

A History of Woodford & Wanstead Photographic Society

Revised 2026

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Original preface by George Hunt (1968)

It has been said that a preface is but a veiled apology for inflicting an indifferent work upon a critical reader. The only suggestion of apology I am prepared to make is for calling this work 'a short history of the Woodford Photographic Society' when, in fact, it is nothing more than an interim report of 75 years of activity.

Because I possess no qualifications, I can make no claim to being a historian. All I could do was to extract from the minutes interesting information and assemble it in chronological order. From this, a certain amount of repetition arises, because ideas and suggestions recorded in committee minutes only become accomplished facts when recorded as such in the reports of the Annual General Meetings. This provides a reference for any searcher who wished to delve more deeply about some particular idea or occasion.

There is some advantage in being a member and to be old enough to have been able, as a young student, to have been acquainted with photography as it was from 1908 to 1914, to have seen and to vividly recall some of the work of the old masters, those beautiful bromoil and gum bichromatic prints, the high-key portraits by Cadby and the dramatic pictures by the great Mortimer as well as the first examples of the autochrome process - it all seems but yesterday.

Once I had glanced at the first minute book and read the clear and concise reports written in the beautiful copper-plate handwriting of Henry Bennett, the urge to do justice to these men of the past could not be suppressed. Despite R G Collingwood's disapproval of 'scissors and paste history', the well-preserved records and clippings from *The Woodford Times* enabled a fairly clear picture to be formed.

Photographs as well as the written work provide valid evidence of what they did as individuals and what they did as a team, but an enquiring mind will always ask 'Why?' If the answers remain consistent throughout the years, then the picture gains in clarity.

If their efforts were intended to be of value to those other than themselves, then what they did is to their credit. But when we find this effort is periodically repeated, then we are forced to the unavoidable conclusion that the Woodford Society possesses an inherent historical sense.

I have to express my gratitude and appreciation for the valuable help given by the eldest living member, Mr W C Cook, who was able verbally to sketch from memory word portraits of several of the old prominent members.

To Mr G W Hall for information regarding the revival of the Society in 1945, and to Mr Hallett, Secretary of the Royal Photographic Society, for his interest and help in lending a copy of *The Photographic Journal* of July 1942, which contains a verbatim report of the 'W L F Wastell Memorial Lecture' delivered by F J Mortimer, CBE, FRPS.

George John Dean Hunt, Woodford, 1968

To the founders

*'For their work continueth,
Greater than they knew'*

(Rudyard Kipling)

Foreword by Gillian Hutchinson (2002)

In editing this history of Woodford Photographic Society, I have drawn mainly on the work of George Hunt. In 1967, George Hunt searched meticulously through the records of the club and set out details of interest in chronological order. George Hunt died in 1968.

In 1972, George Hall was asked to bring the history up to date, but he said he felt unable to continue George Hunt's work as the secretary's reports no longer contained enough information of the past years' events.

As the centenary approached, the committee asked Reg Fowkes to complete the project up to 1994. Reg had been involved with the club since 1945 and was able to use his own memories to make notes about his own contribution in the later years.

As I attempted to draw together the information these two researchers provided, I realised that there were many gaps. I referred to the original sources and found that the club's records are incomplete. Until 1939, the secretary of the society kept a record of every meeting. These records were mostly written in longhand in hardcover books and are an invaluable source of information. In addition, the secretary kept minutes of the council [committee] meetings, but only one book has survived from this early period.

After the society reconvened in 1945, it seems that the secretary did not record the activities of society meetings, but continued to keep minutes of the committee meetings. These were no longer always written in longhand or in hardback books, but typed on loose sheets of paper which easily become lost. Consequently there are gaps in one of the most interesting periods photographically, the 1960s and 1970s.

The two disparate sets of minutes provide us with different types of information. Early records of club meetings show members' enthusiasm and preoccupation with experimenting with new and exciting photographic techniques. The later committee minutes on the other hand are more concerned with administrative matters than photography and often omit to mention new developments.

My task has been to try and fill in the gaps and make a coherent whole from the information available.

Gillian Hutchinson, BA, LRPS
April 2002

125th anniversary foreword by Alan Simpson (2018)

Sixteen years ago, Gillian Hutchinson updated George Hunt's history of what is now Woodford & Wanstead Photographic Society, originally written in 1968. This year, 2018, fifty years on from George's earlier offering, sees the society celebrate its 125th anniversary.

The years since 1893 have seen many ups and downs in the society's fortunes, but it continues to meet and has done so regularly apart from a few years during the two world wars. Now settled in its new home at Wanstead House, the club is once again going from strength to strength.

I have made few changes to George and Gillian's efforts, other than to bring them up to date and to enhance some of their writings with material I came across when putting together my contribution. I have also looked at a resource not available to at least one of my predecessors - the internet: in particular, the online British Newspaper Archive, from which I have made use of a few contemporary cuttings relating to the society's early years and annual exhibitions; and the Ancestry website, from where I have been able to confirm (or refute) some of the more notable members' biographical details.

Alan Simpson, BA, LRPS
October 2018

Early years (1893-1919)

The formation of the society

By the middle of the 19th century, the science and techniques of photography had advanced to a high standard. Photography was seen by many as being of national importance and the year 1853 saw the formation of the Photographic Society, a nationwide organisation.

The first camera club in the country was Leeds Camera Club, formed in 1852. Following the formation of the Photographic Society in 1853, local societies were established in other big towns and, by 1893, some 30 had affiliated to the Photographic Society (under Royal patronage from 1854, but not known as the Royal Photographic Society - RPS - until 1894). This affiliation helped to foster the development and general interest in photography throughout the United Kingdom.

On 9 October 1893, seven men met at the Coffee Tavern, 92 George Lane, adjoining George Lane railway station (now South Woodford station) to pass a set of rules and to declare the aims and objects of Woodford Photographic Society (WPS). The seven men were: Henry Thomas Malby, H Wilmer, Edward B Caird, Henry W Bennett, F W Elliot, F W Smith and Henry Crouch. All were skilled and experienced photographers.

The population of the parish of Woodford at that time was fewer than 9,000. The census figures for 1891 show the number of people in Woodford, St Mary's being 3,577, in Woodford Wells 3,352, and in Woodford Bridge 1,955, giving a total of 8,884. The census for 1891 gives a total for Woodford of 11,024. This includes the area of South Woodford.

This meeting could not have been a sudden affair; the magnet that drew them together was their common interest. But how did they get to know each other? At that time, professional photographer Henry Malby lived at 2 Blyden Villas, in Chelmsford Road. H Wilmer and Henry Crouch lived in Grove Hill, Edward Caird in Grove Road, and F W Elliott in Higham Road. It may well be that as they all lived in close proximity to Henry Malby they gradually became acquainted and so in the 'village' of St Mary's the seed was sown for the founding of WPS.

They decided to hold meetings on the first and third Thursday of each month and charge an annual subscription of half a guinea (10/6). H Wilmer was elected president for the year (the president also acted as chairman until after the Second World War), Henry Bennett became both secretary and treasurer, and Messrs Malby, Caird and Crouch were elected members of the council.

Aims of the society

The group declared its main aim to be 'the advancement of photography, technically and artistically'.

Its second aim was for the society to take its place amongst the foremost in the kingdom. This it achieved in the early years. Competition in the affiliation contests of the RPS was intensely keen and attracted work from all over the country. The system employed evaluated scores to the third decimal place. Plaques were awarded for the best individual efforts, while the team efforts were awarded the first three places. Where fractions only separated the leaders, the records give ample evidence of WPS successes.

A third aim, which was never written down, was a desire to do something of value to the community. This was the reason for the photographic survey of the 'Ancient Parish of Woodford' organised by Francis Emler in 1901-1905. This record is now known as the Emler Collection and is recognised to be of historic value. Details are given in the 'Surveys' section later in this history.

The first meetings

At one of the first meetings, on 19 October 1893, the president, H Wilmer said:

There is no apostolic succession in photography - the only road to success must be through failures, which should never discourage, but be valued for the lessons they teach.

He expressed the need for individual work and the hope that 'by co-operation and hard work the Woodford Society might take an honoured place amongst the foremost societies'.

In the early years a good practical programme was arranged with the burden of instruction, demonstration and general guidance falling upon the shoulders of the founders. At one of the early meetings, Edward Caird read a paper on 'Some modern printing processes' reviewing the gelatine chloride, gelatine bromide, carbon and platino processes. Another paper was read on 'Copying' and there was a lecture on 'Artistic aspects of photography'.

There were discussions on toning and exposure; darkrooms; the advantages of backed plates; and how to correct converging verticals. Members gave practical demonstrations on platinotype printing; preserving solutions from oxidization; carbon printing; and mending and binding lantern slides. Lantern slides were made on glass. They were often difficult to make, especially when the slide had to be produced by a process of reduction from a larger negative. Sometimes clouds had to be painted in to enhance the effect and it was quite normal for a good worker to have a number of cloud negatives to choose from. Sometimes unwanted clouds had to be blacked out first. The whole process called for skill and patience, but was worthwhile because of the popularity of the public shows.

By the end of the first year, seven lectures or papers had been given, two with demonstrations. There had been a social event with lantern slide display and nine information discussions. Membership had risen to 20 and the club arranged its first exhibition, to be held at the Coffee Tavern. At this first exhibition all the prints were framed.

The club also decided to become affiliated to the RPS from 1 January 1895, and, in October, *The Woodford Times* published a report of the society's success at the RPS annual exhibition. WPS had 12 prints and 12 sets of lantern slides accepted and Ernest Marriage was awarded a medal for a set of 12 slides.

In January 1895, F Elliott spoke on beginners' difficulties and suggested that too many papers were read on the technical side and not enough on the artistic side. Experienced members were asked to provide samples of their work with details of exposure, development and toning, to set a standard of guidance for beginners.

The Photographic Journal, 1896

Woodford Photographic Society. - January 2, Mr. E. B. Caird in the chair. - Mr. Marriage showed a lantern slide developed with sacchrate of lime; he spoke of it as being a very rapid developer. The Chairman showed some Eastman films of snap-shots exposed in August 1893, and only just developed. Two or three gave very good results, but two or three others exhibited marks evidently caused by pressure of elastic bands used in packing the films after exposure. It was decided to apply to the Royal Photographic Society for the loan of a set of lantern slides and Mr. Warnerke's paper on the development of printing-out papers.

Woodford Photographic Society. - January 16, Mr. E. Marriage in the chair. - A quantity of literature, supplied by Messrs. Elliott & Co. and Messrs. Thomas & Co., was distributed among the members present. The Chairman passed round a number of slides that had been intensified by various methods. These were afterwards passed through the lantern, and the results compared, but some doubts were expressed as to their permanency. The slides contributed by the Leeds Photographic Society for circulation among the societies affiliated to the Royal Photographic Society were then shown, as well as some by Mr. Malby.

Woodford Photographic Society. - February 6, Mr. E. B. Caird in the chair. - A few

Photo-micrographs were shown by the Secretary, and, as these were among the first taken by any member of the Society, they caused considerable interest. Mr. Emler explained his method of working, which is simplicity itself. The microscope is so adjusted that the eyepiece end is inserted into the front of the camera. The lens having been removed, all extraneous light is carefully excluded. The object is then placed on the stage of the microscope, a two-inch condenser behind that, while a duplex oil lamp was used for illumination. The exposure varied with the objective used, and ranged between thirty and ninety seconds. Ilford isochromatic plates and pyro-soda developer were used. Mr. Warnerke's paper on Development of Printing-out Papers was then read. The substance of the paper was that, after a short exposure to either daylight or artificial light, the paper can be developed and then toned, the results being equal, if not better, than direct printing and toning, formula and the whole method of treatment being very fully explained.

The Essex Chronicle, 8 May 1896

WOODFORD

THE ANNUAL ART AND INDUSTRIAL EXHIBITION was opened on Wednesday at the Lecture Hall, Woodford Green, and proved a decided success. The entries were more numerous than last year, and a marked improvement was observed in the art division, while the cookery and needlework exhibits were very good. In the musical classes the competition was very keen. One of the features of the show was the collection of photographs lent by the Woodford Photographic Society.

The Photographic Journal, 1896

Woodford Photographic Society. - October 15, Annual Meeting. - After the usual routine business had been gone through, the Secretary submitted his report upon the state of the Society, its work and finances for the past year. He said the membership had increased, but the attendance could hardly be considered satisfactory. Demonstrations upon Platinotype, by Mr. W. H. Bennett, and Lantern-slide Making, by Mr. Marriage; A Holiday in Derbyshire, illustrated by a set of nearly fifty lantern slides, by Mr. Emler; and the Leeds slides, circulating among the affiliated societies, formed part of the year's work. The excellence of the work shown at the Exhibition last November was touched upon, and congratulations offered to those members whose pictures were shown at Pall Mall. The balance-sheet showed that last year's deficit had been wiped off, a balance in hand of £1. 15s. remaining. An appeal was made to the members to endeavour to increase the membership, and, if possible, to draw within the Society the many photographers in and about Woodford who do not belong to any other society, a course which would benefit them and generally conduce to an improvement in photographic work done in the neighbourhood. Mr. Wilmer, at the conclusion of the report, in proposing a vote of thanks to the retiring officers, warmly praised the Secretary for his interest and exertions on the Society's behalf during the past year. The officers elected for the present year are: - President: Mr. E. Marriage. - Council: Messrs. Caird, Goodwin, and Malby. - Lanternist: Mr. E. Noble. - Hon Secretary and Treasurer: Mr. F. G. Emler. The programme for the present year is a capital one ...

The Photographic Journal, 1897

Woodford Photographic Society. - January 21, Mr. E. Marriage in the chair. - Mr. H. W. Bennett was called upon to read his affiliation lecture upon Architectural Photography. The lecture is very comprehensive in character, particular stress being laid upon the need of good apparatus if the best results are desired. The style of camera, with its various movements and fittings, lenses of different focal length, angle of view, and flatness of field, tripod, tilting table, &c., all receive careful consideration. A good deal of wholesome advice is given as to plate and exposure. The last part of the lecture is illustrated by some slides of beautiful examples of architectural photography, each of these slides being used to illustrate some point of lighting, angle of view, question of exposure, &c.

Woodford Photographic Society. - February 18, Mr. E. Marriage in the chair. - Among the items of interest shown were a couple of large transparencies that Mr. Wilmer brought - these were specimens of the latest development of colour photography by M. Chassagne, and created a good deal of interest. Mr. Wilmer was heartily thanked for giving the members an opportunity of seeing these interesting examples. Mr. Emler, the Secretary, read a paper on Some Failures and their Lessons. The failures dealt with were of a nature that the photographer is likely to meet with in the course of his experience, and were not due to carelessness or neglect; examples were shown, and a good deal of discussion ensued.

Illustrated Catalogue of the Royal Photographic Society's International Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, 1898

Woodford Photographic Society

- 1. A Suffolk Road, H. Wilmer.*
- 2. Hastings, H. T. Malby.*
- 3. A Yarmouth Row, E. Noble.*
- 4. Capital in Canterbury Cathedral, E. Marriage.*
- 5. From dim recesses of the Woods, J. T. Ashby.*
- 6. Twixt Day and Night, F. G. Emler.*

The society expands

Meetings of WPS were held at the Coffee Tavern until 1898 when the membership had risen to 41 and the society then moved to the Wilfrid Lawson Temperance Hotel, near 'The Castle' public house, Woodford ¹. In the same year, the society decided to amend its aims and objectives by adding that one of its purposes should be: 'The discussion of the subjects connected with photography in a social manner and the encouragement of photographic research practice among the members by mutual and friendly assistance'.

