

BROMLEY & SHEPPARDS COLLEGES



Herald

December 2023/January 2024



Welcome

Dear Collegians and Friends,

As Bromley High Street is filled with Christmas lights, trees and photo opportunities, here is your Advent and Christmas Edition of the Herald.



This is a difficult time, as we look forward to celebrating the Nativity, while recognising that the land where our stories are set is being systematically destroyed. We each deal with this in our own way, some of us with the stories of Doctor Who and Harry Potter, and others by facing what is happening in Gaza and relating it directly to the Christmas Story. Our cover picture is of Paul Jenkin's Crib outside flat 5.

The deadline for the next Herald will be Saturday January 27th '24. Please send contributions to me, preferably by email to: therevvedbee@hotmail.co.uk



Merry Christmas and Happy New Year. As ever, thanks to Jo, for printing and delivering the Herald each month.

Brandy Pearson

Clarisma Concert for the Friends



On a Saturday in November, Clarisma came and played to raise money for the Friends of Bromley and Sheppard's College. It was a very happy afternoon of gentle well-known light music, plus tea and cake.

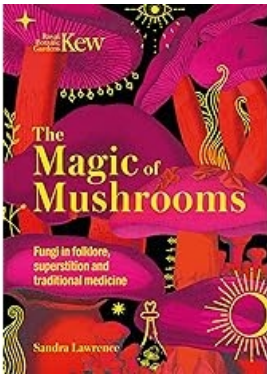


Love the matching waistcoats! - and we raised over £250!

Photos by Paul Allton

The Haunted Landscape: Witchcraft, Ritual and the Supernatural

On Saturday November 18th, Rob and I attended the Sixth conference put on by the London Fortean Society at Conway Hall, The Ethical Society's 1920s Headquarters, which stage talks, lectures, classes and community events. We were there for a conference entitled The Haunted Landscape.

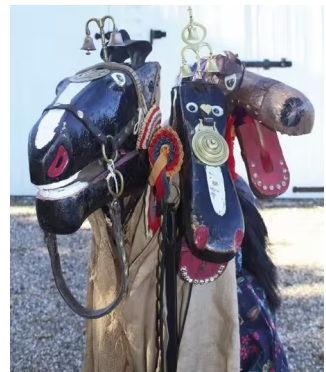


It was the best so far, with academics and other experts giving talks on a wonderful variety of subjects (and selling their books!) There were eight presentations. Here are some of the highlights.

Sandra Lawrence gave a lively talk on Fungi in Folklore and Superstition, introducing us to her book, published by Kew Gardens. Countries tend to be either mycophobic – fear of fungi - like most of the UK, or mycophilic. Many in European cultures know what fungi to eat and what not to eat, like my Polish friends.

Kirsty Hartsiotis told us fascinating ghost stories of the Cotswolds and Wiltshire. She is a professional storyteller and told her tales with gusto.

James Edward Frost not only told us about the Kentish Hooden Horses,



which were part of traditional processions, morris dancing and wassailing in Eastern Kent. He brought his own and gave us a demonstration! He has an exhibition on in Herne Bay, and we are tempted to go on a day trip!

Jeremy Harte brought us accounts from medieval monks, stories of the dreadful things that might happen if you disrespected ancient saints, and even the Blessed Virgin Mary! She is said to have sent dragons to burn up the impious!

Francis Young shared the latest research on the origin of British fairies.

It was a fascinating and inspiring day. An added bonus was the bus ride back to Victoria. It was slow, but gave us the chance to see the Christmas Lights, and the windows of Fortnum and Masons.

We look forward to next year, but will remember to take a cushion!

Brandy and Rob Pearson

If you ever need a wheelchair...

A wheelchair has been discovered in a cupboard under the stairs beyond the Office. Following John's emergency after the Collegians meeting, it is now in the hallway leading to the Common Room beside the stairs, easily accessible to all via the lift. It was given to the College by Dorothy McDougall's family and is virtually brand-new. It is really there for emergency use but if any

collegian needs it for some time, please let the Office know and leave a note where you found the wheelchair so that it can be located if needed quickly. Just before it was found the Friends had agreed to buy one immediately for collegian use!

Hoping you don't need it,
Paul Allton

The Crib



When St Francis first instituted the Christmas Crib he used real animals and people to depict the earthiness, poverty and reality of the Nativity. So many cribs today

are what I would call 'saccharine spirituality' (pretty and little reality).

My annual charity crib outside Number 5, with its red appreciation-donation canister are in aid of the Al Ahli , Anglican Hospital in Gaza. It is owned by the Diocese of Jerusalem and is in urgent need of funds in order to continue to function during the ongoing crisis.

This year I decided to start with the Advent journey of Mary and Joseph and set in the reality of today's Holy Land, with the Israeli wall that cuts Bethlehem off, a Gaza wasteland of shattered bricks, entanglements of barbed wire that tear at the body and soul of suffering humanity. I have set all this against a montage of newspaper images, that reflect both the sufferings of Israelis and Palestinians.



