and moving things. Skills in carpentry etc would be a great bonus as well.*

*It has also been suggested that we found Friends of Parndon Mill. Would you like to join? There will be no annual subscription and no pressure to come here to do voluntary work. We would just like your support, advice and ideas for furthering the development of Parndon Mill and securing its future.*

Sally Anderson

*PS Have you had a look at our Online Gallery yet? [www.parndonmill.co.uk](http://www.parndonmill.co.uk) click on Online Gallery*

## Profile on a WEAG Member

Would you like to be 'our profile on a member'? If so email me on [lexie.lyons@icloud.com](mailto:lexie.lyons@icloud.com) and I'll forward you the questions.

## Stay In Touch

[weag.org.uk](http://weag.org.uk)

[Facebook.com/westsexarchaeological](https://www.facebook.com/westsexarchaeological)

[Twitter.com/WEAGarchaeology](https://twitter.com/WEAGarchaeology)

[Instagram.com/weag\\_archaeology](https://www.instagram.com/weag_archaeology)

Anything you'd like to contribute to the WEAG Newsletter or if you have any comments on the new format, please email [lexie.lyons@icloud.com](mailto:lexie.lyons@icloud.com)

## WEAG CALENDAR OF EVENTS

### Lecture Program

Talks will be accessible via the internet and NOT in person at the usual venue, further details to follow. We'd like your help in summarising each of the remote talks/lectures to be included in the following newsletter for those members who do not have internet access.

Lectures are in the committee room at Woodford County High School, High Road, Woodford Green, IG8 9LA at 7:15pm unless otherwise stated.

Non-members are welcome to attend Lectures. A voluntary contribution of £2 would be appreciated from guests.

#### Monday 11 January 2021 @ 19:15 via Zoom

'Humphrey Repton at Highams'. *Speaker: Georgina Green.* Georgina is a local historian and has taught in adult education in Redbridge and Waltham Forest about the local area. She has also written several books and as an old schoolgirl of Woodford County High School has a particular interest in Highams House.

#### Monday 8 February 2021 @ 19:15

'Medieval Building Myths'. *Speaker: James Wright.* James is an award-winning buildings archaeologist. He has two decades professional experience of ferreting around in people's cellars, hunting through their attics and digging up their gardens. He hopes to find meaningful truths about how ordinary and extraordinary folk lived their lives in the mediaeval period.

#### Monday 8 March 2021 @ 19:15

AGM and 'Progress in the last 12 months at Bankside Rose'. *Speaker: Harvey Sheldon, Birkbeck College, WEAG President.*

#### Monday 12 April 2021 @ 19:15

'Historic Cultural Landscapes in South West Essex'. *Speaker: Tricia Moxey.*

#### Monday 10 May 2021 @ 19:15

The Rudge Lecture – 'to be announced'. *Speaker: Mike "Mr Stonehenge" Parker Pearson.*

## *The Mystery of the Indian Princesses in Doddinghurst*

Several years ago, while looking around the churchyard at Doddinghurst we came across a memorial from the 1880s to two women with Indian sounding names. Trawling the internet at the time we could find nothing on the subject. Recently we returned to the churchyard again and our interest was reawakened. Again we trawled the internet and managed to find a few snippets, these in turn led to information about other members of the family that we have drawn together here along with our own research. Obviously this fascinating story is far from complete and local historians, art historians and scholars are looking at the story from various angles across several continents. We will follow their work with interest and here provide a short summing up of some of the information and research so far.



The grave at Doddinghurst

Kelveden Hatch in the late 19th century was a small village of around 400 people on the road from Ongar to Brentwood. Most people, if they have heard of Kelveden Hatch at all, instantly think of the ‘Secret Nuclear Bunker’, but just a little further down the Ongar Road is a house named Kurma Lodge, home to three Indian Princesses (one a model for a prominent Royal Academician) and a friend of James Joyce.