In September 1899, Alfred Horsley Hinton, editor of *The Amateur Photographer* magazine, became a member. He was chairman in 1902-1903, and *The Amateur Photographer* reported the 8th annual exhibition of the society in 1902, saying:

There are probably few, if indeed any Societies which, in proportion to its numbers includes amongst its members so many who have made a name for themselves in some particular branch of photography.

In those days members often used bicycles as their main means of transport and, because of the heavy equipment needed at that time, most photographers preferred to work locally. Some members used hand carts to carry their equipment around. Film speeds were low and photographers generally had to use a tripod. Plates and other equipment were expensive and consequently photographers were generally more careful and selective in taking photographs.

The East Anglian Daily Times, 10 July 1905

PICTORIAL RECORDS OF ESSEX. NEW SCHEME INAUGURATED.

On the invitation of the Earl and Countess of Warwick, the members of the Essex Field Club and many friends, in all about seventy, assembled on Saturday at Easton Lodge, Dunmow, the Essex seat of the family, for the purpose of hearing the proposals of the new "Council of

¹ The hotel was demolished in 1973 and a block of flats built on the site.

*the Survey, "an off-shoot of the Field Club, which has recently developed a scheme for bringing about a photographic and pictorial survey of the county ..."*²

Mr. Miller Christy, F.L.S., next addressed the gathering, and said that the Council of the Photographic Society was, strictly speaking, a Committee of the Field Club. Their aim was, in brief, to write the history of the county in pictures. The scheme had been anticipated in several other English counties, notably in Warwickshire, where it had been at work for some years. In Surrey, too, a start had been made. The idea originated with Mr. Briscoe, who put it forward in an article in "The Essex Naturalist." There were in the county thousands of amateur photographers, there being 50 organised societies, and it was hoped to enlist their sympathies in the work. The financial question was not a serious one, a comparatively small sum being required for the purposes of the Survey. The minimum subscription would be half-a-crown, but many would, no doubt, subscribe more. Besides collecting current photographs, they hoped to become the custodians of many of the prints and engravings that already existed which threw any light on the social life and customs of the people of the county. He produced a sample Steinenberg book file of photographs, such as it was proposed to collect, which had been contributed by the Woodford Photographic Society. The photographs were mostly half-plates, and opposite was a schedule of information as to place, time, photographer, etc. ...

The Essex Chronicle, 20 April 1906

Photographing Essex.

The annual report of the Council of the Essex Field Club complains that while the quality of its members is excellent, their number is not what might be expected in a large and populous county. To anyone with the slightest leaning towards natural work, or antiquarian research, the facilities and enjoyable excursions offered by the Club should certainly appeal. This is the first year of existence for the Field Club's child - the Photographic Survey and Record. The Council express their thanks to the Woodford Photographic Society, who have contributed a set of 200 prints, comprising the survey of Woodford. The Council add: Fortunately this Society commenced the work several years ago, and some of the prints record parts of the district, the aspect of which has since been completely changed in giving place to modern requirements. This only emphasizes the necessity of record work being proceeded with without further delay, for our towns and villages are rapidly undergoing change, and relics of bygone days and curious customs are fast disappearing, soon to become merely a memory unless a systematic record is now undertaken.

By 1906, the membership had increased to 104 and six members of the club had received the Fellowship of the RPS distinction (FRPS) - Messrs Ashby, Bennett, Malby, Marriage, Wilmer and Wastell. In 1907, the RPS accepted five competition slides from WPS and the society won a third place certificate. During this time four members of the club were also working on producing a survey of the parish of Woodford.

At the annual general meeting (AGM) in 1906, a member suggested that marks should be awarded at the society's monthly lantern slide competitions with a certificate or other reward to go to the member with the highest number of points at the end of the year. This idea was rejected, the prevailing opinion being that competition was not necessary as an incentive to improvement.

² Essex Field Club was founded in 1880 'to promote the study of the natural history, geology and pre-historic archaeology of the county of Essex and its borderlands, to establish a museum, and to issue publications'. Originally named Epping Forest & County of Essex Naturalists' Society, it changed its name to Essex Field Club in 1882. An attempt, at first abortive, to establish a photographic and pictorial survey of Essex was initiated in 1903: by 1913, it was dormant, but in later years the survey was revived and vigorously carried on. By 1949, the survey included 13,200 items in 88 albums.

During these early years, the leading members of the club bore the main responsibility of instructing and advising the younger members. For example, in January 1908, Mr Goodwin demonstrated the development of a colour slide. He first exposed a plate on a watercolour drawing for about 23 minutes, illuminated by the oxy-hydrogen light from the lantern. The slide was developed and shown on the screen during the evening.

The autochrome process was also used by Henry Malby who showed 20 of his slides of flowers to the society in March 1908, explaining various points of interest. Autochrome slides were shown at the society's 16th annual exhibition by Messrs Marriage, Goodwin and Malby.

The autochrome process had been introduced by the Lumiere Company of Paris in 1904. It involved using plates dusted with coloured grains of potato starch. It was an advance on the three-colour process previously used and marked the early beginning of popular colour photography. This system, with refinements, continued in use until the 1930s when Kodachrome and Agfacolor film came on the market.

Other talks during these years included a lecture on the theory and practice of tank development, the oxobrome process and the bromoil process.

In 1911, Ilford Photographic Society invited WPS to join in a competition with about 20 other local clubs, but the records do not indicate whether Woodford accepted.

The society evidently enjoyed varied social activities at this time. A programme dated January 1912 shows that the club held a whist drive and musical evening with the entertainment provided by members and their families after an interval for refreshments. At other times the minutes make references to summer activities such as rambles and coach outings, with a prize being offered for the best print of a photograph taken on these excursions.

The First World War

Britain declared war on Germany and Austro-Hungary on 4 September 1914. When the WPS council met on 2 September, it took the decision to cancel that season's outstanding outings due to the war. In the following years, outings were reinstated. On 26 November 1914, at the Wilfrid Lawson Hotel, William Wastell organised a public showing of slides ('A Dive into Belgium') in aid of the Belgian Relief Fund. With entry at 6d and 1/-, the event raised the sum of £9 4s 0d.

When the Society's council met on 27 January 1915, it resolved that any member called to the colours would be retained on the list of members, but no subscription would be expected. In April, it was noted that at least four members were on military service: Messrs Pallet, Harper, Stevens, and Cripps.

The activities of the club were reduced at this time because of the war and the Society decided to postpone the 21st annual exhibition. The last wartime council meeting recorded took place on 30 March 1915. Although Society meetings continued for a time, and the sparse accounts show membership subscriptions and affiliation fees for 1917, 1918 and 1919, there do not appear to have been any formal meetings between the AGM in October 1917 and the AGM in 1919. Attendance during this period fell from approximately 20 to 10.

Between the wars (1919-1939)

Meetings resumed with the AGM on 16 November 1919 held at the Wilfrid Lawson Hotel, but from January 1920 the society moved to the Memorial Hall. The postponed 21st annual exhibition was held in April 1921 and, because of post-war difficulties, the society decided not to have an exhibition catalogue. At this exhibition the names of 16 new exhibitors appear as well as the names of older members.

During its first 25 years, the society had achieved many of its objectives. There had been great changes and developments in materials and techniques, and members had kept abreast of these developments by trial and error, achieving success in competitions and producing the survey of Woodford which was of historical interest. The First World War broke the sequence and created a shortage of materials, but as the society was able to stage the exhibition in 1921 it is clear that the pre-war impetus had survived.

The programme continued in a similar way to the pre-war programme with lectures and demonstrations, including lectures by members. For example, in November 1922, Bernard Cook, a member and City of London verderer, gave a historical and pictorial demonstration on Epping Forest, illuminated by autochrome slides. There were 32 members and 20 visitors present at that meeting. Other meetings in the early 1920s touched on the role that photography had played in the recent war: 'With Allenby through Palestine with a Pocket Carbine' was the title of a presentation given by an officer of the Royal Field Artillery; and war photographer H Creighton Beckett, FRPS, spoke of his experiences too.

There were some changes at this time. At the 23rd annual exhibition in 1923, awards were made to preliminary members for the first time. This exhibition received a 33-inch report in *The Woodford Times*. The attitude to competition had evidently changed since 1906 when the idea of having competitions was rejected, for another innovation was the arrangement of a print competition in October 1926, the judging to be by popular vote.

At the AGM in April 1921, the possibility of women becoming members of the Society was raised:

Mr W F Heard asked whether ladies could become members of our Society (he stated that the question was put to him at our recent Exhibition [8-9 April]). Mr Wastell said that possibly the Council could earmark some of our most suitable meetings when ladies might be invited as visitors; this was agreed to.

Subsequently, in the programmes for 1921-1922, 1922-1923, 1923-1924, and 1924-1925, some of the meetings have an asterisk beside them and there is a note at the bottom which says: 'These lectures are illustrated with lantern slides and are suitable evenings on which members might bring their lady friends'. Two years later, at the AGM on 25 April 1923, it was resolved to admit women as full members of the Society:

Mr Wright proposed that ladies may be accepted for membership. Mr Newcomb seconded and after some discussion the resolution was carried with one dissentient.

In that same month, Miss G E Powers ³ became the first female member; in August she was followed by Miss R Eastgate (proposed by Miss G E Powers). In February 1924, Mrs G and Miss D Norah Cross were elected as members ⁴.

³ Gertrude Emma Powers was born on 18 November 1889 in the borough of Stepney and was the eldest of three children. In the 1890s, with her sister Florence (1892-1977) and brother Harold (1896-1987), she lived in Limehouse with parents Harry (1863-1951), a printer, and Clara (1868-1938), first at 24 Wallwood Street and later at 681 Commercial Road. At the start of 1899, Gertrude began attending nearby Thomas Street school; her siblings later went there too. In 1901, the family was still at 681 Commercial Road, and had been joined by Harry's parents, Charles (1837-1922), a flour miller, and Eliza (1840-1937). By 1911, the parents and children had moved to Woodford, taking up residence at 'Glenside', 4 Grove Crescent. In that same year, Gertrude

The minute books for 1922 to 1930 show vigorous activity by the society, although only a few members were regularly active. In 1927, the society entered the annual RPS affiliation print competition after a lapse of many years, but failed to gain an award.

By 1929, the council was concerned about poor attendance at both the winter meetings and the summer outings. It decided to reduce the winter meetings to two per month, one to be held at the Memorial Hall and the other at a member's house. Membership at that time was about 60 but the average attendance was only nine.

From 1931 membership continued to decline. This was despite the fact that the population of the area was increasing. There had been a steady development up to the 1920s followed by a lull, but with the development of housing projects such as the Monkams Estate and the Nightingale Estate in the 1930s the population again increased.

During this time many of the big old houses in Woodford, which had been photographed for the Emler Collection, were lost and Woodford changed from being an agricultural area into a dormitory suburb. The census for 1931 shows the population of Woodford as 23,946; this includes parts of South Woodford. Wanstead at that time had a population of 19,183. By 1933, the population of Woodford had increased to 26,840, but Wanstead had barely risen to 19,710. In 1934, Woodford Urban District was amalgamated with Wanstead to form Wanstead & Woodford Urban District; in 1937, the new authority was elevated to the status of a Municipal Borough.

At some point in the mid-1930s, the Society ceased to meet. In an article about photographic societies in *The Amateur Photographer* magazine of 5 September 1934, William Wastell noted that Woodford Photographic Society was the first one he had joined, but 'the Woodford society is now only a memory'; in *The Amateur Photographer* of 8 November 1939, he referred to the club as 'long defunct'. Among the surviving records of the Society, the last meeting for which there is any evidence is that of 5 April 1935, when the attendance register showed that 11 members were present.

Wastell reminisced about his time with Woodford Photographic Society in *The Amateur Photographer* of 20 March 1940; he wrote:

graduated from the University of London with a BSc (III class), and the following year from Newnham College, Cambridge with a BA (II class). In late April 1923, Gertrude became the first female member of Woodford Photographic Society; she was proposed by Mr H E Powers – this was either her father Harry Edward or brother Harold Edward Charles. On 22 December 1923, Gertrude married Charles Wood (1879-1955) at the church of St Mary the Virgin, Woodford. The couple subsequently moved to Wilderness Corner, Quidenham, Norfolk, where Gertrude died, aged 44, on 18 October 1934. Probate reveals that she left the sum of £445 19s 11d to her husband Charles.

⁴ Dorothy Norah Cross – who was known by her middle name – was born in April 1889 in the borough of Hackney and was the eldest of three children. In the 1890s, with her sister Marjorie (1893-?) and brother Samuel (1895-1916), she lived in Clapton with parents Samuel (1856-1925), a school-teacher, and Elizabeth (1860-1898), at 71 Dunlace Road. The family was able to afford a domestic servant. In 1898, Norah's mother, Elizabeth, died, and by the time of the 1901 census Samuel and the children had moved to Woodford, taking up residence at 1 Tower Villas [somewhere near Cowslip Road and Daisy Road], where they employed a housekeeper. In 1904, Samuel married again, this time to Grace Radford (1877-1959). In the 1911 census, the family was living at 30 Pultney Road, South Woodford; both Norah and her father were recorded as school-teachers working for the London County Council. In February 1924, Norah and her step-mother Grace were elected as members of Woodford Photographic Society. At the AGM in April 1925, little more than a year after joining the society, Norah was elected to the society's council (what we call the committee today), and at the AGM in 1928 she became the society's first female president. She was also president in 1932. Norah did not marry, and at the time of her death on 4 February 1957 she was living at 54 St Ronan's Crescent, Woodford Green. Probate reveals that she left the sum of £2,769 12s 5d to her step-mother Grace.

..., when I found that there was a photographic society almost at my door, I had the sense to join it; and soon after, in 1900, I became a member of the R.P.S. ...

Woodford, in Essex, was a small rural parish in those days, but the little photographic society that sprang up soon ranked high, and took its place with the best. Several of its members had an international reputation. Among its distinguished presidents was the great Horsley Hinton; the first photographers of the day were ready and even eager to lecture, demonstrate or open our exhibitions. We held our heads high, I can assure you.

I learnt something of the glories of architecture from such fellow-members as H. W. Bennett and Ernest Marriage, and of jolly snapshot work from Edgar Carpenter and Percy Wright. Then for the rigours of the game of technique there was H. T. Malby, one of the earliest pioneers of D. and P. service. To the present generation these are barely names even; in those days they meant great personages in the world of photography. I remember Child Bayley [AP asst/editor?] asking me why so many distinguished photographers hailed from Woodford, and I remember asking him in return where the blazes else he would expect them to come from.

Of several prints I have by old fellow-members – the society is now extinct – I reproduce one by E. H. R. Hilsworth. That was his name, although he was invariably called "Teddy." It is from a sulphide-toned bromide, soft and beautiful. He was a great hunter of rustic characters, and he and I often prosecuted this search even in four-ale bars of country inns. We learned much about cakes and ale, and heard the chimes at midnight; but he accomplished some fine work, and thought nothing of humping around apparatus that weighed more than he did himself. He was one of a gay and clever crowd, all of whom I recall with deep affection, and with curious vividness despite the long years that have passed.

