

Sutton House Society Newsletter

April 2004



For all interested in the past, present and future of Sutton House

Sir Ralph Sadleir, a quincentennial celebration

The builder of Sutton House, according to historians, was born in 1507 which means that in 2007 we shall be celebrating the five hundredth anniversary of his birth and we are planning a number of events at Sutton House to commemorate the occasion.

One ambitious project is to bring together at Sutton House descendants of the Tudor Sadleirs from all over the world. We already have contacts in Australia, New Zealand and North America as well as Great Britain and Ireland but hope through the Internet to discover many more.

We do not know the precise date of Ralph's birth, which means that we have a free choice of dates for the commemoration; so we are planning a weekend of activities in the summer to coincide with the most favourable travelling times for families from the antipodes who could plan a family holiday of say two or three weeks in Europe with the highlight (one hopes) of meeting up with other Sadleirs or Sadlers in Sutton House.

We are very fortunate to have, as a member of the Sutton House Society Committee, Bill Sadleir from Wiltshire who is assisting in the planning of the event. Bill is descended from the branch of the Sadleirs that settled in Ireland at the time of Cromwell and has a family tree going back to the fifteenth century. His cousin Randle, also a member of the Society, has loaned two of the portraits in the Great Chamber to the National Trust at Sutton House — what better place for a meeting of the “clan”!

The Monograph: is it the last lap?

It has been more of a marathon than a sprint but at last *Sutton House — a Tudor Courtier's House in Hackney*, the long-awaited book on the history of Sutton House, looks to be in the final straight! All the proofs have been read and corrected and the book is being indexed at the moment; however no date has yet been given by English Heritage for its publication.

The forward has been written by Dame Jennifer Jenkins, Chairwoman of the National Trust between 1986 and 1990, who visited the house on several occasions including the evening when her famous husband Lord (Roy) Jenkins celebrated his seventieth birthday in the Great Chamber. She writes about her *first* experience of the house in the following way:

Urgently in need of a solution [for the future of the derelict house], the Trust decided to lease the house to a developer for conversion to flats. When this proposal became known there was an explosion of local anger and a “Save Sutton House” campaign [later to become the Sutton

House Society] was organized, calling on the Trust to restore the house as a museum and community centre.

It was at this point that I first saw it. I was immediately persuaded that division into self-contained units would damage the building's integrity and atmosphere as well as limiting public access. More difficult was to judge whether the alternative proposals would provide a secure long-term future. Working together, the Trust and the campaign group have shown that it could. The building has been restored and new facilities designed in a contemporary style have been fitted in. The house is alive with school children, visitors to the cafe, and people attending weddings, concerts or other functions.

Sutton House demonstrates that it is possible for a sixteenth-century building to be intensively used while the fabric is preserved. Its historic character has been the key to its success in attracting a wide range of activities and is greatly appreciated by the local community.

We are very pleased that recent research into life assurance policies in the Guildhall Library by Society member Joan Hardinge, which has given us a better understanding of Sutton House in the eighteenth century, has been included in the final draft.

If you would like to purchase a signed copy of the book once it is published (price still to be announced) please contact Siân Harrington at Sutton House.

Spring outing

Saturday 22nd May: *Hampstead through artists' eyes*

Our experienced guide Ailsa Pain is arranging this outing as a sequel to our outing last summer to the Stour Valley. We shall meet at Hampstead tube at 11.00 am, from where Ailsa will lead us on a 45-minute walk taking in Admiral's House, Well Walk (the site of the Assembly rooms), the Flask Pub, and Constable's houses in Lower Terrace (where he observed cloud scenes). We shall have lunch at Burgh House, and then go on to Keat's House in time for a tour at 3.00 pm.

The cost of the outing is £2.50 for members and £3.50 for non-members; this covers admission to Keat's House. To book places please fill in the attached form and send it to Sutton House with your payment. There is a limit on numbers, so don't delay!

Property Manager's update

Brick Place Cafe

The cafe will be run from 29th March by Rita Lindsay. Rita has lots of good ideas for the cafe, and we look forward to better-quality food and service.

The car yard at No. 16a

As you know the land stretching from Sutton House along the backs of the houses on Sutton Place to Churchwell Path was sold by Charlie Nairn at auction on 24th November 2003. However, it seems that the sale has fallen through and the National Trust and local residents are now entering negotiations with Charlie Nairn to buy the whole plot.

London Area Manager

Ian Wilson started work as the new London Area Manager on 1st March 2004. Many of you will remember Ian from his time as House Steward here at Sutton House.

Sutton House Forthcoming Events

Art Gallery

Wednesday 7th April – Monday 3rd May:
Young Artists, New Artists

Young people from three Hackney secondary schools have taken part in the premiere of the Sutton House Art Prize. Come and see the work of these new artists on display for the first time.

Wednesday 5th May – Monday 7th June:
Freedom Quilts, Gayhurst School

Children from Gayhurst School and their families were inspired to make their own responses to the theme of freedom during Black History Month 2003. Four amazing 'Freedom Quilts' are the results of their work.