So how did three Indian Princesses end up living in a small village in Essex? Our story begins in the court of the Ahluwalia dynasty at Kapurthala, a Princely state of Punjab. Ruled by Ahluwalia Sikh rulers and spread across 352 square miles, in 1947

Kapurthala became part of the Union of India. The royal house had been

founded in 1777 when Sardar Jassa Singh, from the village of Ahlu, near Lahore seized Kapurthala from Ibrahim Bhatti and founded a new Royal house. The following 80 years saw much trial and tribulation in the fortunes of Kapurthala State. After the First Anglo Sikh War of 1845-46, territory was lost to the British, as the Kapurthala troops had fought against them at Buddhowal and Aliwal. On the 13th September 1852, 21 year old **Randhir Singh** (26 March 1831 – 2 April 1870) succeeded his father as Raja of Kapurthala. He was an Anglophile and it was he who was responsible for restoring the family fortunes. He aligned himself with the British during the Second Anglo Sikh war (Indian Rebellion) of 1857, fighting for the British and leading his troops at the Great Sepoy Mutiny, (as it was called by the British at the time, although this is now a discredited term.) He received the Indian Mutiny Medal with one clasp in 1858 and was made Knight Grand Commander of the Order of the Star of India [GCSI] (10 December 1864). He made many improvements in the state administration, established a



Randhir Singh Raja of Kapurthala.

formal judicial and legal system, oversaw the creation of Anglo-Vernacular schools and the erection of many buildings and amenities for public utility.

While a prince the Raja had been taught by the English tutor **Robert Theodore Hodges** (sometime Head Writer at Ludhiana, Punjab). He was the father of **Henrietta Melvina** (1841 – 1893) by his wife, **Katherine**, half-sister of Mohan Lal Kashmiri, KDE, KLS. On 16th May 1859, 18 year old Henrietta Melvina became the third Rani (his first two wives having died leaving three sons and one daughter between them) when she married the Raja (who was Sikh) in a Christian ceremony at Kapurthala Palace. The couple had three daughters, **Melvina** (1860-1919), **Victoria** (1861-1863) and **Hellen Marion** (1864 -1887).

In 1869 Henrietta divorced the Prince and left for England with her two surviving daughters. They settled in London and there is some evidence that the family were in some financial trouble at this time, but a friend intervened with the Prince and he

Lady Kundavari Singh	Head	W
Melvina R. S. Ahluwalia	Daughter	W
Hellen M. S. Ahluwalia	Daughter	W

NAME	AGE	SEX	RELATION	ETHNIC ORIGIN	RELIGION	EDUCATION	PROFESSION	REMARKS
Dowager Ranees	35	F	Head	India	D.S.			
Melvina	21	F	Princess	India	M.S.			
Hellen	17	F	Princess	India	M.S.			

Detail of the princesses on the 1881 Kensington Census

allowed her some property. The following year, 1870, Raja Randhir Singh was travelling to Europe when he died on board his ship while in Aden, his body was returned to India and cremated at Nashik, on the banks of the Godavari River . On 20th October 1871

Henrietta married Royal Artillery Staff Assistant Surgeon **John Hamer Oliver** (1838 – 1873) (born in Newton, Montgomeryshire, to John & Mary Oliver) at St George’s Bloomsbury and settled in Exeter. By this time the girls were boarding with a family in Devon in an area of Torbay known as Tor Mohan. On 16th April 1873, after only 18 months of marriage, John Hamer Oliver died (Intestate) aged 35, leaving an estate of £1500 which Henrietta inherited. She was now known as Her Highness the Dowager Ranees and by the mid-1870s