What happened from 1935 to 1945? There are no minute books, accounts or attendance registers between the attendance lists of 5 April 1935 (11 attended) and 25 September 1945 (19 attended).

The need for a photographic club in the area was noted in May 1939.

The Miniature Camera Magazine, May 1939

Woodford Green District

It is felt that a portfolio working under similar conditions to the 35-mm. Leica and Contax Circles would be beneficial to workers in the above district, in order to foster a feeling of comradeship and to pool knowledge and discussion of photography in all its branches. Also, to provide criticism on members' work.

It is possible that outings for photographic purposes could be arranged during the summer months, and a club exclusively for 35-mm. workers has been formed and will operate during the winter months, with lectures and demonstrations on miniature photography.

If this appeals to any readers they should communicate with Mr. Wm. A. Taylor, 13, St. Albans Road, Woodford Green, Essex, who will send them full particulars.

Post-war period (1945-1980)

Revival of the society

In the summer of 1945, following the cessation of hostilities, Henry Malby, grandson of founder member Henry Thomas Malby, met George Hall and some other members to discuss the revival of WPS.

Bernard Cook offered the use of Fellowship House for a meeting and an announcement was published in the local press. Then councillor Cormacy, another member, asked the society to reform at the Community Centre at Wanstead House ⁵, but after a heated debate it was decided by vote that the society would keep its Woodford independence. Fortnightly meetings were arranged, to be held at Brooklands preparatory school, Churchfields, while annual exhibitions were to be held at the Congregational church hall in George Lane.

Francis George Newmarch resumed office as president. He was the natural choice because of his prominence and his long association with the society, having served as president/chairman before the war. Previously the president had also acted as chairman, but now the society decided to elect a chairman annually and upgrade the office of president to its proper position that is to preside at public functions and to conduct the AGM, receiving the reports of the retiring officers. George Hall was elected chairman, Henry Malby became secretary, and William (Billy) Cook became treasurer. Before the war, the elected officers had been known as the council, but from this time they were called the committee.

Amateur Photographer magazine of 15 August 1945 carried a notice stating:

The Woodford Photographic Society has been formed, and will welcome the support of amateurs in the district. All interested should write to the Hon. Secretary, Mr. H. R. Malby, 23, Chelmsford Road, Woodford, London, E.18.

The first post-war meeting was held at Brooklands school on 25 September 1945 and the attendance book shows 15 members and four visitors were present. Among the signatories are Henry Malby, Mrs Eleanor Malby, Francis Newmarch, George Hall, Reg Fowkes and W J Souter.

Regular reports of the first meetings appeared in *The Woodford Times* and these show that the activities were based on the tradition established before the war, with senior members giving lectures and demonstrations to the society. Reports at this time refer to the Society as 're-formed', 'rejuvenated' and 'newly formed', also referring back to 'the days of the old Woodford Photographic Society'.

In 1952, the venue was moved to St Barnabas school in association with the youth centre there. The committee arranged a programme of 42 meetings, held during term time. A darkroom was fitted up in part of the old air raid shelter and the committee established a set of rules for the its use. The average membership around that time was 37, including pre-war members Billy Cook, W J Souter, B A Crouch and J R Webster.

Eventually the association with the youth centre was severed as the youngsters were not interested in photography. The club applied for a direct letting to the education authority and was granted favourable terms because of the status of the society as a cultural and educational body.

Coronation year

In 1953, Wanstead & Woodford Borough Council decided to produce a Coronation brochure and invited the society to take portraits of the members of the council for inclusion in the brochure. The council agreed to present the society with an autographed copy of the brochure and donate five guineas to cover expenses.

⁵ Seventy years later, the club would hold its meetings at Wanstead House.

The society also decided to produce a Coronation survey of Woodford. This involved re-photographing sites in the Emler Collection where changes had taken place. Billy Cook mounted the prints and attached them to their counterparts in the Emler Collection.

Arrangements were made to hold the society's Jubilee Exhibition in conjunction with the council's celebrations and the mayor, councillor Donald Forbes, opened the exhibition. Loughton, Leyton and Chingford photographic clubs were invited to supply panels of prints and the RPS was asked to lend the Wastell Collection for display at the exhibition.

The 1950s and 1960s

During this period there was a constant turnover of membership. Some members moved away, others were not able to continue because of domestic reasons. The loss of talented members in this way made it difficult for the club to fulfil the hopes of the early members that the society would 'take its place amongst the foremost in the country'. Finances also caused concern at this time and the society held the first raffle in September 1953, tickets costing 6d and the prize worth approximately 4/6.

The society had 37 members in 1956, and the records of the monochrome print competitions show that there were three advanced workers, seven intermediate and five preliminary. In the late 1950s, the work of the advanced monochrome workers fell off in volume and quality and for a while the advanced and intermediate groups were merged and three new groups created - open, pictorial and record. By 1960, however, the original classifications had been resumed.

The society began to place greater emphasis on competitions, and with this came the need to establish rules. In 1953, a print panel was established to select prints for competitions and to determine the classes and, in 1955, the committee agreed to set up rules for print competitions. Prior to this time a member had been allowed only one place in a competition. The rules were agreed on 1 April 1955 as follows:

- Only mounted prints to be accepted.
- The print must be the work of the author.
- One point to be given per entry irrespective of the number of prints entered in the competition.
- No more than three prints to be entered.
- Prints to be judged on merit. The number of awards to be made is in the hands of the judge, thereby enabling an entrant to secure more than one place.
- A print not taking an award is entitled to be submitted at future competitions.
- Points to be awarded as follows: 1st place - 3 points; 2nd place - 2 points; 3rd place - 1 point.

In the early 1960s, the committee decided the period of assessing awards and promotions would be from one annual exhibition to the next, as distinct from the financial year and that the print panel would be responsible for deciding promotions, the decision to be based on exhibition and competition results and the consistent standard of any member. The following year, the committee decided to award certificates of merit to members who had scored the highest points in club competitions. These were to be presented at the opening ceremony of the annual exhibition.

In 1955, the first four-way annual print battle was held involving photographic societies from Ilford, Loughton, Bishops Stortford and Woodford. Several years later, in 1964, the directors of Ilford Ltd in Basildon presented a shield for this contest, which then became known as the Basildon Trophy battle. Since then, Bishops Stortford has withdrawn and, in 1979, Ilford Photographic Society was dissolved. These two clubs were replaced in the competition by Lea Valley Camera Club and Enfield Camera Club. Woodford Photographic Society ceased taking part in the early 2000s, but by the late 2010s was once more involved in inter-club competitions.

During the period after the war, 35mm colour slides became increasingly popular and the programmes were arranged to give an equal balance of colour slides and monochrome prints in competitions, the first colour slide competition being held in 1953. Cameras and equipment were not too expensive and with slides being commercially processed the opportunity for photography was open to all. Slide shows

became a popular form of entertainment for the general public, both at home and at other society meetings.

In 1957, to foster this interest, the society decided to allow both home-processed and trade-processed slides to be entered into competitions. This followed an earlier discussion about whether to split the slide class into beginners and advanced or trade-processed and home-processed. The annual exhibition catalogue for 1957 shows three classes for monochrome prints, a separate portrait class and classes for trade-processed and home-processed slides. The annual exhibition catalogue for the previous year refers to classes for 2in x 2in slides (35mm film) and 2¼in x 2¼in slides (120 roll film). The catalogue also includes members' colour prints, but it is not clear how these were produced; it seems likely that they were prints from slides.

In 1962, Wanstead & Woodford Borough Council staged a 'What We Do' exhibition at the Sir James Hawkey Hall as part of its 25th anniversary celebrations. All local organizations were invited to contribute. Woodford Photographic Society had four panels on display at the exhibition, one of which was used to show samples of the Emler Collection.

In 1968, Henry Malby, grandson of the founder of WPS, was elected honorary vice-president and life member of the society. After a long period of caretaker strikes in 1967-1968, which came without warning so that lecturers, judges and members could not be notified, the society found other premises at Ray Lodge church hall, which also had a store room available. The club needed a new projector at this time and members were asked for donations, contributing £10 towards the total cost of £27 14s. 9d.

By the end of the 1960s, the content of the programmes had changed. In 1963, member Mr Robinson demonstrated home processing of colour film in a way reminiscent of some of the early meetings of the society, but the programme for 1968 shows that the club had become more competitive. Of the 42 meetings, 16 were competitions. Some members contributed an evening, including Fred James and Reg Fowkes, but there were talks and demonstrations by professional companies: May & Baker, Agfa, Kodak, the Camera Centre, Minolta, and the Photographic Alliance of Great Britain (PAGB).

Affiliation to the East Anglian Federation

Since the Second World War, Woodford Photographic Society had been affiliated to the Central Association of Photographic Societies, but had never taken part in any of the activities. In 1965, the borough of Wanstead & Woodford was amalgamated with Ilford and parts of Chigwell and Dagenham to become the London Borough of Redbridge, part of a new 'Greater London' administrative area. The society then came within the geographic area of the East Anglian Federation (EAF) of Photographic Societies (which included the north-eastern fringes of Greater London) and decided to resign from the Central Association and join the EAF.

Two of the main organisers of the EAF lived in Woodford - Fred G James and Daisy M James (who had both played a prominent role in the organisation of the Borough of Wanstead & Woodford's Civil Defence during the Second World War). As they were local residents, they were invited to become honorary members of Woodford Photographic Society. Fred died a year afterwards in 1966, but Daisy became an active member and whilst with the society was honoured with the Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique's excellence award (ESFIAP) for her services to photography.

Daisy James involved the society in the EAF annual exhibitions and for several years Woodford was among the leading clubs for successful entries in these exhibitions. In May 1967, WPS had the highest number of prints and slides accepted. One of Reg Fowkes' prints was subsequently included in the EAF's entry for the inter-federation competition held by the PAGB. In 1968, the society was again successful with five monochrome prints and 56 colour slides accepted. Four of the prints and two of the slides were then selected to represent the EAF at the national inter-federation contest. This placed Woodford once again amongst the front rank of the societies in the region.

The association with the EAF has affected the work of the society. Since affiliation, the rules governing competitions and the annual exhibition/competition have been changed so that print sizes and mounting

(and now digital file resolution too) comply with the rules of the EAF. However, some of the EAF judges prefer to see traditional pictorial photography and this can deter members from undertaking the innovative work which was the aim of the founders.

The 1970s

The records show that the society was a thriving club in the 1970s and proud of its long tradition. The committee decided to set up a permanent collection in order to keep a record of the work of the club; for example, typical prints of members past and present and, where possible, the winning prints of the Newmarch Trophy. Reg Fowkes began to organise the collection of these works in 1970, and the permanent collection would ultimately include photographs from the mid-1950s through to the mid-1990s, with a few from earlier years.

The minutes of the society at this time are often silent on matters concerning the history of WPS photography in general. It is not certain when the first colour prints made from colour negative film were exhibited at competitions, but in 1975 the club bought an enlarger suitable for colour printing at a cost of £40 for the use of members - 10 members showed an interest in using the enlarger. In 1977, Winn Fowkes referred to the work of the colour print workers in the chairman's annual report.

Colour slide work also became increasingly popular and, in 1979, the society decided to purchase a new projection screen and establish a new slide competition. At this time there were no nationally accepted categories for colour slide workers although categories for monochrome workers were accepted throughout the country, beginners starting in the preliminary class and progressing through intermediate to advanced.

After experimenting with different ways of grouping and methods of keeping scores in a slide competition, the committee decided to divide members into two groups: Group 1 would consist of members who consistently produced good work, whilst the remainder were listed in Group 2. Members who were successful in Group 2 would be promoted to Group 1, whilst those who failed to maintain a good standard in Group 1 would be demoted. In due course, an advanced class emerged and became established. By 2002, the slide competitions had three categories: A, B and C. A was the advanced group, B the intermediate and C the preliminary. Members could be promoted or demoted as appropriate.

The society took the opportunity to join Redbridge Arts Council (RAC) in 1975. At that time the annual subscription to RAC was £1.50. In 1978, the annual subscription to WPS was £5.

One other affiliated photographic club in Redbridge in the 1970s was Ilford Photographic Society. This club was dissolved in 1979 and subsequently Terry Johnson who had been a member, joined WPS. He became chairman in 1986.

In 1977, the club arranged an evening entitled 'Son of Pollocks Peep Show' by Sir George and Lady Pollock. This was held at the Sir James Hawkey Hall in November and other clubs in the area were invited. The show was a great success and made a profit of nearly £100. However, another show the following year was less successful and the venture was not repeated.

In 1978, the committee asked Reg Fowkes to produce an honours board of trophy winners. The space available eventually became filled and the records were subsequently written in calligraphic script and kept in a ring-binder held by the secretary. A separate page for each trophy showed the winners year by year and there was a page for each year showing all the trophy winners for that year. This list is now in the club archive, but updating ceased in the early 2000s.

Club successes

After 1945, the first RPS distinctions awarded to a member of WPS were gained by Reg Fowkes, who achieved Associate status (ARPS) in both colour slide and pictorial print sections in 1967.

Later members to gain the ARPS distinction were F J Caley (prints) H R Hawking (prints) A Merrick (prints) John Woolliams (slides) P Jarvis (slides). Licentiate distinctions were awarded to F Allen (prints), Margaret Dane (slides), Ken Landau (prints) and John Rivoire (prints).

Members had great success in exhibitions and competitions during the 1970s. In 1975, the EAF accepted six prints and six slides from WPS for its exhibitions, and ten prints and nine slides were accepted in 1976. In the same year, Arthur Krick achieved the distinction of having prints hung at the RPS international exhibition.

In 1975, the club defeated 11 other clubs to win the Alan Coleman Trophy run by Barking Photographic Society. WPS won the Basildon Trophy in 1975 and 1976 and, in 1978, won the North London Exhibition Shield, in which 25 clubs competed.

Towards the century (1981-1993)

In 1982, WPS moved from Ray Lodge church hall to the Hollis Room at the South Woodford Library. The premises at Ray Lodge had given problems because of the need for 'blacking out' and the general lack of comfort. With the advances made in the photographic industry, photography became a hobby that everyone could enjoy and many people possessed cameras. The population of the area was also expanding, but despite this, membership had reduced to about 40 people.

By 1991, the population in the Woodford area where the club had originated had greatly increased. It is difficult to get a precise comparison from the census figures, but the ward figures, which approximate to the parishes mentioned at the beginning of this history, were Bridge Ward 11,681, Church End Ward 8,913, and Monkham's Ward 9,617 giving a total of 30,211. This is approximately four times the population in 1891. With the inclusion of 10,442 people for Roding Ward which covers South Woodford, the total increases to 40,211.

Attempts to publicise the club at this time included occasional local exhibitions at the Sir James Hawkey Hall when Reg Fowkes would stage a WPS stand. Also the Britannia Building Society in George Lane offered its window for displays. This was used on several occasions in the late 1980s.

When Daisy James died in January 1985, the society decided to introduce a five-club annual competition for a memorial shield, to be known as the Daisy James Trophy. This was judged in the early years by Dennis Mickleborough, who was a close friend of Daisy James and fellow organiser in the EAF. He continued to judge until 1992. The clubs invited to take part in this competition with Woodford were Harlow, Lea Valley, Loughton and Walthamstow.

On the first occasion the competition was well supported with representatives from each club filling the room to capacity. Woodford's chairman, Ron Burton, opened the competition. The first winner of the trophy was Lea Valley Photographic Society with WPS the runner-up. The trophy was presented by Ron James, Daisy's cousin, to Paul Radden who represented Lea Valley.

