



Registered Charity
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The Huguenot Society Newsletter

From The Hon. Secretary
No 62 Autumn 2016

The Huguenot Library collections, along with UCL Special Collections, are currently at **The National Archives**, Ruskin Avenue, Kew, Richmond TW9 4DU, where they are available for consultation in the Special Collections dedicated reading room. The Huguenot Library reader days at TNA are Tuesdays and Wednesdays and Huguenot Society publications and other reference works are now available on open access at the library. For information about opening times, how to book a visit and order material, please visit the Library and Archive webpages. Details are also available on the web pages concerning facilities for Fellows to consult Society publications on Fridays at Gower Street, together with recent journals and microfiche of the archives.. You can contact the Librarian, Miss Micol Barengo on the following number: **Tel: 020 7679 2046** or email library@huguenotsociety.org.uk For information on TNA: www.nationalarchives.gov.uk

Huguenot Society Officers And Fellows

We regret the passing of two very distinguished members of the Society, Randolph Vigne and Keith Le May. Randolph made an enormous contribution to the Huguenot Society during his two periods as President and as his time as editor. He was an infallible authority on all Huguenot matters and a very active Director of the French Hospital. He died on 19 June at the age of 87 and a memorial service was held for him at St Mary Abbots Church in Kensington on 22 July. This service was attended by friends and family from England and South Africa, together with members of the Huguenot Society and the French Hospital. A number of tributes were given, including one from the Speaker of the Namibian Parliament on behalf of the President of Namibia.

Keith Le May will be remembered particularly for his long service on the Library and Archive committee and he worked together with Barbara Julien to set up the Family History page and its downloadable documents. Keith had an extensive knowledge of genealogical matters and for many years he wrote all the responses to the *Is my name Huguenot* postal enquiries. He sadly passed away on June 5th 2016 at Southampton General Hospital, at the age of 85 and his funeral service was held at Holy Saviour Church, Bitterne, on 1 July 2016.

A party from the Huguenot Society had a very successful visit on Saturday 14 May to the House Mill at Three Mills Island on the River Lea. The wheels of the tidal mill are still in place but not working. The House Mill has a strong Huguenot connection as it was originally bought by Peter Lefevre, a refugee from Normandy in 1727 and his partners were a Bisson and a Debonnaire. Daniel Bisson, rebuilt the Mill in 1776 for grinding grain to bake bread and the manufacture of gin to supply London, and it functioned here until the end of World War II.



News from the Irish Section

Members of the Irish section went on an outing to Portarlinton on 13 August where many Huguenot soldiers and families arrived and made their home in the town. The trip included a visit to Lea Parish Church which is three miles outside the town and was the original Parish Church for the area. It was abandoned as a place of worship in the early 19th century. Members of the Blanc family in the group are descended from the Le Blanc family who were butchers in the town. Many of the early Huguenot burials took place in Lea Parish Church and there are many French names in the graveyard including the grave of Susan Blanc. As the photos show on the right, this may be an abandoned church but it is a magical spot.



The group photo in the French Church and the disused Lea graveyard

The Irish Section: The Annual Service in St Patrick's Cathedral in Dublin will be held on Sunday 20 November 2016 at 3.15 pm.

News from the V&A

The Rosalinde and Arthur Gilbert Collection Galleries re-open at the V&A on 16 November 2016. This includes a display of Huguenot silver which is dominated by the work of celebrated second generation Huguenot craftsmen including London's leading 18th-century silversmith, Paul de Lamerie. On show will be the Le Quesne tea kettle, owned by Sir John Le Quesne who served as a Director of La Providence, the French Hospital. For a full copy of the press release please contact the Hon Secretary at secretary@huguenotsociety.org.uk

An Invitation to a book launch and lecture by Julian Woodford

The Huguenots of Spitalfields have collaborated with Spitalfields Life to launch Julian Woodford's biography, *The Boss Of Bethnal Green*, the most notorious Huguenot Joseph Merceron, in the Hanbury Hall where Merceron was baptised in 1764. This event will take place on Thursday, 3 November at 7pm at Hanbury Hall, Hanbury Street, London E1 6QR. Entry is free but to reserve a seat please contact bookings@huguenotsofspitalfields.org

The Institute Of Historical Research - Library Membership

The Huguenot Society now has corporate membership to the Institute of Historical Research (IHR) for all members of the Society. On the first visit to the IHR, members will need to bring in some form of identification with proof of their name and address and they will also be asked to complete an application form. Members of the Huguenot Society also have free access to the UCL Library and they will need to go through a similar registration process to the one at the IHR on their first visit.