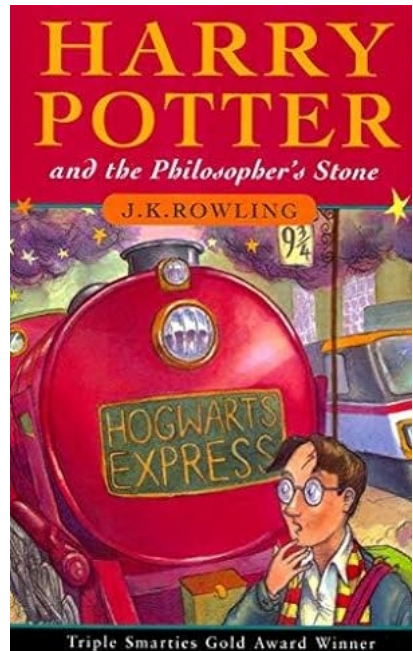
As I was completing the setting in front of newspaper images of today's suffering humanity, someone walking around the Wren Quad paused, looked at it and commented in somewhat sceptical tone 'What's the point of it all ?' I kept silent , half thinking it was another failed creative project! Then I thought - "*is it nothing to you who pass by*" (From your the Good Friday Liturgy of the Cross - Lamentations 1:12 - Look it up)

Please contribute what you can , and not just money, but Angela's initiative of making size-matching clay figures - it's up until Epiphany so the Magi will arrive, perhaps not dressed as kings, rather multi millionaires, carrying their gold bars through desert of poverty and suffering!

Paulos

Harry Potter and...

I am a great Harry Potter fan. My apologies if you find that hard to read. I read all the books twice and I watch the films every year. Be comforted by the thought that I watch the BBC's *Pride and Prejudice* every year as well. Yes, it does have something to do with Colin Firth diving into the pond!



For years I've been wanting to visit the Warner Brothers Studio to see the Harry Potter Exhibition and Cecil and I finally did it in November.

I was delighted to discover the secrets of how scenes were filmed and very impressed with all the detailed



items, such as goblets and books, that were created for the production.

The highlight was riding a broomstick in front of the green screen. We now have a fast moving film of us flying in different locations.

Great fun!

Janet Heatley

Singing in City Churches



Some of Lewisham Choral Society singing in St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street - on Tuesday morning, 31st October.

At 10am on Tuesday 31st October, some thirty members of Lewisham Choral Society, including, Andrew Grant and Valerie Pearce, (Bernard Fray joined us at the next church) met at St. Bride's Church, Fleet Street, to begin a wonderful morning of singing Morten Lauridsen's *O Magnum Mysterium* in five Inner City Churches.

We were blessed with good weather, which was very welcome for our walk between the churches. The churches we visited were St Bride's, St Dunstan-in-the-West, St Andrew's Holborn, St Etheldreda's Roman Catholic Church and Holy Sepulchre's Church, Holborn.

The motet is a beautiful piece and sounded wonderful in the open space of these churches.

In some there were only one or two people to listen, but we enjoyed hearing the sound echoing around these sacred spaces.

The Vicar was there to welcome us at Holy Sepulchre and enlarged upon the fact that it was the musicians' church and while it had an outreach to the local area, it also hosted regular concerts.

I had never visited any of these churches before and the morning left me feeling that I must pay each of them a visit again as there is a lot to explore and experience in each of them.

Valerie Pearce

The Mystery of George & Martha

from *The Southwark Mysteries*

John Constable (the writer not the painter) inaugurated a new phase of experimental writing which produced his best-known work, *The Southwark Mysteries*. These began in 1996 as a cycle of mystical poems revealed to his shamanistic alter-ego, John Crow, by "The Goose", who claimed to have been buried in the unconsecrated Cross Bones Graveyard.

The Winchester Geese were medieval sex workers in the Bankside brothels licensed by the Bishop of Winchester under Ordinances dating back to 1161.

The Southwark Mysteries grew from a poem cycle to a contemporary mystery play, first performed in Shakespeare's Globe and Southwark Cathedral on 23 April 2000.

Cecil Heatley has a signed copy of the first book of the Southwark Mysteries from 1999. This is one of the songs from that book:

I have illustrated the poem with a picture of the George in Southwark, the setting of the poem, and George and Martha and their dragons who are in the poem.

The complete Southwark Mysteries is available from your usual outlets.

Mary O'Reilly
tell me Mary Martha
Mystery
in the yard of George's
hostelry



George
of Dragon notoriety
patron saint of nationality
did pierce the Dragon bodily
with his fearsome Lance of
Destiny



& Martha
tamed it tenderly
stroked the head & cunningly
with her girdle bound the beastie
& so did harness Dragon energy



According
to O'Reilly
in the Yard of George's hostelry

& I the Childe
at Liberty
so reveal My Southwark Mystery

John Crow

Doctor Who's 60th Anniversary



One of the many joys of living here, is the wonderful variety of interests among Collegians. I was delighted to find that some of us are great fans of Doctor Who, and were happy to celebrate the 60th anniversary of the first

episode this November. Here is a fine photo of Cecil and a friend. (If you really don't recognise it, this is a Dalek!)

Our other photo is of our daughter Alex outside the Tardis (Time and Relative Dimensions in Space – the Doctor's ship – stuck in the camouflage of an old-fashioned police call box.)

That picture was taken in Glasgow just before lockdown. As Rob and I were walking along the South Bank the other day, there was another appearance of the Tardis, but it dematerialised before I managed to photograph it!



Brandy Pearson

**Bromley and Sheppard's Colleges
London Road,
Bromley
BR1 1PE**

Refugee

poem by Malcolm

Guite

contributed

by Yvonne

Fairlamb



Refugee

WE think of him as safe beneath the steeple,
Or cosy in a crib beside the font,
But he is with a million displaced people
On the long road of weariness and want.
For even as we sing our final carol
His family is up and on that road,
Fleeing the wrath of someone else's quarrel,
Glancing behind and shouldering their load.
Whilst Herod rages still from his dark tower
Christ clings to Mary, fingers tightly curled,
The lambs are slaughtered by the men of power,
And death squads spread their curse across the world.
But every Herod dies, and comes alone
To stand before the Lamb upon the throne.