Most members at this time did not have the use of a darkroom and were restricted to colour work with trade processing. This tended to split the club between members who produced prints and those who took slides.

The minutes for 25 September 1986 show that the committee agreed that the colour trade prints recently introduced to the regular competitions would be treated as a separate class. A maximum size limit of 12 inches was imposed so that no entry took prominence because of its size.

The previous minutes are missing so it is not possible to find out how the decision to include trade-processed work in competitions was made, but this move made it possible for colour slide photographers and those who used colour negative film to compete together during print competition evenings as slide workers could have prints made from their slides commercially. With processing skills not needed, beginners and experienced workers had an equal chance in competing.

In 1986, a member suggested that a copy of the competition rules be given to new members. The records show that the competition rules were revised in 1989 in order to bring them into line with the rules for exhibition in the EAF. These rules state that a print must have one side of at least 10 inches to be eligible for competition. These rules were revised again a few years later, with the minimum size being given as 50 square inches.

The rules for 1989 stated that there would be six print competitions and six slide competitions a year and indicated the increased emphasis on competition in the post-war period. A look at the programmes for the period since 1945 shows how the emphasis has changed from the early years when the founder members gave instruction and demonstration sessions.

As a member of RAC, the society was eligible to receive grants to buy equipment. In 1990, the society received £380 and was able to buy a darkroom tent for the use of members.

Centenary year and the late 1990s

The society's centenary year was an obvious cause for celebration and, in 1992, a sub-committee was formed to plan the special events for the centenary. The members were Reg Fowkes, Marsden Anderson and Terry Johnson. They were later joined by Peter Smith.

The society staged a special centenary exhibition at South Woodford library from 4 January to 5 February 1993. The president of the EAF, Stanley Searle, officially opened the proceedings. He was accompanied by the president-elect Dennis Mickleborough. The celebrations continued with a cheese and wine party and this was followed by a slide show with taped music.

The exhibition consisted of material from the permanent collection, such as the past Newmarch Trophy winners and works of some of the early society members. Terry Johnson and Reg Fowkes showed the panels used to gain their ARPS distinctions and John Rivoire's recent Licentiate panel was also on show. In addition, there were three panels of members' recent work and a panel of the Emler 'Then and Now' selection.

A centenary souvenir catalogue accompanied the exhibition. It included the society's programme for 1993 plus a brief history of the club. The cost of £406 for 1,000 programmes was met by an RAC grant of £250 and £185 paid by three advertisers.

The EAF *Bulletin* published an article about the history of the society and the exhibition, noting that WPS was the second-oldest club of the 150 in the EAF, Peterborough Camera Club being the oldest.

To mark the centenary, Margaret Dane and her husband Frank, then living in Esher, Surrey presented the Dane landscape slide trophy.

Also in commemoration of the centenary, Reg Fowkes compiled a special book of photographs of Woodford taken many years earlier by William Wastell. Some of Wastell's popular collection had already become well-known and is a valuable historical record of Woodford. The book, *Wastell's Woodford*, also contained a resumé of the history of WPS. This made it an ideal public relations tool for the centenary and a useful reference for club members.

During the centenary year, the society received two grants, £250 from RAC for portraiture equipment and a further £250 from Redbridge Community Trust.

After 1993, the fortunes of the club fluctuated. Three of the society's best monochrome workers died within a few years of each other, Reg Fowkes in 1994, and Eric Bird and Terry Johnson in 1996. All three had been long-time members and rivals in the advanced monochrome competitions. Stan Daniels, another long-serving member who had been projectionist for many years, died in 1997.

In early 1996, the club had to move for a few months from the Hollis Room at South Woodford library while building works were carried out. The society moved first to a room at Tamar Square in Woodford, which was bitterly cold, and then to Lopping Hall in Loughton. Because of the difficulties during these moves membership dwindled, but again a strong core of members continued after the return to the Hollis Room.

In 1988, the rent for the Hollis Room had been £12.76 per night, but this had increased rapidly leading to fears that the club might become insolvent. Membership fees were increased and nearly doubled over a few years. At the same time the number of meetings was reduced to help keep down costs. By 1998, the rent had increased to £30.20 per night. The society could not afford this amount and was glad to accept the use, at a lesser cost, of 'Dulverton', a former dance studio in Wanstead for meetings. The first meeting held at the new venue was the Christmas party on 15 December 1998. This was a success as the new meeting place had a better atmosphere than the Hollis Room.

With the move to Wanstead several new members joined WPS. They were former members of the defunct Leytonstone & Wanstead Camera Club (LWCC), which had met across George Green at Wanstead House, but which had disbanded because of dwindling membership. These included Norman Olley and Alan Simpson, who soon became active members of the society and both performed roles on the committee over the following years. (Alan joined the committee in 2001 and, in 2024, was still on it, as archivist). Yvonne Dudley, the owner of 'Dulverton', was also a former LWCC member.

During this period, members of WPS had some successes. In 1997, Jason Brinkler had a number of his prints purchased by the National Portrait Gallery, one of which was on display. Two members gained the LRPS distinction, Gillian Hutchinson for prints and Alan Simpson for slides.

Two new trophies were added to the club's collection: the Marsden Trophy for the best wildlife study in the exhibition, and the Flora Shield, presented by Derrick Holder, for the best floral study.

Towards the end of the century there were great advances in digital imaging and the EAF decided to accept prints produced in this way. In the same spirit that the founders of the society had welcomed new processes and experimented with them, members of WPS now began working with the new digital medium in both colour and monochrome. In 2000, digitally produced prints first appeared in competitions, competing successfully with prints produced by the traditional chemical process.

The AGM in October 2000 changed the classes for colour prints from trade-processed and home-processed to preliminary, intermediate and advanced sections, which included all prints whether produced traditionally or digitally.

Into the new millennium

The society decided to mark the new millennium by undertaking another survey of Woodford, which, like its predecessors, would ultimately be presented to the London Borough of Redbridge for posterity. All members of the society were invited to take part and 16 volunteered to do so; each was given a designated area to photograph between September and November 2000.

A sub-committee comprising Marsden Anderson, Peter Smith and Alan Simpson obtained a Lottery grant in order for the society to publish a book, *Woodford into the 21st Century*, using significant pictures from the survey. RAC also provided a grant for an exhibition to publicise the book.

By this time, the society was the only remaining photography club in Redbridge and, in 2003, it undertook a small photographic survey of buildings in other parts of the borough. This resulted in a set of 48 mounted photographs, exhibited in the Ilford Exchange that same year.

A decision was taken in 2005 to include 'Wanstead' in the society's name. Given that the society had been meeting in Wanstead since 1998, this seemed only logical. Thus WPS became WWPS, yet it took until 2018 before the name was formally changed on the society bank account!

The progress of digital photography, and its accessibility across multiple devices, was now ushering in an era where more photographs were being taken than ever before. Yet despite this, the first decade of the new millennium saw the society's membership continue to decline. From 22 members in 2000, the total had fallen to 12 by 2008. New members joined, some having discovered the society through its website, but they were outnumbered by others not renewing or who moved away from the area. These included Wendy Gill and Martin Leech, club stalwarts throughout this difficult period, and John Woolliams, David Nathan, and Gillian Hutchinson, all members of many years' standing.

It was during this period too that the number of entries for colour slide competitions fell dramatically, many members now finding it more satisfying to produce prints on their computers. The high cost of a digital projector meant purchase of one by the society was unlikely, and eventually slide competitions were dropped from the programme. This period in the doldrums was evidenced further by a falling off of interest in inter-club competitions, a less than thorough approach to record-keeping, and prints were no longer added to the society's permanent collection. Furthermore, as income fell, a decision was made not to continue with the annual exhibition after 2007 - the club had to pay to exhibit at South Woodford library. The annual exhibition, which had been open to the public to view, became an internal annual club competition instead. To cut costs further, the club also decided no longer to pay to have trophies engraved with competition winners' names.

Such was the decline in membership, and with it a rapidly decreasing bank balance, that the AGM in 2009 could have been the society's last - funds amounted to less than £170 and plans were in hand to bring things to an end. Fate intervened, however, when Peter Hughes attended that year's AGM - his first visit to the club. Peter mentioned that a contact of his in the construction industry, Ark Build plc of Loughton, could be interested in sponsoring the society. This was an opportunity not to be turned down, and with that impetus the members voted to carry on. Soon the bank balance was looking much healthier, and Peter himself became a valuable committee member, being elected chairman in 2010.

With new funds available, the society was able to purchase a digital projector, and so projected image competitions and displays are once again a part of the annual programme.

When Arnie Göbel became secretary, he produced a regular newsletter for members, which Luciano Osceca and Chris Saunders continued as successors to Arnie as newsletter editors. (This was not the first newsletter produced by the society - the archive contains others from 1976, 1990 and 1996). The society's new publicity officer, David Tyrrell, also worked very hard to get the society noticed, using every opportunity to promote and exhibit members' work. This included an exhibition of

members' photographs at Valentines Mansion in 2015 and, in 2017 and 2018, as part of the Wanstead Art Trail, the society had a display of prints at Wanstead tube station. In 2016, the society also helped organise and promote the Reg Fowkes competition, a local photographic competition that had been run by Pat Smith, Reg's daughter.

Chairmen during these years were Peter Hughes and then Peter Rowe, followed by 'Cabbie Dave' (David Tachauer). During this period, Arnie Göbel achieved his LRPS, and Bob Gibbons his ARPS. In 2017, Bob Gibbons went on to gain his FRPS, the first club member for many years to be awarded this highest level of photographic distinction.

An important decision made by the committee in 2017 was to discontinue presentation of trophies for the various club competitions. Several of the trophies had become broken or were dented and looked unappealing, and as the competitions had changed over the years, there were now some categories for which there was no trophy to present and some trophies for which there were no longer categories. It was decided that, beginning in the 2018-2019 season, winners would receive attractively designed certificates to keep.

The new committee members' industry, and that of others behind the scenes, bore fruit and membership numbers began to increase, including some who were to become very active in the club. When the opportunity came to move club meetings to Wanstead House Community Centre in 2014 - only 70 years after it was first suggested - the chance was taken. Once there, it was not long before the club had outgrown its ground-floor meeting room and moved into the much larger room in the attic (once the 'home' of the defunct LWCC). The only downside of the move to Wanstead House was that the change of evening (from Tuesday to Monday) meant that several members could no longer attend, including Peter Smith, a long-standing member and former chairman.

Meeting only twice a month, and not at all in some holiday periods, left some members wanting a more regular programme. With this in mind, in 2015, informal get-togethers in the Wanstead House bar were introduced in the weeks with no formal club meeting. Workshops were also organised on the use of Adobe Photoshop and Lightroom. In addition, committee members took on the role of organising outings to places with photographic potential. These extra activities all proved to be successful and truly meet one of the society's early aims, viz 'the discussion of the subjects connected with photography in a social manner and the encouragement of photographic research practice among the members by mutual and friendly assistance'.

The move to Wanstead House, a presence on social media (notably Flickr, Facebook and Instagram) and an injection of new blood and new ideas into the committee all helped to revive the society's fortunes, and membership numbers began to rise again - in mid-2018, there were 38 paid-up members (membership now costing £65 per annum - £45 for concessions). Many of the newer members had no background in 'traditional' photography, their photographic interest having formed in a world of camera-phones, selfies and transient online images. To help these and others develop a wider skills base, the society now places less emphasis on competitions and its programme regularly includes practical 'hands on' sessions and outings. This is in some way a return to the motives of the society's early years when the founder members gave instruction and demonstration sessions, but now with greater participation.

To celebrate the club's 125th anniversary, Dave Tyrell arranged for the club to organise and host an '1893 Foundation Cup' inter-club competition, which it was hoped would become an annual event. This was first held in October 2018, with WWPS battling against local rivals from Loughton Camera Club, Romford Camera Club, Barking Photographic Society, Chingford Photographic Society, and Chigwell Camera Club. The winners were Chingford, with Woodford in second place. Alongside the competition, an exhibition of members' work was on display at Wanstead House for a two-week period. The following year saw a close competition, with only two points separating the top three clubs - Woodford took first place, Loughton second, and Chingford third.

In March 2020, following the outbreak of the coronavirus/Covid-19 pandemic, the club temporarily ceased 'physical' meetings and held 'virtual' meetings and competitions online via the Zoom

application instead. Benefits of this included access to a much wider pool of speakers and judges, from locations well beyond the club's normal reach, and international visitors attended too - from Spain, the USA and India. When Covid regulations were lessened, some meetings at Wanstead House resumed in September 2021, but the club continued to hold some Zoom meetings too.

In the post-Covid years, outside competitions again featured in the club programme. In 2023, Woodford & Wanstead Photographic Society won the Romford Gold Cup, ahead of five other local clubs – Upminster, Romford, Dagenham, Barking, and Hornchurch.

The society's founders would be amazed at the developments that have taken place since they formed their club for 'the advancement of photography, technically and artistically', in the modern methods of producing photographs and in the ease with which photographs can now be mass-produced. They would no doubt also be amazed that the club they founded back in 1893 is still meeting regularly and fulfilling their original aims.

Venues

The Society has held its meeting in a variety of venues over the years, including:

1893-1898	Coffee Tavern, George Lane, South Woodford	(5 years)
1898-1917	Wilfrid Lawson Hotel, High Road, Woodford Green	(19)
1917-1919	No meetings? OR Wilfrid Lawson Hotel?	(2)
1920-1939	Memorial Hall, High Road, South Woodford [maybe only till 1935?]	(19)
1939-1945	No meetings?	(6)
1945-1952	Brooklands preparatory school, Churchfields, South Woodford	(7)
1952-1968	St Barnabas school and youth centre, St Barnabas Road, Woodford Green	(16)
1968-1982	Ray Lodge church hall, South Woodford	(14)
1982-1996	South Woodford library, South Woodford	(14)
1996-1996	Tamar Square, Woodford Green	(<1)
1996-1996	Lopping Hall, High Road, Loughton	(<1)
1996-1998	South Woodford library, South Woodford	(2)
1998-2014	'Dulverton', Cambridge Park, Wanstead	(16)
2014-2020	Wanstead House, George Green, Wanstead	(6)
2020-2021	Online meetings via Zoom application	(1)
2021-	Wanstead House, George Green, Wanstead	(?)

Surveys

Woodford in the Time of Sir Winston Churchill

Woodford in the Time of Sir Winston Churchill is the title of a series of three photographic surveys of the parish of Woodford conducted by Woodford Photographic Society between the years 1901 and 1965.

Part 1. The Emler Collection

The third aim of the founders of Woodford Photographic Society was 'a desire to do something of value to the community'. The first step towards this aim was the decision by the Society to produce a survey of Woodford at the start of the twentieth century, which would illustrate to future generations a view of Woodford at that period of time.

This photographic survey of the 'Ancient Parish of Woodford' was organised by Francis Emler (of Chelmsford Road, South Woodford) who, together with Thomas Tee (Hadleigh Lodge, Woodford Green) and Messrs A Ziegele (Ellesmere, Woodford Green), A W Hooper (a teacher at Woodford Bridge Board School), and W J England (Midlothian Cottage, Woodford Green) provided some 180 prints. The Emler Collection was handed to Woodford Urban District Council in 1908. The council provided an oak filing cabinet in which the prints were stored. By the time the prints had been collected some of the places had already disappeared, for example, Ivy House.