French Hospital

La Providence, Rochester. Founded in 1718 as a charity for poor Huguenot refugees, today it provides accommodation for elderly or needy people, able to look after themselves, though a warden is always on hand to assist in an emergency. The Almshouse is centrally situated, close to Rochester Cathedral and there are over 55 self-contained flats, all with their own front door and emergency call system. Applicants must be able to satisfy the directors they are of direct Huguenot or French Protestant descent. Applications in writing to The Clerk, Mr Ian McKenzie, 41, La Providence, Rochester, Kent ME1 1NB. For further details phone 01634 843107 or email: clerk@frenchhospital.org.uk Website: www.frenchhospital.org.uk

News from the Huguenot Museum

It has been a very busy summer for the museum, seeing more visitors coming through their doors and some exciting new events. Their display *Huguenot Silk: Canterbury and Catwalk* which has now finished attracted plenty of new visitors to see one of the dresses inspired by Alexander McQueen's Spring /Summer 2016 collection as well as collections on loan from Canterbury Museums (shown here is a mourning ring, an heirloom of the Lepine silk weaving family



Lepine 1826 ring

The Museum has also been busy with its events programme hosting talks from Kathy Chater on tracing your Huguenot ancestors and costume historian Lee Ault on the history of dress. Refugee Week was marked with a special study day which saw speakers from around Kent talking about their work helping young refugees. The event brought together artists, activists and political figures for a day of discussion, inspiration and debate, which began with an account of the Huguenot refugee experience. Hala George's short films documenting her experience communicating with her Syrian relatives were especially moving. The artwork from art and craft workshops as part of the Red Cross Young Refugee Project will go on display at the Huguenot Museum from the end of September.

The Museum is also currently seeking applications for a new commission, inviting designer-makers to compete to create a new piece of silver for sale and display in a special exhibition at the Huguenot Museum. This project is sponsored by the South East Museum Development Programme. The commission should celebrate the history of the Huguenots, and will also mark the exciting acquisition by the Museum of two portraits depicting Jean Jacob, an eighteenth-century silversmith and his wife Anne, née Courtauld. Coming up soon are more craft workshops to coincide with our new project and Tessa Murdoch will be giving a talk at the museum on 10 December about the French Hospital silver. If you would like to help the Huguenot Museum please visit: <http://huguenotmuseum.org/get-involved/> For more information and to see our programme of events, please visit www.huguenotmuseum.org

The Reluctant Goldsmith by Christopher Portal

Julie Portal, the widow of Christopher Portal, has about 70 spare copies of his book about his ancestor, the Huguenot goldsmith and playwright Abraham Portal, who lived between 1726 and 1809. If you would be interested in having a copy of this book please contact library@huguenotsociety.org.uk

The French Protestant Church Of London: 8-9 Soho Square, London W1D 3QD. The new President of the Consistory is Mrs Carole de Saint Affrique, who takes over from Thibault Lavergne and Mrs Benedicte Fougier is the new Archivist and Head of Collections (in place of Mrs Gould). A bilingual service and lunch is held on the first Tuesday of the month. Check with Secretariat, on Tuesdays and Thursdays on Tel. 020 7437 5311. The French Protestant Church also holds a service every Sunday at 11.00 am which is very well attended. To visit the Library at the French Protestant Church please contact Mrs Benedicte Fougier by email at: collections@egliseprotestantelondres.com or in writing, care of the Pastor Stéphane Desmarais.

Scarves, Sweatshirts And Ties

Huguenot Society sweatshirts are available in S-M-L-XL-XXL priced at £20 plus postage and packing (UK £3, EU £6, rest of the world £10). **Silk Huguenot Cross ties** are available in blue at £20 each, and polyester ties are available in maroon and in blue at £10 each plus postage and packing (UK £1.50, elsewhere £4). **Silk Huguenot Society scarves** are available in two-tone blue with a gold motif and measure 137x23cm. The cost is £20 each plus postage and packing (UK £1.50, elsewhere £4). **Silk Huguenot Cross, self-tie, Bow Ties** dark blue with silver motif. £25 each plus postage and packing (UK £1.50, elsewhere £4).

For all postal orders please write to the Administrative Officer at PO Box 444, Ruislip, HA4 4GU or email admin@huguenotsociety.org.uk

Subscriptions – PLEASE NOTE that annual subscriptions are due on 1st January each year, the new subscription rates for 2016 are: Individual Fellows' rate UK & Europe £35 or €45; Outside Europe £45 or US\$70, CAN\$80, AUS\$90, NZ\$90. Rates for joint Membership, Libraries and in other currencies available on request.

Payments/enquiries to: Administrative Officer at PO Box 444, Ruislip, HA4 4GU or email admin@huguenotsociety.org.uk

Direct Debits and Paypal Facilities The Direct Debit and the PayPal facilities are now up and running. Overseas members are welcome to pay subscriptions and any other payments by Paypal, using admin@huguenotsociety.org.uk Payments need to be made in UK Pounds please.