# H Newsletter of the Ealing Branch: issue 48 January 2018

[www.ealinghistory.org.uk](http://www.ealinghistory.org.uk)

1. **Our Forthcoming Programme (for fuller details please see our website** [**http://ealinghistory.org.uk/**](http://ealinghistory.org.uk/)**)**

[*Meetings*](http://ealinghistory.org.uk/branch-programme-september-2013-may-2014/) *are held at 7.30 pm. on the second* ***Tuesday*** *of each month at* [*Ealing Green Church*](http://ealinghistory.org.uk/ealing-green-church-location/)*, W5 5QT. There is an opportunity to socialise from 7pm onwards.*

**13th February- - Lyndal Roper, Regius Professor, Oriel College, Oxford University**

**“Celebrating Luther”**

**13th March - Alison Telfer, Project Officer Museum of London, Archaeology Dept.**

**“The Archaeology of Crossrail”.**

**10th April - John Levy (Friends of Israel Education Foundation)**

**“The Balfour Declaration 1917;  British diplomatic gamesmanship in World War One”**

**8th May Heike Schmidt, Associate Professor, Reading University.**

**“Zimbabwe, Nationalism, and the Lion's Den in Black London”.**

**2.** **Minutes of AGM – Tuesday 12th December 2017 at Ealing Green Church**

1. members were present. They were welcomed by the Chair Peter Hounsell
2. Apologies; Liz Wood, Richard Morse, Ann Scurfield
3. Minutes of the AGM of the 13th December 2016 were circulated and approved. No matters arose which were not discussed under subsequent items.
4. The Chair presented his report. In addition, he particularly stressed the need for volunteers to help continue to run the branch, without whom it would eventually close down.
5. The Secretary presented his report. In addition, he stated that he would be prepared to continue for one more season and help with one more but would resign by 2020.

There was some discussion about;

-new ways of publicising talks. Specific mention was made of various local community websites such as Today, Neighbours, Ealing Newsletter, West Five. The secretary said he would look into them.

- Paying speakers. The secretary stated that speakers in HA were usually expected to give their services for expenses only. He did not exclude the possibility of payments in certain cases (it has happened before) but he was wary of the reliability of celebrity speakers who were most likely to charge.

5. The Treasurer presented his report. He referred to difficulties being experienced with the bank

in obtaining details and documents and the possibility of changing banks. The motion to approve the report was proposed by Elizabeth Sunley, seconded by Russell Davis and approved unanimously.

6. Election of Officers. The following were elected:

Chair – Peter Hounsell

Secretary - Pierre Thomas

Treasurer - Peter Crane

Information

& Publicity - Philip Woods

Committee - Elizabeth Sunley, Liz Wood, Russell Davis, Rodney Read , Simon Cockshutt

**3. Secretary’s Report** (September 2016 to June 2017)

There were 41 local members and 77 national members affiliated to this branch

There was a full programme of speakers as follows;

**2016 Sept**.  Stephanie Muir – Ealing Film Studios

**Oct**.    Taylor Downing – the 1916 film of the battle of the Somme

**Nov**     Prof. David Bates – The Normans

**Dec.** AGM with quiz.

**2017 Jan** Prof. David Stevenson – Fall of the Tsar

**Feb.**   Susan Slater – The Silk Road

**March** Prof. Glenn Richardson – Emperor Charles V

**April** Dr. Ivan Gibbons – Irish Easter Rebellion 1917

**May** Prof. Jonathan Harris – Byzantium

The October meeting was our traditional Sixth Form lecture held at Twyford High School, following our policy of maintaining contacts with local schools.

Audiences overall were between 40 and 63 members and guests, up on last year.

The saddest event of the year was the death of Colin Emmins, Fellow of the Association, former long-time Chair and Secretary and, at his death, still the organiser of our outings and second-hand book sales. He is greatly missed.

Two outings were arranged. The first was a tour of Historic Brentford. It had been organised by Colin but he died shortly before the due date without anyone else quite knowing the arrangements. Thanks to Elizabeth Sunley the event did proceed and in the Spring she organised a very successful visit to the London Charterhouse. Unfortunately, an overseas visit was not practical this year.

As usual we are grateful to our Chair, Peter Hounsell; Information Officer- Philip Woods; Treasurer Peter Crane for their continuing work and to Elizabeth Sunley for organising the outings.

We have continued to organise our second-hand book stalls at the HA Conferences and the local Brentfest.

**Pierre Thomas, Secretary**

**4. Treasurer’s Report for the Year Ending 30 June 2017**

As required by headquarters the accounts for this year were submitted at the beginning of September 2017. Nothing has been heard to suggest that headquarters has any problem with the accounts and I therefore assume that all is in order.