According to *The Woodford Times*, three sets of prints were to be prepared, one to be given to the British Museum, one to the District Council and possibly a third set to the Essex Field Club's survey committee.

The Woodford Times, 8 December 1908

PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY'S GIFT

Mr. F. G. Emler and Mr. T. J. Tee attended the [Woodford Urban District Council] meeting on behalf of the Woodford Photographic Society to present the Council with a photographic survey of the district.

The Chairman: We understand that you are giving us a Christmas box.

Mr. Emler said it was hardly a Christmas box. The Society were going to give the prints, but the Council would have to find the box. There were six sets of prints, not quite complete yet, but when the sets were completed there would be about 185 prints representing Woodford from 1901 to 1905⁶. They were in the most permanent process of printing they had, and so they were very durable. He hoped that at some future time they would be able to put the missing contribution of one member in its place⁷. The prints had got a value now, because there had been a good many alterations in Woodford since they were taken. On behalf of the Society, he asked the Council to accept the prints.

Mr. T. J. Tee said it was his idea when the subject was broached at the Finance Committee some years ago that the parish was altering very considerably, and the opinion was expressed that if they had had pictures of Woodford 100 years ago it would have been very interesting to them.

⁶ The period covered by photographs in the Emler Collection as originally presented is in fact 1893 to 1906.

⁷ The missing prints were those which were to have been supplied by William Wastell. Although his name appeared on the original list of contributors, there is no information as to why he had not produced his contribution. When his photographs were later discovered - and presented to the society in 1973 - they covered the period from 1909 to 1930, and in some cases duplicated those taken for the Emler Collection.

The Chairman said on behalf of the Council he could only thank them for their most valuable gift, which he was sure the Council's successors would appreciate even more than they did at the present time.

Part 2. The Coronation Collection

The Coronation Collection taken in 1953 recorded changes that had taken place since 1906 and 47 additional prints were merged with the Emler Collection.

In 1962, Wanstead & Woodford Borough Council asked the society to re-photograph the Emler Collection and the Coronation Collection in case of loss or damage. This work was carried out by George Hunt who produced a set of negatives on Ilford film in 1963. The negatives were filed in an album and presented to the council.

Part 3. The Fowkes Collection

In 1963, the committee again decided to make a survey of Woodford, re-photographing the Emler sites and all other sites that were likely to change in the near future. This idea was promoted by Reg Fowkes, who invited fellow members to join in a combined effort to make this survey. In November 1963, a sub-committee of Messrs Fowkes, Hunt and Robinson was formed to organise this work.

More than 200 additional prints were made in the period 1964-1965. These are known as the Fowkes Collection because of the large number of prints Reg Fowkes provided and were presented in an oak case to the newly formed London Borough of Redbridge in April 1965. The council assured the society that the complete series would be housed permanently in the main library in South Woodford; the photographs are today held by Redbridge Heritage Service at the Central library in Ilford.

The society decided that the three surveys together would be known under the title *of Woodford in the time of Sir Winston Churchill*. Sir Winston Churchill was for many years the Member of Parliament for Wanstead & Woodford. In 1964, the history and purpose of these surveys was explained to Sir Winston and the society asked his permission to use the title to embrace the whole series. He generously gave his permission in the following letter:

Dear Miss Dorman,

I write on behalf of Sir Winston Churchill to thank you for your letter of June 25th. He is complimented by your suggestion that you should call your survey "Woodford in the time of Sir Winston Churchill" and he sends you and your society his very good wishes.

Yours sincerely,

*Anthony Montague Brown,
Private Secretary*

Redbridge in its First Year as a London Borough

In 1964, the society was asked to take a set of photographs of Wanstead and Woodford to form part of a collection of *Redbridge in its First Year as a London Borough*, the new borough to be created in 1965 through the amalgamation of the boroughs of Wanstead & Woodford, Ilford and parts of Dagenham and Chigwell. This was done by Reg Fowkes and the 109 photographs were originally housed in South Woodford library. Ilford Photographic Society provided a similar album of 108 photographs of the eastern part of the new borough to complete the survey.

Woodford Then and Now

In 1973, several years after the presentation of the 1964-1965 survey of Woodford to the newly formed London Borough of Redbridge Council, Reg Fowkes was invited to visit Mrs Ruby Ta Bois. This lady was

the daughter of William Wastell and was a well-known character in the Woodford district. She was very interested in local affairs and had an outspoken approach.

She told him that, just prior to his death in 1941, Wastell had directed that his photographic work was to be destroyed, but her son Noel had saved some of the work. This work consisted of negatives of various sizes, mostly glass. Reg Fowkes made prints from them and discovered they were fine examples of local scenes, dating mainly from 1909 to 1930. The high quality of the negatives enabled them to be reproduced in large sizes and double page spreads and included in the book *Woodford Then and Now*, compiled by Reg Fowkes in 1980.

With the inclusion of material from other sources, such as postcards and pictures of various kinds, Reg obtained a vast collection of 'then and now' illustrations. These were copied and he presented a selection of 466 examples from within the Wanstead and Woodford area to Redbridge council on 11 March 1988. This is known as the 'Reg Fowkes Local Collection of Wanstead and Woodford'.

Wastell's Woodford

This is the commemorative book of William Wastell's photographs of Woodford compiled by Reg Fowkes for WPS's centenary. It contains 70 pictorial photographs of Wanstead and Woodford taken from 1909-1930. Reg Fowkes intended the book to complete the local survey work done by members of WPS.

Woodford into the 21st Century

WPS decided to mark the new millennium by undertaking another survey of the Woodford district to be presented to the London Borough of Redbridge. All members of the society were invited to take part; 16 volunteered and each was given a designated area to photograph between September and November 2000. Eighteen 36-exposure films were used for this survey, producing more than 600 photographs.

A sub-committee comprising Marsden Anderson, Peter Smith and Alan Simpson obtained a Lottery grant in order for the Society to publish a book, *Woodford into the 21st Century*, using 60 pictures from the survey. RAC also provided a grant for an exhibition to publicize the book.

When compared with the photographs taken for the early 20th century surveys, this book shows the tremendous changes that have taken place in Woodford over the previous 100 years, changes that could not have been envisaged by the photographers of those first surveys.

Annual exhibitions

Early exhibitions

The society's first exhibition in 1894 was held at the Coffee Tavern in George Lane. All the prints were framed in the same way. The print was first attached to a semi-transparent tissue which was slightly larger than the print and provided a border. This was then mounted on grey or sepia card. The title was written on the tissue on the bottom left and the signature on the right. The mount was then fitted behind glass with a thin wooden frame. The frames were of standard sizes so that they could be used on future occasions. The cost of the first exhibition was £4 0s 8d.

The second exhibition was held in December 1895 in the Coffee Tavern. A lantern slide exhibition with music was held in Holy Trinity church hall in Hermon Hill, the price of admission being 1/6.

The Woodford Times, 13 December 1895

WOODFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

The members of the Woodford Photographic Society have every reason to be proud of their second exhibition of members' work held at the club room, Coffee Tavern, George Lane, on Saturday last. It was well patronised throughout the whole of the evening, in fact at times the room was uncomfortably crowded, still all managed to see, and from the remarks that were made and opinions passed everyone went away well satisfied with their visit. Among so many pictures that were good it is rather a difficult task to single out any particular picture that is worthy of being classed the best ...

Those who remember the work shewn at the last exhibition cannot but be struck with the advance that has been made this year. This is all the more noticeable with the work of the younger members. View the pictures as one will from a technical or artistic standpoint, the high level of work shewn is only too apparent, and gives every promise of much excellent and beautiful work in the future.

The Photographic Journal, 1896

The Woodford Photographic Society's Exhibition of members' work will be held at the Coffee Tavern, George-lane, South Woodford, on Saturday, the 21st inst., from 4 to 9.30 p m., when the Society will be glad to see any of their photographic friends who may like to pay them a visit. The Secretary (Mr. F. G. Emler), 1, Florence-villas, Chelmsford-road, Woodford, will be glad to send a card of invitation to any one who may like to have one.

WOODFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY'S EXHIBITION.

The Third Annual Exhibition of work of the members of the above Society was held on Saturday, November 21, at the Club-room, Coffee Tavern, George-lane. As last year, it was extremely well patronised, the room being for a long time uncomfortably packed, notwithstanding that the Exhibition was opened earlier and closed later than in former years. On entering the room, one was struck by the prevalence of darker tones. This was somewhat added to by the material that formed the background for the pictures, and which had a quiet, pleasing effect, and helped to bring all the pictures well into relief. The number of pictures shown was about the same as last year, and, as before, a few workers stand out conspicuously from the rest. Mr. Noble may be placed foremost, four of his batch being of very high merit. One picture, representing some children paddling in the sea, and another showing a lifeboat near the shore, with the surf very troubled, were exceptionally good. Two others, panels of flowers, enlargements on Alpha paper, about 15 x 9, were beautiful examples of careful work, rich in colour and delicate to a degree. Mr. Malby was well represented, as usual. His exhibits consisted of some nice specimens of portraiture and some

enlargements in platinum, two of which deserve special notice; the first a view of Hastings beach, and the other Winchelsea Church.

Mr. H. Wilmer's contribution consisted of some seascapes. These were from sketches by Mr. W. L. Wyllie, A.R.A., and were very good examples of the photogravure process. He had also a small landscape, the name of which was not given, but it was one of the best in the Exhibition.

Mr. Marriage sent a somewhat mixed lot for him. Architecture and architectural details being his forte, it was here where his best work was to be found, the capitals of two pillars, the same as were shown at Pall Mall Exhibition, being the best. One or two smaller frames contained some nice landscapes which by no means detracted from Mr. Marriage's reputation as a clever and careful worker.

Mr. Emler, the Secretary, was a generous contributor, no less than fourteen frames being sent by him. All his exhibits but one were in platinotype, and comprised pretty bits in North Wales, Epping Forest, and Knighton. One photograph of some rhododendrons was very nice, while two or three of Bontddu, in North Wales, showed care both in selection of subject and the after-operations of production of print.

Mr. Caird was represented by a number of bromide enlargements, A Scottish Glen being the best; it is a nice piece of work. The others were mostly genre subjects. The Rev. N. R. Fitzpatrick contributed three enlargements on bromide paper, Treib, Lake Lucerne, being very good. Mr. Billings sent a few small things. These were mostly pretty scenes in the Isle of Wight. One, The Smithy, is a very creditable piece of work, more especially when we consider the great difficulty attending such work. The gradation of tone was all that could be wished for. Mr. Steriker had two or three nice things, the larger and perhaps best was a picture of York Minster. Mr. Hooper sent a few portraits, and one or two landscape scenes in the Lake country. Mr. Goodwin had a couple of frames, the Retro-choir at Chichester Cathedral, and a small seascape, both being very creditable pieces of work.

One of the features of the Exhibition was an arrangement for the display of transparencies and lantern slides. These were much appreciated, and, for a greater part of the evening, attracted a good deal of attention. Transparencies of all sizes were shown, which came as a change to ordinary and almost too familiar lantern slides.

Looking at the Exhibition as a whole, the standard of the work was well up to the average of past years. It was fairly representative of the members as a body. The work of one prominent member was missed, but this was somewhat compensated for by the contributions of some younger members, who work on almost identical lines. The Council have every reason to congratulate themselves upon the display, which is the culmination of another year's good and successful work.

The Photographic Journal, 1897

The Woodford Photographic Society held its Fourth Annual Exhibition at the club-room on Friday and Saturday last. The attendance was very good throughout the whole of the time the Exhibition was open. All the principal members exhibited, and, as usual, a few pictures stood out conspicuously above the rest. Mr. H. W. Bennett had some fine work on show, three architectural subjects being much admired. Mr. Malby was at his best with two cloud effects and some flower studies. Mr. Marriage showed a number of pictures of various subjects, his architectural details being by far the best. Mr. Wilmer had a couple of photogravures, well known to frequenters of this year's Pall Mall Exhibition. Mr. Emler (the Secretary) contributed about a dozen frames, three being enlargements; the subjects were mostly pretty little bits of Yorkshire or Epping Forest scenery. Mr. Noble only had two frames this year, but both were of high merit. The President (Mr. E. B. Caird) was well represented by a number of bromide enlargements. The exhibition was greatly improved by the addition

of the Affiliation Committee's travelling collection of pictures. The transparency stand came in for a good deal of attention, and was quite a feature of the show.

The Essex Herald, 12 December 1899

WOODFORD.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION. - On Thursday night the annual exhibition of pictures by the members of the Woodford Photographic Society was opened by Colonel Lockwood, M.P., at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall. The contributions numbered 176 (exclusive of some smaller specimens which were uncatalogued), as against 90 last year. The quality and hanging gave evidence of progress. Colonel Lockwood, in the course of his speech, regretted that, owing to the death of a brother, Mrs. Lockwood was unable to be present, but she wished the society every prosperity.

The Photographic Journal, 1899

Woodford Photographic Society. - This Society held its Annual Exhibition at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of last week. The Thursday was devoted to a "private view" and the opening ceremony; on the other two days it was open to the public. A number of members and their friends gathered together on Thursday to welcome Colonel Lockwood, M.P., who performed the opening ceremony; and, after he had been conducted round the screens, he ascended the stage, and, in a speech remarkable at once for literary charm and graceful delivery, congratulated the Society upon the excellency of the work shown. After a slight interval a number of slides were passed through the lantern. The arrangement for the display of the pictures, as well as the quality of the work on view, showed an advance upon previous years. Nearly all the principal members contributed, as well as many of the younger ones, and, considering that no external photographic work was shown, the Society's display was very creditable, both in regard to quantity and quality. Many of the pictures have been on view in London and elsewhere from time to time. Among the principal contributors may be mentioned Messrs. H. T. Malby, F.R.P.S.; H. W. Bennett, F.R.P.S.; H. Wilmer, F.R.P.S.; E. Marriage, F.R.P.S.; A. Horsley Hinton, J. T. Ashby, E. Noble, W. L. F. Wastell, F. G. Ember, &c. The lantern slides and transparencies were quite a feature of the show, and attracted a great deal of attention. On Friday Mr. E. J. Wall, F.R.P.S., attended and gave a lecture upon "Colour Photography." The attendance throughout the whole time the Exhibition was open was very satisfactory, and gave great encouragement to those who worked so hard to make it a success.

The Essex Chronicle, 14 December 1900

WOODFORD.

AN EXHIBITION in connection with the Woodford Photographic Society was held in the Wilfrid Lawson Hall on the 6th inst. Mr. E. N. Buxton, J.P., performed the opening ceremony and remarked that he was glad to see that they combined people of all classes, including the Vicar, who showed some most beautiful pictures.

The Essex Chronicle, 5 February 1904

WOODFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY.

The tenth annual exhibition was opened at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall, Woodford, on Wednesday, by Mr. D. J. Morgan, M.P. Many of the photographs exhibited were subsequently shown on a limelight screen, Mr. F. G. Emler, president, acting as lecturer. The feature of the exhibition this year is the extent to which toned bromides figure. The pictures which attracted most attention were a series by Mr. R. A. Malby, showing the sleighing of fallen trees in Epping Forest. Thirty-six members of the Society exhibited an average of 4.25 pictures each.

Mr. H. T. Malby, F.R.P.S., the hon. sec., made excellent arrangements. The exhibition continues open until to morrow.