Princess Hellen Melvina

was attending events in polite London society. By 1881, the girls, aged 21 and 17, were back living with their mother in Kensington, London and in January 1883 Melvina married Major **Arthur Stronge Gilbert** (2 Sep 1839- June 1913) in Paris. He was 20 years her senior, Dublin born, he enlisted 22 May 1856 and became a Major in the 4th Battalion of the Princess of Wales Yorkshire Regiment. He may have previously known the family in India. At the end of 1883 the family went to live in Kelvedon Hatch and they had a son, Arthur Stuart Ahluwalia Stronge Gilbert, known as Stuart. In 1884 the 20 year old Hellen began to attend society events. She was reported in the press attending several fund raising festivals this year

including two events at the Albert Hall. These popular

events allowed society ladies to dress up in elaborate costumes and man stalls selling various items in aid of fashionable causes. At the Peasant Festival in February 1884 Hellen was on the Scottish stand dressed as 'a fortune telling gypsy'. Her costume was described in the newspapers in great detail: "short skirt of red, with white and gold bands, with gold coins and small cards scattered about it, tunic of blue and gold Indian stuff, blue stockings, black and gold shoes: white muslin bodice with sleeves to elbow, over jacket liberally trimmed with gold braid and coins; red cap embroidered in gold with sequences, gold bangles and wrists and above elbow, united with chains of sequins, pointed belt with black ornaments." Tavistock Gazette 2nd Feb 1884.



The Illustrated London News. Peasant Festival at the Albert Hall. February 1884.

Later that year she was one of the ladies arranged by Royal Academicians into poses



Jephthah's Vow: The Martyr (1885-86) by Edwin Longsdale Long. Hellen modelled the part of Jephthah's daughter. Russell- Cotes Art Gallery and Museum.

associated with Shakespearean plays at the Shakespeare festival in aid of a school for Officers' Daughters. It is probable that it was at this event that she met Edwin Longsdale Long RA. He was a well-established painter of biblical and fashionable 'oriental' scenes (a term which encompassed anything 'other' from the Near East to the Far East) of an imagined artfully arranged past populated by scantily clad beautiful young women. She modelled for him on many occasions over the next couple of years and also acted out the roles from the paintings in fashionable tableaux. She was the model for the now lost Judith of Israel, painted around 1884 and probably for Jephthah daughter, in the series of paintings Jephthah's Vow (1885). Well-known to the art loving public as Mr Long's 'Judith', a newspaper report of May 1884 reported that a private view at the Royal Academy 'I need hardly add that Mr Long has considerably idealised the subject of his canvas. The Princess is somewhat short sighted and had to use eyeglasses to view the presentment of herself.' (From The Newcastle Courant, 9 May 1884). By 1887 Hellen had become unwell with TB and went to Brighton,

probably to aid her recovery. However while there she died at the age of 23 on the 16th October and was buried in Doddinghurst near her sister's home.

Henrietta continued to live in Kelvedon Hatch with her daughter, son in law and grandson until she died in 1893 at the age of just 49 and was buried in the same grave as Hellen. Soon after this the family left Essex and moved to Cheltenham where Melvina would die in 1919 six years after her husband.



Stuart Gilbert

**Arthur Stuart Ahluwalia Stronge Gilbert** (1883–1969) Stuart Gilbert as he was known professionally, was educated at Dean Close Memorial School, Cheltenham, at Cheltenham College, and at Hertford College, Oxford, where he took a first in classical moderations in 1904 and a second in literae humaniores in 1906. In 1907 he joined the Indian Civil Service and was posted to Burma, where he served in several posts including assistant commissioner, postal censor and judge. He took early retirement in 1927. During the war he served as a lieutenant in the no. 3 Burma Ford Van Company (1916–19). In 1919, while on leave, married a Frenchwoman, **Marie Agnès Mathilde (Moune)**, née Douin.

Upon his retirement in 1927 Gilbert and Moune settled in Paris, where they lived (with the exception of the Second World War years, when they lived in Wales) for the remainder of their lives. It was soon after moving to Paris, when strolling past Shakespeare and Company, a bookshop on the Rue de l'Odéon, that their lives

changed permanently. Shakespeare and Company had been founded by Sylvia Beach, a famed publisher and Paris bookseller who befriended and supported leading literary figures in the 1920s and '30s, including

James Joyce and Ernest Hemingway, and was a favourite meeting point for Anglophone authors. Sylvia Beach died in 1962 and her papers, including correspondence with Gilbert can now be found in the archive at Princeton. The window display at Shakespeare and Company included some pages from James Joyce's *Ulysses*, in a French translation by Auguste Morel and Valéry Larbaud, in which Gilbert noticed a number of errors. Beach arranged contact between Gilbert and Joyce and a lifelong collaboration ensued, leading to Gilbert becoming a literary translator (initially helping to translate *Ulysses* into French; later, unusually, he translated both from English to French and from French to English) and also to the publication of Gilbert's seminal work *James Joyce's Ulysses: a Study* in 1930 and the first volume of *Joyce's Collected Letters* in 1957.