Wednesday 9th June – Sunday 4th July:
Ambiguous Places

Landscape paintings by Delia Woodman. Urban constructions loom in the middle of nowhere and the perspective at times seems viewed from the sky.

Activities for All Ages

Sunday 25th April 11.30 am – 5.00 pm:
Tudor Party People

Sunday 30th May 11.30 am – 5.00 pm:
Tudor Childhood

Discovery Days. Choose from a variety of lively and unusual activities at historic Sutton House. See how characters from the past bring the house to life. Join a tour to discover fascinating secrets, and learn new skills at a variety of workshops. **Free** activity-packed days for all ages.

Sunday 23rd May 1.00 pm – 5.00 pm:
Adult Learners Lectures

The Open University returns to Sutton House with a series of lectures on local history. Admission is free but booking is advisable. Call 020-8525 9055.

Sundays 11th April, 16th May and 20th June 12.30 pm – 5.00 pm: *Painting Places*

A series of special days where visitors are invited to capture Sutton House with assistance from a professional artist and free art materials. **Free** after admission to the house.

First Sunday of each month 1.30 pm and 3.30 pm: *Free Sutton House Tours*

Themed guided tours. Please contact Sutton House for further details.

Holiday Projects

Children aged 8 to 11 are invited to enjoy special projects during the half term and summer holidays. Cost per day is £3 (£1.50 for concessions). Booking via Sutton House on 020-8986 2264 is essential, as places are limited.

Over 55s

Every Friday at Sutton House is dedicated to people who are aged 55 and over. On offer is a programme of free talks, tours, art-and-craft sessions and activities. **Free** entry to local residents. Special-price tea or coffee and cake.

Talks, Tours and Courses

Saturday 3rd April 11.00 am – 12 noon:
Tudor Women

Dr. Sian Jones, formerly of Southampton Museums, returns to Sutton House to repeat her popular talk about the role of women in Tudor society. Adults £5, children £2.50, families £15. Tickets from the Regional Box Office on 01494-755 572. Includes tea and coffee.

Tuesdays 20th April – 6th July 6.30 pm – 8.30 pm: *London from the East — a social history of the East End*

This course will examine the development of London's East End since the sixteenth century. We will look at the East End's rich traditions, as a centre of crafts and industry, as the point of

reception for immigrants from many lands, and as the home of radical political and social movements. Site visits included. For further information on this and the autumn programme please contact Verity Barnett on 020-7631 6655.

Saturday 15th May 2.00 pm – 3.00 pm:
Black Servants and Companions

This talk about Dido Elizabeth Bell, Francis Barber and other black servants and companions of the rich and titled of British history is by Valery Small. **Free** after admission to the house.

Saturday 22nd May 11.00 am – 12 noon:
Huguenots (talk)

A talk by Michael Berlin of Birkbeck University. London has had a long history of immigration and the Huguenots were one of the first waves of people to make a contribution to East End life. Adults £5, children £2.50. Tickets from the Regional Box Office on 01494-755 572. Includes tea and coffee.

Saturday 5th June 11.00 am – 12.30 pm:
Huguenots (walk)

A walk by Michael Berlin of Birkbeck University around the East End of London, complementing his talk on Huguenot history on 22nd May. Please note: the meeting place for the walk is Liverpool Street station. Adults £5, children £2.50. Tickets from the Regional Box Office on 01494-755 572 .

Saturday 19th June 2.00 pm – 3.00 pm:
Mary Seacole

Valery Small returns to Sutton House to talk about the life of Mary

Seacole, a black nurse who for many years was one of the unsung heroines of the Crimean War. **Free** after admission to the house.

Seasonal Events

Saturday 8th and Sunday 9th May: *Spring Fete*

Our popular spring fair returns to Sutton House. We invite you back to fill your baskets with plants and herbs, and buy pots and planters by local craft workers. We will also have a selection of related crafts to buy. **Free** after admission to the house.

Sutton House Music Society

Sutton House Music Society's twelfth season of concerts takes place at Sutton House. Adults £8.50, concessions £5, families £20. Tickets from the Regional Box Office on 01494-755 572.

Sunday 4th April 5.00 pm: *Fitzwilliam String Quartet with Penelope Roskell (piano)*

Shostakovich's fifth Quartet and Beethoven's "Archduke" Trio.

Sunday 16th May 5.00 pm: *Fitzwilliam String Quartet*

Quartets by Mozart, Shostakovich and Rachel Stott.

Sunday 13th June 5.00 pm: *Eleanor Percy (violin) and Irina Lyakhovskaya (piano)*

Sonatas by Mozart, Poulenc and Franck.

Booking Form

Sutton House Society Spring Outing : Saturday 22nd May 2004

Please fill in this form to book places on the outing, and send it to:

Sutton House, 2&4 Homerton High Street, London E9 6JQ.

NAME

ADDRESS

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TELEPHONE

EMAIL

I should like to book the following places on the outing.

| <i>Type</i> | <i>Price</i> | <i>Number</i> | <i>Total</i> |
|--------------|--------------|---------------|--------------|
| Members | £2.50 | | £ |
| Non-members | £3.50 | | £ |
| Total | | | £ |

I enclose a cheque for £

SIGNED DATE.....