By 1905, the majority of prints were bromide enlargements. There were also some slides from the Emler survey. Thirty-eight members contributed to this exhibition. The prints were displayed in a series of bays covered with neutral toned canvas, finished top and bottom with a deep dado of dark brown. A post of *art nouveau* design with a simple copper decoration was placed at the end of each screen.

The Essex Chronicle, 3 February 1905

WOODFORD.
PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION.

The eleventh annual exhibition of the Woodford Photographic Society was opened at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall, on Wednesday evening, by Colonel Lockwood, M.P., in the presence of a large company. The exhibition is not quite up to the standard of last year, but there was some exceedingly good work on show, more particularly among the lantern slides.

The Essex Chronicle, 5 March 1909

WOODFORD.

WOODFORD PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY. - The annual exhibition was opened at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall, on Wednesday evening, by Mr. J. Gurney Fowler, J.P. The exhibits were numerically about the same as last year, and were excellent specimens of work.

By the time of the 16th annual exhibition, in 1910, *The Woodford Times* reported a noticeable absence of carbon, platinotype and other once generally used processes and an almost universal adoption of bromide, both toned and untoned or converted to bromoil.

The Essex Chronicle, 6 March 1914

WOODFORD.

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION. - The twentieth exhibition of the Woodford Photographic Society was opened by Mr. Stanley Johnson on Wednesday evening at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall. The exhibition comprised 148 pictures - 10 more than last year - all except two the work of members, and were fully up to the high standard maintained during recent years. The secretary, Mr. F. G. Emler, stated that the society had about 70 members, and entered for the affiliation competitions, and came out top in the print and colour slide competitions. Of the ten slides they sent in, the judges "collared" six or eight, and Mr. Bernard Cook was awarded a plaque, otherwise "a medal of honour." - Mr. Stanley Johnson, in replying to a vote of thanks, and to suggestions that he should become a member, said if the committee would do him the honour of inviting himself to associate with them he should be delighted.

In 1915, the society decided to postpone the annual exhibition until after the war and the next exhibition was held in 1921. At this time, because of post-war difficulties, the society decided not to print exhibition catalogues. The prints were to be unframed, but to bear the title and name of the author on the mount.

There are no society records of press accounts of the exhibitions after 1924 although exhibitions continued. The records show that in 1928 there were 166 prints on view and an unspecified number of slides.

By 1929, there were fewer active members in the club and the council decided to discontinue the very public exhibition and substitute a less pretentious and private exhibition.

After 1945, the exhibitions were held at first in the Congregational church hall, which was tucked away at the rear of the church in George Lane. Attendance was mainly members and their families and friends, although the public was welcome free of charge.

In 1952, the society moved to St Barnabas school and youth centre. The move to St Barnabas enabled the club to obtain and store exhibition panels and stands in the air-raid shelter in the school basement. The annual exhibitions were held in the school canteen for three days during the Easter break. These exhibitions were always opened by the mayor or some other dignitary - the Marquis of Ely and Sir Stuart Mallinson being two - but this venue was off the beaten track and there were very few visitors. Consequently, the exhibitions were always an expense to the club.

75th anniversary exhibition

The 1968-1969 season saw the society's 75th anniversary, and WPS held a special one-day exhibition on 31 May 1969 at the Memorial Hall next to St Mary's church. Admission to the exhibition was free, but a charge of 1/-, including a raffle ticket, was made for the special souvenir catalogue, compiled by Reg Fowkes. More than 400 visitors attended the exhibition, which showed a profit of £18.

The official opening was at 11.00 am by Reg Mason, editor of *Amateur Photographer* and vice-president of the RPS. The exhibition was set up by all available members on the previous Friday evening and the hall was decorated outside with banners, bunting, balloons, posters and signs.

The exhibition contained 26 panels showing the prints made by past and present members. One major attraction for the public was the showing of Reg Fowkes' old Woodford enlargements. Eighty selected slides were projected on the stage continuously using a back projection funnel and a carousel projector presented by Henry Malby. Other slides were displayed in a newly made showcase, which was still in use 25 years later at the centenary. A further 100 selected slides were shown in a final audio-visual slide show.

Throughout the 75th anniversary year *The Woodford Times* and *Express & Independent* newspapers printed full-page photographs by club members in their publications.

With the success of the 75th anniversary exhibition, the committee decided to use the same arrangements the following year. This venue continued until 1981. The exhibitions were always very profitable and on one occasion more than 600 visitors were recorded.

1980 exhibition

In 1980, the annual exhibition was based on the theme 'Woodford Then and Now' as it coincided with the launch of Reg Fowkes' book of that name. Copies were sold at the exhibition and £1 per copy was donated to the society's funds. Four hundred and seventy people attended this exhibition.

Two years later the club moved from Ray Lodge church hall to the Hollis Room at South Woodford library. The premises at Ray Lodge had given problems because of the need for 'blacking out' and the general lack of comfort. Membership had reduced to about 40 people. The move to South Woodford library enabled the society to use the library's exhibition area and panels there free of charge.

From 1982, the annual exhibitions were staged in South Woodford library for three or four weeks during September, at the end of the club's year.

90th anniversary exhibition

In 1983, the exhibits included prints of the past Newmarch Trophy winners from the permanent collection.

Centenary exhibition

Details of the centenary exhibition are included earlier in this history.

Final exhibition

The club's final annual public exhibition was held in 2007.

125th anniversary exhibition

To celebrate the club's 125th anniversary, Dave Tyrell arranged for the club to organise and host an '1893 Foundation Cup' inter-club competition. This was held in October 2018, with WWPS battling against local rivals from Loughton Camera Club, Romford Camera Club, Barking Photographic Society, Chingford Photographic Society, and Chigwell Camera Club, with David Woods judging. Alongside the competition, an exhibition of members' work was on display at Wanstead House for a two-week period, opened by Sheila Bain, Redbridge councillor for Wanstead Park ward.

Membership

On 19 October 1893, the society had 15 members. By 1894, membership had increased to 20 and the average attendance was 64%. During this first year, Ernest Marriage, Francis Emler and E Noble had joined the original members.

Following this there was a steady increase in membership. In October 1898, the secretary, Francis Emler, reported that membership was 41 and by 1899 it had increased to 56. By 1904, there were 94 members, but the minutes record that instruction meetings were not well attended. The exhibitions of slides and prints were popular events and it is likely that many members joined for social reasons. There are no attendance books for the early part of the 20th century, so it is not possible to see how many people attended the meetings.

The year 1906 appears to have been a peak for membership, which reached 104, but by 1909 the figure had dropped to 82.

In March 1915, the society received an application from a lady to become a member. This application was rejected with the following explanation:

That in consideration of precedent established by long usage that no ladies have hitherto become members it is undesirable at the moment to proceed with the election.

This was carried unanimously. By 1922, this attitude had changed and Miss G E Powers became the first female member of the society.

The problem of non-attending members continued for, in 1925, the secretary, W C Good, said it was difficult to arrive at the exact size of membership as a number never attended although they retained their membership. He estimated that there were officially 82 members although average attendance was 19. The following year the council proposed trying to find out whether non-active members wanted to continue their membership as it felt that a small lively membership was preferable to a large one containing people who did not contribute.

A steady decline of membership followed. There were 60 paid-up members in 1928 with an average attendance of nine and 26 members in 1930. The early records show a discrepancy between the secretary's report of membership and the treasurer's account of subscriptions received. The treasurer's figures are assumed to be accurate.

When the club restarted in 1945, there were 15 members and four visitors at the first meeting. Numbers increased gradually throughout the 1950s and 1960s until, in 1963, membership was 61. Generally membership averaged more than 40, although attendance at meetings was often about half that number.

In 1976-1977, the membership list shows 60 names, several of whom were still members in 1998, including the president, John Woolliams, but gradually membership began to decline. In 1993-1994 there were 46 names on the membership list and, by 1997, this had decreased to 27. Throughout this time only a proportion attended most meetings and the task of running the club fell on a core group of regular attendees.

Despite the increase in population and the widespread use of photography amongst the public, the membership of the club remained low. This was probably because of social reasons. When the club started there were no cinemas, no television and no cars. The magic lantern was a novelty and appealed to a wide audience. By the late 1990s, photographic societies perhaps appealed only to the dedicated specialist or hobbyist, and it was proving particularly difficult to attract younger members to the club, especially those with family commitments.

However, the second decade of the 21st century saw a turnaround in the club's fortunes and membership began to rise: by mid-2018, the 125th anniversary year, membership numbers stood at 38. In 2022, club numbers stood at 50, of whom one-third were women.

When the club started, the members came from a small geographical area in the heart of Woodford. Since then membership has spread further afield and many present-day members live in houses that were not built until the 20th century or later and are situated on land that was farmland at the time the Emler Collection was made.

Membership numbers

1893	1894	1898	1899	1904	1906	1909	1925	1928	1929
15	20	41	56	94	104	82	82	60	60

1945	1952	1956	1963	1976	1982	1993	1997	2008	2018
15	37	37	61	60	40	46	27	12	38
2022	2024								
50	35								

Presidents and chairmen/women

In the years before the Second World War, the club's President also served as chairman. After the war, the two roles were separated. The role of President was dropped in the early 2000s.

Combined role of President and chairman/woman

1893-1894	H Wilmer
1894-1895	Edward Caird
1895-1896	Henry Malby
1896-1897	Ernest Marriage
1897-1898	Edward Caird
1898-1899	J T Ashby
1899-1900	Not known
1900-1901	Not known
1901-1902	Not known
1902-1903	Alfred Hinton
1903-1904	Francis Emler
1904-1905	H Wilmer
1905-1906	A Ziegele
1906-1907	E H Carpenter
1907-1908	J P W Goodwin
1908-1909	T Naylor
1909-1910	E H R Hillsworth
1910-1911	T W Pallet
1911-1912	W W Donaldson
1912-1913	Francis Newmarch
1913-1914	William Wastell
1914-1915	Francis Emler
1915-1916	Not known
1916-1917	Not known
1917-1918	Not known
1918-1919	Not known
1919-1920	L C Aukland
1920-1921	Not known
1921-1922	J P W Goodwin
1922-1923	Francis Newmarch
1923-1924	Not known
1924-1925	Francis Emler
1925-1926	Not known
1926-1927	Not known
1927-1928	Not known
1928-1929	Norah Cross
1929-1930	Not known
1930-1931	Francis Newmarch
1931-1932	Norah Cross
1932-1933	Not known
1933-1934	Not known
1934-1935	Not known
1935-1936	No meetings
1936-1937	No meetings
1937-1938	No meetings

1938-1939	No meetings
1939-1940	No meetings
1940-1941	No meetings
1941-1942	No meetings
1942-1943	No meetings
1943-1944	No meetings
1944-1945	No meetings
1945-1946	George Hall

Presidents

1945-1954	Francis Newmarch
1954-1959	William Cook
1960-1961	George Hunt
1961-1985	George Hall
1985-1994	Reg Fowkes
1994-1996	Terry Johnson
1996-1997	Winn Fowkes
1997-2000	John Woolliams
2000-2006	Marsden Anderson

Chairmen/women

1946-1947	B A Crouch
1947-1948	George Hall
1948-1949	George Hall
1949-1950	George Hall
1950-1951	George Hall
1951-1952	George Hall
1952-1953	George Hall
1953-1954	George Hall
1954-1955	P Williamson
1955-1956	George Hall
1956-1957	George Hall
1957-1958	R H Hawkins
1958-1959	George Hall
1959-1960	L Stokes
1960-1961	R J Robertson
1961-1962	R J Robertson
1962-1963	Reg Fowkes
1963-1964	Reg Fowkes
1964-1965	George Hunt
1965-1966	George Hunt
1966-1967	J W Davies
1967-1968	J W Davies
1968-1969	J W Davies
1969-1970	John Woolliams
1970-1971	John Woolliams
1971-1972	John Woolliams
1972-1973	John Woolliams
1973-1974	J W Davies
1974-1975	J W Davies
1975-1976	Reg Fowkes

1976-1977	Winn Fowkes
1977-1978	Winn Fowkes
1978-1979	Arthur Krick
1979-1980	Terry Johnson
1980-1981	Terry Johnson
1981-1982	John Woolliams
1982-1983	John Woolliams
1983-1984	Terry Johnson
1984-1985	P Jarvis
1985-1986	P Jarvis
1986-1987	Ron Burton
1987-1988	Terry Johnson
1988-1989	Terry Johnson
1989-1990	Stan Smith
1990-1991	Stan Smith
1991-1992	Stan Smith
1992-1993	Stan Smith
1993-1994	Stan Smith
1994-1995	Winn Fowkes
1995-1996	Marsden Anderson
1996-1997	Marsden Anderson
1997-1998	Les Coles
1998-1999	Peter Smith
1999-2000	Peter Smith
2000-2001	Peter Smith
2001-2002	Peter Smith
2002-2003	Peter Smith
2003-2004	Peter Smith
2004-2005	Peter Smith
2005-2006	Peter Smith
2006-2007	Wendy Gill
2007-2008	Norman Olley
2008-2009	Norman Olley
2009-2010	Norman Olley
2010-2011	Peter Hughes
2011-2012	Peter Hughes
2012-2013	Peter Hughes
2013-2014	Peter Hughes
2014-2015	Peter Rowe
2015-2016	Peter Rowe
2016-2017	Peter Rowe/David Tachauer
2017-2018	David Tachauer
2018-2019	David Tachauer
2019-2020	David Tachauer
2020-2021	Susan Rosner
2021-2022	Susan Rosner
2022-2023	Susan Rosner
2023-2024	Susan Rosner
2024-2025	Susan Rosner
2025-2026	Kevin Wright

Some statistics

- Most years as chairman: George Hall (11 years), 1945-1946, 1947-1954, 1955-1957 and 1958-1959; Peter Smith (8 years), 1998-2006; John Woolliams (6 years), 1969-1973 and 1981-1983
- Longest continuously serving chairman: Peter Smith (8 years), 1998-2006; George Hall (7 years), 1947-1954
- Longest period between first and last election as chairman: Francis Emler (21 years), 1903-1904 and 1924-1925
- Chairwomen: Norah Cross, 1928-1929 and 1931-1932; Winn Fowkes, 1976-1978 and 1994-1995; Wendy Gill, 2006-2007; Susan Rosner, 2020-2025

Some notable members of the society

ANDERSON, Thomas William Marsden

Thomas William Marsden Anderson was born in 1919. He had a military background, having served in the army in the Second World War, during which he was awarded the Military Cross in recognition of 'an act or acts of exemplary gallantry during active operations against the enemy'. He also possessed the Territorial Decoration for long service as an officer with the Territorial Army. In his civilian life, Marsden was a fire surveyor for Municipal Mutual Insurance

Marsden joined WPS in 1988, having already gained his ARPS in 1952 when he was a founder member of Chingford Photographic Society. He was a member of the London Topographical Society, the Royal Archaeological Institute, and the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society. Marsden also joined the RPS's archaeological section and was the official photographer for several archaeological excavations; in 1969, he had 50 photographs of these on display at the Museum of London.

With an interest in the club's history and local history, Marsden was on the sub-committee to arrange the society's centenary celebrations, and he was also instrumental in arranging funding for the Millennium survey and the ensuing book, *Woodford into the 21st Century*. Marsden died in 2006. In 2007, the 'T W M Anderson Photographic Collection' was donated to Historic England. This comprises 2,800 colour slides and 2 glass negatives taken or collected by Marsden between 1952 and 1999. The collection's strength is in recording historic buildings in and around Woodford and Waltham Abbey.