The Gilberts and the Joyces became close friends and Richard Ellmann's biography of Joyce documents numerous holidays taken together in Salzburg, Le Havre, and Dublin, or staying at the Imperial Hotel in Torquay.

The Gilberts established a salon in their top-floor apartment at 7 Rue Jean du Bellay on the Île Saint-Louis, with its spectacular views over the Seine. Guests including Ernest Hemingway, Ford Madox Ford, Samuel Beckett, and D. H. Lawrence visited, as



James Joyce and Sylvia Beach outside Shakespeare and Company in the early 1920s.

did a number of Gilbert's professional acquaintances, the company reflecting the close relationships between writers and publishers of the period. (The Times, 14 Jan 1969) Gilbert's reputation as a literary translator was based less on his translations of Joyce into French, than of contemporary French authors, most of whom he knew personally, into English. These included Albert Camus, Jean Cocteau, Jean-Paul Sartre and Georges



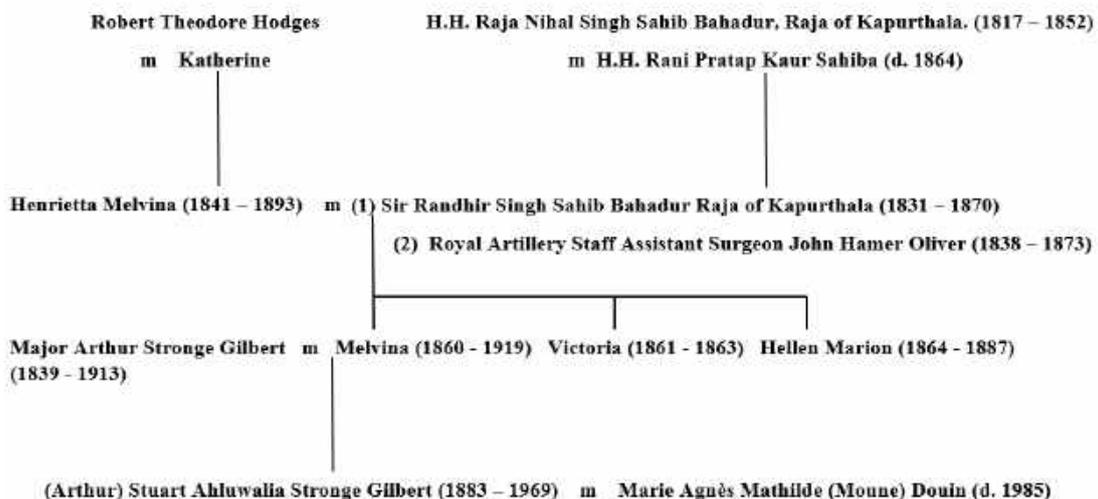
Kumra Lodge, Kelvedon Hatch.

Simenon. With Moune as a native French-speaker and an active co-translator. Together they are almost single-handedly responsible for introducing a whole generation of contemporary French authors to a new readership. Stuart Gilbert outlived Joyce (with whom he is most closely associated) by twenty-eight years, dying at his home in Paris on 5 January 1969. Moune, who had a successful career as a translator in her own right, died in 1985. The diaries, notebooks, typescripts, manuscripts, letters, postcards, photographs, and other items kept by Gilbert, are now in the Harry Ransom Center at the University of Texas, Austin.