The opening balance as at 30 July 2016 was £1410.46 p

The income for the period ending June 2017 was as follows: –

* subscription from 41 members over the year £615
* non members at the door £340
* quota from H A £218
* books £429.70
* refreshments £67.60
* donations (see below) £160
* excursions £16
* Antwerp refund (see below) £165

Total income £2011.30 p

The donations were made up of £150 from the estate of Colin Emmins and £10 from Notting Hill School. The Antwerp refund of £15 each member resulted from the delay that occurred on the return trip from Antwerp and all of affected agreed to denote the refund to the association’s funds. All donations were gratefully received.

The expenses for the same period were as follows: –

* administration (printing, stationery, postage, and expenses) £541.63
* rent £315
* lecturers expenses £111
* publicity £26

Total expenditure £993.63 p

As will be seen we have made a substantial profit this year but there are a number of factors which have produced these figures. These are of course Colin’s donation, the refund from the Antwerp trip, and the coffee morning at Colin’s flat when a number of his books were sold for the benefit of the Association. These payments must be borne in mind when considering the overall financial position. Having said that there were 41 associate members which is an improvement on previous years and it does look as if the current year 2017/18 will be an improvement on that.

As at the 21 June 2017 there was £2475.16 in the bank.

Once again I would like to thank Ian Rogers for the hard work he has put in as our auditor and for his unbounded patience. **Peter Crane, Treasurer**

**William Arthur Dunkerley (1852-1941)**

I spent some time during 2017 researching the life and times of William Arthur Dunkerley who I discovered during January of last year through two unrelated incidents. The first was choosing a hymn for my church in Greenford to sing during the Week of Prayer for Christian Unity – the hymn was “In Christ there is no east of west”, credited to John Oxenham; the second was picking a book from the shelves at home to read on the train –“Capital Crimes”, a volume of stories in the well-known series of crime reprints from the British Library. This contained a story “A mystery of the Underground”, which describes a serial killer who murders passengers on the District Line at the same time on Friday nights. This story, as you will realise, was also by John Oxenham, the pseudonym under which Dunkerley used for his literary work. John Oxenham was an historical character from the age of Francis Drake, but the source for Dunkerley was almost certainly Charles Kingsley’s novel “Westward Ho!” a book he enjoyed as a child.

The combination of hymn writer, and popular novelist and short story writer sparked my interest. It is not difficult to find some information on Dunkerley via a Google search, and when I realised that Dunkerley lived in Ealing for 30 years, I was tempted to find out more about him, and offered to give a talk at Ealing Central Library in November 2017. So after many pleasant hours in the British Library, the National Archives, and Ealing Local History Centre, and finally in the archives of Ealing Green Church (which was Ealing Congregational Church at the time that Dunkerley and his family attended it), I was able to put together a talk describing a long, varied and interesting life.

Dunkerley was born, brought up and educated in Manchester, after which he started working for the family wholesale grocery business. He spent time as the firm’s buyer in Brittany, and after marrying a Scot’s girl, set off to the United States to set up an American office in New York. This didn’t work out, and after he returned to Britain, he started, with another writer Andrew Barr, a weekly British edition of a popular US newspaper, the *Detroit Free Press*. He moved south from Southport with his family and lived first in Bedford Park, and then at several houses in Ealing.

Later he formed a company to sell a mass-produced American watch – the Waterbury – involving a range of clever promotions and publicity stunts. Despite the success of this, in the 1890s he started two magazines with Jerome K. Jerome as the editor and himself as the business manager: the first was *The Idler*, and the second *To-Day*. After some years of writing cheques to other writers, he decided to try his own hand at writing, hiding his identity under the Oxenham pseudonym and making elaborate arrangements to prevent identification. By 1900 he was established as a writer, and gave up his other business activities. He wrote many short stories, and over forty novels in the next 20 years.

In 1913 he published his first book of poetry, and during the years of World War 1, he wrote a series of books of poetry, offering hope and consolation in line with his strong Christian convictions, becoming perhaps the best-known poet of the Home Front. One of his hymns, “Hymn for the Men at the Front”, was much sung at memorial services during the war, and was circulated in thousands of copies as a postcard. Another of his poems, “Tread softly”, written as his response to a visit to the battlefields of the Western Front, is engraved on a plaque at a military cemetery in France.

After the war he continued to write, but his work now focussed on re-telling the life of Jesus over several volumes. He left Ealing in 1922 and moved to Worthing where he lived until his death in 1941. He had six children, 4 daughters and two sons. Two of his daughters adopted his Oxenham pseudonym as their own writing personas: Erica became her father’s biographer, and companion after the death of her mother, whilst Elsie became a well-known writer of girls’ school stories, and is now better known than her father.

**Peter Hounsell**

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