ASHBY, John Thomas

In January 2026, Woodford & Wanstead Photographic Society (WWPS) received an enquiry via its website from a local historian in Wigan. The enquirer wished to dispose of an old book entitled *Memories of the Camera*. He said that the book was by J T Ashby, a 'famous' photographer in the late nineteenth and early twentieth century. Searching online had taken him to the WWPS website where he had found Ashby's name in the club history. The enquirer advised that the book bore no publisher's name or date and he suspected that it was a one-off publication. As well as images by Ashby, the book contained photographs taken by other people, some with details of the camera and lens used (none of Ashby's has this information); the images were from the UK and Europe.

Intrigued by this description, and knowing that a J T Ashby had been an early President of Woodford Photographic Society (the predecessor of WWPS), I acquired the book. On inspection it is small, roughly 7½" by 5", and bound in green buckram with a faded title and the remains of a decorative landscape illustration in yellow on the cover. It contains 82 photographs – 42 by Ashby and 40 by others. Many of the others are unattributed, but those named are: Miss Agnes Tomlinson, R Brooman White, J A Heir, R C Ryan, A M Geddis, Miss E A Whieldon, G H Lillie, R L Adams, E Pickard, Maurice Price, F M Sutcliffe, and W E Dunmore. All the photographs are well printed on art paper. There is no text in the book nor is there any information about its origin; there might once have been a title page, but if so it has been removed – a page has clearly been torn out at the front of the book. Searching online for Ashby + "Memories of the Camera" produced no results, so I suspect the enquirer was correct and that this is a one-off publication. It certainly has a home-produced look to it. As to a date for the book, it must have been produced after 1900 as two of the photographs show images of the Paris Exhibition of that year.

Wearing my WWPS archivist's hat, I then set about researching J T Ashby's background, using four main sources: i) the Ancestry website (subscription); ii) the British Newspaper Archive website (subscription); iii) the Royal Photographic Society's online archive of its Journal (free); and iv) the Woodford Photographic Society's archive in the Redbridge Heritage Centre (free) – plus whatever else online searches threw my way. I am also grateful to Chris Pond for information about the houses in Lower Park Road, Loughton.

I was unable to find J T Ashby's precise date of birth, other than it was recorded in the third quarter of 1846, but the 1851 census recorded four-year-old John Thomas Ashby living with his family at 2

Water Lane, Hunton, near Maidstone in Kent. The family comprised his father, 29-year-old John, a blacksmith; his mother, Elizabeth, 28 years of age; a brother, Thomas, two years old; and a sister, Elizabeth, one year of age. The father and children had all been born in Hunton, the mother in Maidstone.

Ten years later, in 1861, the census recorded 14-year-old John working as a groom at a public house on Loose Hill, near Maidstone. Although unnamed, the pub was quite likely 'The Chequers', a 17th-century coaching inn still there today on Old Loose Hill.

By the time of the next census, John, now 24, had moved away from Kent and events had taken a turn that would lead him to a career in education, a calling in which he would spend the rest of his working life. In 1871, he was recorded as an assistant master teaching at the Infant Orphanage Asylum at Snaresbrook. The building had opened in 1843, later housed the Royal Wanstead School and serves today as Snaresbrook Crown Court. It was here that he would meet his future wife, Sarah Wedding, whom the census recorded as a 25-year-old assistant governess also working at the Asylum. Sarah had originally come to the Asylum as an orphan inmate, her father having died in 1849 and her mother in 1850.

In 1876, John and Sarah married and soon started a family of their own. By 1881, the couple had moved to 5 Brighton Villas, Tottenham, in Middlesex. John gave his occupation as 'Professor of drawing and painting'. With Sarah and John were their first two children – John Bertram, aged four, and Margaret Emily, only nine months old.

John took an active interest in Freemasonry and on 14 February 1882 joined No 228 Lodge of United Strength; he gave his profession as 'artist'. In later life he would be a member of No 3353 Lucton Lodge, Loughton.

In a newspaper advertisement of 1 October 1887, John's name appeared as Headmaster at George Green Schools, East India Dock Road, Poplar – he would retain this position until retirement. George Green Schools had been founded in 1828 and, in 1884, moved from the original buildings to new premises, which provided places for 200 boys and 200 girls. The pupils paid modest fees (£2 and £2 13s 4d per term in 1887) or were assisted with scholarships. The advertisement stated that pupils were 'prepared for the College of Preceptors and for the Local Examinations'. In 1975, the school moved to the Isle of Dogs and the old premises subsequently became part of Tower Hamlets College.

By the time of the 1891 census, John and Sarah had moved to 'Downings' in Lower Park Road, Loughton, Essex. In Loughton during the late 1870s there had been a concerted attempt to create a residential middle-class estate in the area known as The Parks. On the Lower Park, purchase conditions encouraged the building of substantial middle-class houses with four or five bedrooms and attic accommodation for a live-in servant. Covenants attached to the land stipulated a minimum construction cost of £300 for each detached house, excluding the price of the land, and £500 for a pair of semi-detached houses. By the early twentieth century the street had been partially numbered, but in 1923 Loughton Urban District Council rationalised the system, consolidating the existing numbers and assigning numbers to houses previously known only by name. Today 'Downings' is 12 Lower Park Road.

The family had grown too. By 1891, John and Sarah had three new daughters: Beryl, aged seven; Dorothy, six; and Phyllis, four. Beryl and Dorothy had been born in Tottenham, and Phyllis in Clapton. Perhaps the family lived briefly in Clapton between censuses. There was no mention of Margaret, however, and she does not appear with the family in any later census. I have not been able to trace her demise, but I do wonder if Margaret had died while still an infant. Thirteen-year-old John Hoofs, a boarding scholar, and Mary Williams, 39, a domestic servant, were also at 'Downings' on census night.

John Thomas Ashby became a member of Woodford Photographic Society (WPS) in 1897; his first recorded attendance was on 18 November that year. He was already a competent photographer,

being elected a member of the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) in the same year. John was soon exhibiting his photographs:

The Essex Times, 11 December 1897

PHOTOGRAPHIC EXHIBITION

The Woodford Photographic Society held its annual exhibition at the club rooms of the Coffee tavern, George-lane yesterday evening ... Mr J T Ashby, a new member, sent some creditable examples of landscape photography, all on a fairly large scale.

On 17 December, *The Woodford Times* also reported on the exhibition, noting '... some fine work was shewn by Mr Ashby and Mr Bool, each a recent addition to the membership of the society, and from both of whom we shall anticipate some notable work next year'. February of the 'next year', 1898, saw John elected to the WPS selection committee for the forthcoming RPS International Exhibition at the Crystal Palace, and in April he was one of six WPS exhibitors of photographs there:

Woodford Photographic Society.

1. *A Suffolk Road, H. Wilmer.*
2. *Hastings, H. T. Malby.*
3. *A Yarmouth Row, E. Noble.*
4. *Capital in Canterbury Cathedral, E. Marriage.*
5. *From Dim Recesses of the Woods, J. T. Ashby.*
6. *Twixt Day and Night, F. G. Emler.*

At a WPS meeting in March 1898, John was recorded as having passed around some examples of his work on printing-out paper (POP). He liked POP, but noted others preferred platinotype and carbon prints. POP is a contact printing process very popular in the 1880s-1910s. Unlike modern darkroom papers, the image appears by itself during exposure to light, without a developer. POP prints contain warm tones, very fine detail, a slightly glossy surface, and soft highlights with a long tonal scale.

At the WPS AGM in October 1898, John was elected as President for the 1898-1899 season – less than a year after joining the society. Soon afterwards, in January 1899, he gave 'an interesting address' to WPS on 'Some Notes on Mounting and Framing'; over the coming decade he would give many more lectures to photographic clubs.

The spring and summer of 1899 saw John leading WPS outings: to Ongar and Greensted; at Loughton and in Epping Forest; from Theydon Bois to Lambourne; and from Epping to Coopersale. In the same year we find him mentioned in the RPS review of the WPS annual exhibition:

The Photographic Journal, 1899

Woodford Photographic Society. – This Society held its Annual Exhibition at the Wilfrid Lawson Hall, on Thursday, Friday, and Saturday of last week. The Thursday was devoted to a "private view" and the opening ceremony; on the other two days it was open to the public. A number of members and their friends gathered together on Thursday to welcome Colonel Lockwood, M.P., who performed the opening ceremony; and, after he had been conducted round the screens, he ascended the stage, and, in a speech remarkable at once for literary charm and graceful delivery, congratulated the Society upon the excellence of the work shown. After a slight interval a number of slides were passed through the lantern. The arrangement for the display of the pictures, as well as the quality of the work on view, showed an advance upon previous years. Nearly all the principal members contributed, as well as many of the younger ones, and, considering that no external photographic work was shown, the Society's display was very creditable, both in regard to quantity and quality. Many of the pictures have been on view in London and elsewhere from time to time. Among the principal contributors may be mentioned Messrs. H. T. Malby, F.R.P.S.; H. W. Bennett,

F.R.P.S.; H Wilmer, F.R.P.S.; E. Marriage, F.R.P.S.; A. Horsley Hinton; J. T. Ashby; E. Noble; W. L. F. Wastell; F. G. Emler; &c. The lantern slides and transparencies were quite a feature of the show, and attracted a great deal of attention. On Friday Mr. E. J. Wall, F.R.P.S., attended and gave a lecture upon "Colour Photography." The attendance throughout the whole time the Exhibition was open was very satisfactory, and gave great encouragement to those who worked so hard to make it a success.

The year 1900 saw further lectures by John at WPS meetings. In February, he gave a talk in two parts on 'Some Practical Hints for Photographers in Pictorial Composition'. The new century opened with his lecturing in January 1901 on 'How to Make a Picture'.

The 1901 census recorded John (54) and Sarah (56) with most of the family still in Loughton at 'Downings'. Beryl, who would have been 17, was not there on census night. Son John Bertram, now 24, was following in his father's footsteps and gave his profession as 'Schoolmaster'. The family also continued to employ a domestic servant, 20-year-old Ada Burrows.

The early 20th century saw John devoting much time to photography, writing, lecturing and judging. For three years he wrote the artistic leader in, and illustrated much of, *The Year Book of Photography and Amateur's Guide* – a component part of *The British Journal Photographic Almanac*. In 1901, the RPS journal's review of the *Year Book* noted that 'Mr J T Ashby has an exhaustive article on "Photography in the Woodlands," profusely illustrated by his own photographs'. A fuller review of the *Year Book* appeared in *The Academy* on 15 July 1901:

We heard amateur photography recommended to a lady for "nerves" the other day, and truly there is no escape from photography any more than from cycling. The strongest give in at last. It is only by turning at intervals from Mr. J. T. Ashby's seductive paper, herein printed, on "Photography in the Woodlands," to those parts of the volume which seethe with "sulphio-cyanide of ammonia," "metabisulphite of potassium," and "hydroquinone," that we are able to preserve our resolution to defer the plunge until age has enlarged our leisure. We refer particularly to Mr. Ashby's paper, because it is the making of the volume. Chatty, humorous, and genuinely helpful, this little treatise on woodland work may be recommended to every amateur, and the more so because Mr. Ashby takes a thoroughly sane view of the true nature and limitations of photographic work. He is properly impatient of high-flown attempts to identify the aims of photography with those of pictorial art. "It should not," he insists, "be considered an excellence in a photograph that it resembles something else, as, for instance, an unfinished or otherwise imperfect work of manual art, such as a rough sketch, a sepia drawing, a charcoal rubbing, and the like. This is to degrade photography. For if its highest claim to consideration be the mere power of imitating the inferior or minor productions of another art, what is the value of that claim?" Mr. Ashby's own photographs, reproduced here, are striking examples of pure photography, in which the niceties of light and composition receive the fullest consideration. In "The Whispering Woodlands," "The Dead o' the Year," "Season of Mists," and "The Secret Ministry of Frost," we have four entirely different moods of Epping Forest.

At the turn of the twentieth century, pictorial photography underwent a transformation that reshaped both its aesthetic ambitions and its theoretical foundations. Photographers who emerged in Europe and the United States during the 1890s departed decisively from earlier Victorian conventions, expanding the expressive possibilities of photography in ways previously unimagined. This shift was not limited to visual style; it reflected a broader rethinking of what photography could be, driven by innovative practices and parallel developments in photographic theory.

In Britain, pictorial photographers were central to this movement. Seeking to establish photography as a fine art rather than a mechanical or documentary tool, they favoured expressive subjects, soft focus, and handcrafted printing techniques. Processes such as gum bichromate enabled extensive manipulation of tone and texture, producing images that often resembled paintings or drawings. These ideals were promoted by the Linked Ring Brotherhood, founded in opposition to the more

conservative stance of the RPS. While influential, pictorialism also attracted criticism for its perceived sentimentality and rejection of photographic objectivity.

Crucially, this movement was sustained by a strong infrastructure. Journals such as *The Photogram*, *Amateur Photographer*, and *Camera Work* provided platforms for exhibition, debate, and critical reflection, helping to redefine the boundaries of photographic practice. J T Ashby was not a member of the Linked Ring and although his photographic subjects were pictorial he clearly favoured a more objective approach. An article in *The Cosmopolitan* for November 1901-April 1902 touched on this and mentioned John:

Pictorial composition is one of those things which really are not chance, but are the result of the artistic feeling of the camera-man. For an inartistic person nature may pose itself every day, but he will pass it by. To the photographer of artistic taste, on the other hand, everything beautiful appeals, and all he has to regret is that he sees so many good things when he hasn't his camera with him or when the light may not be just right. The difference between the naturalistic and pictorial photographer may be summed up in the statement that the naturalistic operator tries to get everything on his plate that can be seen, while the pictorialist tries to suppress everything that is unimportant. As a result the pictorialist is developing even impressionistic effects in photography.

A very sober discussion of the limitations of photography as applied to art is contained in two papers I recently have read, one by J. T. Ashby and the other by E. T. Holden. Mr. Ashby follows his dissertation on the limitations by pointing out what the artistic photographer can accomplish in spite of them. There is no need, argues Mr. Ashby, to risk a failure by attempting too lofty a flight. The more heroic emotions are seldom, if ever, awakened by photography. "Yet," continues Mr. Ashby, "as our daily lives are not, as a rule, spent in heroics, we have a very wide range of homelier sentiments, emotions and interests to appeal to, whose less extravagant demands are very well satisfied with such achievements as lie within the power of the camerist."

Mr. Holden takes a less optimistic view of photography as an art. Evidently he is not a pictorialist. Yet there is no gainsaying opinions such as he expresses. The camera makes note of some natural and beautiful fact, and there, according to Mr. Holden, its work ends.