The house in which Stuart Gilbert was born, and his mother, aunt and grandmother (the three Indian princesses) lived still stands on the Ongar Road at Kelvedon Hatch, as does the palace after which it was named although it has not fared so well. The Kamra Palace in Kapurthala, an excellent blend of western and oriental architecture, was constructed in 1833 by Maharaja Fateh Singh and was the principle home of Raja Randhir Singh and one time home to our three princesses. If you wish to see the grave that started this story it is impossible to miss being the first large cross you see on your left as you enter Doddinghurst Churchyard.



The Kamra Palace in Kapurthala.



By Lee Joyce and Claire Hooper

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Henrietta's inscription on the grave at Doddinghurst



Hellen's inscription on the grave at Doddinghurst

Points of Historical Interest in All Saints Churchyard

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## A MINI "GREEN BOOK" FOR 2021

The world pandemic of COVID-19 had a significant effect on the events we had planned for Copped Hall in 2020. Like so many heritage organisations we had to cancel the majority of the exciting events we intended to run in the year.

A great deal of work was put into the events for 2020 so it has been decided that we will try almost a "re-run" of some events in 2021. With such uncertainty however it has been decided not to produce our usual Green Book but instead, at this stage, only provide a tentative timetable for the first 6 months of the year.

### *Tentative Events Timetable for Early 2021*

17.01.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

13.02.21 .... Quiz Evening: Theydon Bois Village Hall

21.02.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

28.02.21 .... Snowdrops. A Friends Only Event \*

13.03.21 .... Mother's Day Afternoon Tea

21.03.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

04.04.21 .... Garden Afternoon

17.04.22 .... Garden Workshop: Hanging Baskets

18.04.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

24.04.21 .... Lates: Lost Houses

02.05.21 .... Garden Afternoon

05.05.21 .... Drawing Class 1: Dilys Bidewell

09.05.21 .... Lecture: Alan Cox (Last Year at Copped Hall)

16.05.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

30.05.21 .... OPEN DAY

01.06.21 .... Drawing Class 2: Dilys Bidewell

06.06.20 .... Garden Afternoon

20.06.21 .... Play: The Taming of the Shrew

20.06.21 .... Monthly Guided Tour

26.06.21 .... Afternoon Tea



**Latest News!** Do you enjoy the various TV programmes where furniture is restored, would like to try it but do not have the basic skills? A new series of one-day furniture repair and restoration skills workshops is coming to Copped Hall covering such things as tools, polishes, upholstery, glues, techniques and much more... Look out for our Email Updates and the website News section!

### *Status of Events?*

All the above events may need to be cancelled or modified at short notice according to the national situation and prevailing Government Restrictions.

Until further notice all events shall be ticketed and may have specific entry times. Tickets should be obtained via Ticketsource or via our Box Office.

It is essential to check that the event is still going ahead. Please make reference to the website, Ticketsource, our E-Bulletins and, if these are not available to you or you are still unsure, please contact our Box Office. Details of all these are shown below. Our Facebook page will also be updated with relevant information.

### *Events Details*

- Full details of the above events are contained on our website. [www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk](http://www.coppedhalltrust.org.uk)
- E-Bulletins about the events will be issued to those Friends that have registered their email addresses with us.
- If you do not have access to the Internet or have an email address, the Box Office may be contacted to enquire as to updates, the event content, details of cost, entry times, mobility issues and so on.

For those of you that still have your 2020 Green Book to hand, the content of the above events are fundamentally the same as that planned for 2020. That marked with an \* is new.

### *Buying Tickets and Contacting Us*

#### **Ticketsource**

Tickets for all events are obtained via Ticketsource. This is our preferred option. Please go to <https://www.ticketsource.co.uk/coppedhallevents>  
View the event, pay and print your tickets. Both debit and credit cards may be used.

#### **Our Box Office**

Our Box Office can be contacted via email. The address is [tickets@coppedhalltrust.org.uk](mailto:tickets@coppedhalltrust.org.uk)  
The telephone number is 07749 397932. For Information on Drawing Classes **only** please contact Alan Cox on 07799 473108 or email on [coxalan1@aol.com](mailto:coxalan1@aol.com)