The RPS journal's review of 1902's *Year Book* reported 'the bulk of the illustrations to the book are contributed by Mr J T Ashby, who also supplies an illustrated article on Bettws to which the landscape photographer may profitably turn'. At least one of the photographs in John's article on Bettws-y-Coed was put to further use in the following year:

The Welsh Coast Pioneer, 6 November 1903

'... a handbook upon "Bettwsycoed as a health resort" has lately been published by Dr Macdonogh [of Tyn-y-Bryn] ... The book is beautifully illustrated from photographs by Mr Marriott Dodson, one being by Mr J. T. Ashby, F.R.P.S., and it is neatly bound in crimson, with gold lettering, and printed on art surface paper. The publishers are Messrs Woodall, Minshall, and Thomas, Oswestry'

In February 1902, John was again exhibiting in the WPS annual exhibition, but only a few months later, in May, he resigned from WPS. Why he resigned is not known, and the WPS minute book for that period is missing. My suspicion is that he was becoming more involved in RPS activities. He was awarded his RPS Fellowship in 1902, and by 1903 his name was appearing as a member of the RPS Council and he was on the RPS Board of Judges for affiliated photographic societies. (Woodford Photographic Society affiliated to the RPS in 1895.) John was now judging and lecturing across much of southern England, these examples from the early 1900s being typical: in December 1902 he was judging at Frome, Somerset; in March 1903, he lead an outing for the Camera Section of the Norwich Teachers' Field Club; in November 1903, he was back in Frome; also in 1903, he judged the annual exhibitions of Croydon Camera Club and Cripplegate Photographic Society; in January 1904 he

lectured on 'Pictorial Composition' for Cambridge & District Photographic Club, one local newspaper highlighting his acknowledged status:

The Saffron Walden Weekly News, 11 December 1903

... one of the best-known artist-photographers, critics, and judges in the photographic world, and he has for some years criticised the well-known 'Photographic News' competitions, and for three years wrote the artistic leader in, and illustrated, the 'Photographic News Year Book' ... Mr Ashby is principal of one of the largest schools in London, and not unknown in most of the colleges. In addition he finds time to act as judge at many exhibitions, as critic to numerous postal clubs, and to take an active interest in Masonic matters. He is also on the Council of the Royal Photographic Society, and a Fellow.

It was during this busy period that tragedy struck. In the summer of 1904, John's wife Sarah died, probably at 'Downings', for her death was recorded in the Epping Civil Registration District of which Loughton was part.

In April 1905, John was judging at Croydon again, and in May lecturing at Hove on 'Art in Photography'. In October 1907, he gave his 'Pictorial Composition' lecture again, this time in Lewisham. The local newspaper printed a review:

The Forest Hill & Sydenham Examiner, 18 October 1907

SOUTH SUBURBAN PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY.

Twenty-five stalwarts braved the elements on Wednesday evening to hear a lecture at plough Hall, High Street, Lewisham, by Mr. J. T. Ashby, F.R.P.S., on "Pictorial Composition." Mr. F. J. Mortimer, F.R.P.S., presided. After dealing with the elementary rules of perspective, the lecturer said that while there were many things the painter could do which the photographer could not, there was one thing the photographer could get which the painter could only strive for in vain, and that was "texture." The painter got effects which simulated texture by the use of rough canvas, and by skilful technical dodges; but the photographers got the actual texture itself. And yet photographers threw away this distinguishing excellence of their medium, suppressed detail and texture, and endeavoured to imitate the painter's dodges and to reproduce the defects of the painter's medium. The gum bichromate school were the worst offenders. He supposed it was one of the innate vices of human nature to delight in making dirt pies, and in taking to gum bichromate its devotees were but following the bent of humanity.

On 1 January 1909, George Green Schools were taken over by London County Council; the fees were now to be £4 13s 6d per year. John remained in post as Principal. Later that year a local newspaper advertisement stated that 'the object of the School is to provide a High Class Modern Education, such as may fit a pupil for a professional career or any other advantageous position in life. Pupils are prepared for matriculation and for Oxford and Cambridge Local and other Public Examinations'.

By the time of the 1911 census, John, now 64, had retired and was still at 'Downings', seemingly alone. I have not found son John Bertram in the 1911 census. He was not recorded at 'Downings' – he might simply have been absent on census night, or maybe he had left home. (A decade later, a now married John Bertram was living at 'Downings' with his wife, Florence, and a servant. His profession was then stated as 'Secretary of Public Secondary School – Parmiter's School'. He was still at 'Downings' in 1928.) In 1911, Beryl (27) was boarding at 26 Mount Pleasant Lane, Upper Clapton. She gave her profession as teacher in a County Council secondary school, possibly George Green Schools. Sadly, Beryl died at the young age of 29 in early 1912, possibly at 'Downings'. Dorothy (26) has disappeared from the records – she was not at 'Downings' in 1911 and I have not found her in any records after 1901. Phyllis (24) had married George Pottier in 1910 and moved to Coulsdon, Surrey. She bore John's first grandchild, a son, Philip, in 1912.

John's life came to an end on 25 February 1916 when he died at 'Downings' aged 69. Probate records show that he left effects to the value of £31 10s. In its obituaries, the *British Journal Photographic Almanac* for 1917 reported: 'Among others who have been removed by death during the past twelve months are ... J T Ashby, a former contributor on art topics to the photographic press'.

Having researched J T Ashby's life, I wondered if there was anything more to be revealed through his photographs in *Memories of the Camera*. We know that he took pictorial landscape photographs, especially of woodlands, and that he led photographic outings around Epping Forest. Although few of his photographs in the book have locations in their titles, there are many of woodlands, and several show obviously pollarded trees. Such trees are a distinctive feature of Epping Forest and with the forest on his Loughton doorstep I think it highly likely that John made many of his images there. This is in fact borne out by the *Academy* review above, which mentions by name several of the photographs I have found in *Memories of the Camera*. There are also a handful of his photographs taken in Snowdonia, one of which is at Bettws-y-Coed and may well be amongst those taken with his 1902 *Year Book* article in mind.

And finally, it is somewhat frustrating that in researching J T Ashby, I have not found a single photograph of the man himself. I have no idea what he looked like. One of his own images in *Memories of the Camera* features a middle-aged woman, and another a group of younger people, all in forest settings. Are they perhaps John's own family?

EMLER, Francis George

Francis George Emler was born in Windsor in 1859. By 1891, he was married and living in Woodford. Emler earned his living as a civil servant, but also became a skilled photographer whose work was displayed at the RPS on several occasions. In 1895, he became secretary of WPS and remained in that office until 1923. He organised public lantern slide shows interspersed with music. These were popular events. His flair for publicity and his organizing ability built up the membership to over 100.

He was granted honorary life membership of the society in recognition of his long service as secretary. He was presented with an illuminated address and a cheque for £19. A silver rose bowl was presented to his wife, Isabel, for her hospitality to the council.

Francis Emler was a warden of St Mary's Church and, in 1927, wrote a book *The History of Woodford Parish Church*. He died in 1928. His memorial is the Emler Collection (see chapter entitled 'Surveys').

FOWKES, Reginald L

Reginald L Fowkes was born in Ipswich in 1914. He moved to Woodford in 1932 and worked in an advertising agency until 1939. Having already trained as an auxiliary fireman, he became full time on the outbreak of war. After the war he founded Woodford Studios Display Contractors and was co-director until he retired in 1978.

Reg joined WPS when it reconvened after the Second World War in 1945 and became an active member becoming chairman in 1962. He served on the committee for many years, organizing the annual exhibitions and being responsible for competition entries. Reg also gave much of his time to lecturing and judging at other photographic societies. He was an excellent photographer with an individual style and always the first to offer help and advice to less experienced club members.

In 1966, Reg was unanimously elected to life membership following a proposal by the president, George Hall, which was seconded by George Hunt. He gained his ARPS in 1967, qualifying in both pictorial prints and colour slides. In 1985, he became president of the society and, in the same year, he received an award from the PAGB for his services to photography.

Reg compiled the books *Woodford Then and Now*, *Epping Forest Then and Now* and *Wastell's Woodford*. He died in 1994.

HALL, George W

George W Hall was one of the members who helped organise the revival of the club activities in 1945. He served for 11 years as chairman and 24 years as president. His advanced photography was of a very high standard in monochrome and he won the Newmarch Trophy three times. George died suddenly in 1985.

HINTON, Alfred Horsley

Alfred Horsley Hinton was a landscape photographer, best known for his work in the pictorialist movement in the 1890s and early 1900s. As an original member of the Linked Ring and editor of *The Amateur Photographer*, he was one of the movement's staunchest advocates. Hinton wrote nearly a dozen books on photographic technique, and his photographs were exhibited at expositions throughout Europe and North America.

Hinton was born in London in 1863. He attended art school with the hopes of becoming a painter, and became proficient in oil, watercolours, and black-and-white drawing. By 1882, he had discovered photography, and was hired as editor of *The Photographic Art Journal* in 1887. Hinton briefly worked for a company in Blackfriars selling photographic equipment before taking over a branch portrait studio of Ralph W Robinson in Guildford in 1891. In 1893, he was hired as editor of *The Amateur Photographer*, a position he retained for the rest of his life.

During the late 1880s, Hinton became one of a growing number of photographers who believed that photography should be considered a form of high art, a movement that became known as pictorialism. Pictorialism, according to Hinton, employed 'the image of concrete things to create abstract ideas'. He exhibited several photographs at an early 1890s Leeds exposition described by his contemporary, Alexander Keighley, as the first pictorialist exposition, and was one of the original members of the Linked Ring, an organisation formed in 1892 to promote photography as a fine art.

Hinton helped organise the Photographic Salon in 1893, and became the primary English correspondent for the Bulletin of the French pictorialist group, the Photo Club of Paris. A poll conducted by *Photographic Life* in 1897 found Hinton to be the most popular photographer-exhibiter.

Hinton's staunch defence of pictorialism gained him numerous enemies. His attempt to join the RPS touched off a fierce debate among the readers of the *British Journal of Photography*, with numerous letters written both in support of his membership and against it. Hinton was a member of the RPS between 1889 and 1893, but although he had many friends he also made some enemies who resented his prestige, as a consequence of which he 'blackballed' at the RPS in 1894, a censure he never forgave. He continued his defence of pictorialism into the following century, and was unimpressed with the rise of the 'American School', which included photographers such as Edward Steichen (Steichen once referred to Hinton as a 'slimy snake').

In 1895, Hinton became editor of *The Amateur Photographer*, and the pictorial side of photography received a great impetus. Hitherto the scientific and technical aspects of photography were the chief consideration. Under Hinton's editorship the possibilities of the camera for picture making became the dominant note. Plates, films and lenses had been improving year by year, and placing greater power in the hands of the amateur, and the illustrations in the paper became an outstanding feature.

In September 1899, Hinton became a member of Woodford Photographic Society – he gave the *Amateur Photographer* magazine's home in Creed Lane, London, EC as his address. During the early 1900s, Hinton was a regular contributor to *The Times*, *The Daily Telegraph*, *The Daily Graphic*, and *The Yorkshire Post*, and was frequently called upon to judge photo contests. In 1904, he oversaw the British photographic exhibit at the St Louis World's Fair, and he spent his last years writing manuals ('Little Books') to teach photographers basic techniques.

In February 1908, Hinton fell ill while returning from a trip to the Scottish Photographic Salon in Aberdeen, and died at his home in Woodford Green on 25 February. He was buried at the City of London Cemetery ('Find a Grave' memorial ID 184382973). The RPS held an exclusive exhibit of Hinton's work in April 1908.

Hinton's landscape photographs tend to be characterised by prominent foregrounds and dramatic cloud formations, often in a vertical format. He typically used sepia platinotype and gum bichromate printing processes. Unlike many pictorialists, Hinton preferred sharp focus to soft focus lenses. He occasionally cropped and mixed cloud scenes and foregrounds from different photographs, and was known to rearrange the foregrounds of his subjects to make them more pleasing. His favourite topic was the English countryside, especially the Essex mudflats and Yorkshire moors, and his dark platinum prints invest the gentler landscapes of southern England with a brooding quality.

Hinton's photograph, 'Requiem', was used as the frontispiece of the first issue of Alfred Stieglitz's magazine, *Camera Notes*, in 1897. His photograph, 'Day's Decline', appeared in Volume 3, Issue 1 of *Camera Notes* two years later. 'Reed Harvesting', was exhibited at the first London Salon in 1894, and his 'Salt Marshes' was exhibited at the first Paris Salon that same year. Hinton photographs that garnered considerable attention at the Photographic Salon in subsequent years included 'Recessional' (1901), 'Woods and Rushes' (1902), 'Fleeting and Far' (1903), and 'The White Mill' (1907). In a 1907 issue of *The Photographic News*, Hinton described 'Melton Meadows' as his best photograph.

Hinton's 'Melton Meadows', 'Beyond', 'Recessional', 'Woods and Rushes', 'Fleeting Far', and 'Niagara' are now part of the Victoria & Albert Museum's RPS collection. 'Fleeting Shadows' is part of the Metropolitan Museum of Art's collections. Unfortunately, little of the rest of his work remains as most of his output was dispersed after his death.

The following is his obituary, taken from *The Photographic Journal* [of the Royal Photographic Society] in March 1908:

The photographic world will receive the news of A Horsley Hinton's death not only with surprise but also with profound regret. His early ambitions tended towards a career devoted to Art, and with that end in view some time was spent in the Art Schools, but circumstances arose which diverted his footsteps towards a commercial career. The present writer was first brought in contact with Mr. Hinton at the time when he was editing a photographic monthly called The Photographic Art Journal.

In passing it may be interesting to note that there have been five journals in this country under that name in the years 1851-59-70-87, and another published a few years later at Leicester. It was the fourth of this series that Mr. Hinton edited. His short-lived career was an indication that it was in advance of its time.

After a couple of years' collaboration with Ralph W. Robinson (son of the veteran H. P. Robinson) as portraitist, Mr. Hinton devoted his energies to photographic journalism in special connection with the Amateur Photographer, which periodical he ably edited from 1893 to the time of his death.

He was an active member of the Linked Ring and a constant exhibitor at the exhibition promoted by that body and familiarly known as the Photographic Salon. While holding himself free to admire work of any and every kind he did not identify himself with any pronounced extremes or "schools."

His stronger side lay in the direction of pictorial landscape; as a maker of combination prints he was an adept. It is of course very much too soon after the shock of his death to attempt to "place" him among his contemporary pictorialists. Time alone can mature judgement and give the necessary detachment required to see any man's work in true perspective. Nevertheless, it is safe to say that his influence has been very considerable, and entirely in the direction of infusing the personal element into the work of the camera.

Mr. Hinton was a lover of nature and natural history, an indefatigable worker, with a nervously energetic temperament, quick to give and receive appreciation, ever ready to lend a helping hand or friendly counsel to a photographic society or an isolated individual. His death at the early age of forty-five will be deeply regretted by the enormous circle of friends and acquaintances at home and abroad.

F. C. L.

HUNT, George John Dean

George John Dean Hunt was born in 1894 in Bow. By the time of the 1911 census, he was a 17-year-old optician's assistant living in East Ham. He later qualified as an optician and moved to Woodford, where he joined the society in 1950. He was an enthusiastic colour slide worker who specialised in travel and abstract photographs. Switzerland and Venice were his favourite hunting grounds for travel photographs and he produced his abstracts by projecting the colours through glass blocks. He had slides accepted for the RPS International Exhibition. He died in 1968.

JAMES, Daisy

During the Second World War, Daisy James, ARPS, and her husband Fred James, FRPS, served as Air Raid Precaution (ARP) wardens, based in a wardens' shelter in Herongate Road, Aldersbrook. Fred balanced his night-time duties with his daytime job as a deputy bank manager. Fred's wartime photographs and diary recorded the experiences of ordinary men and women who risked their lives on the Home Front.

The couple joined WPS when it moved its affiliation to the EAF in 1965. They were two of the main organisers of the EAF and as they were local residents they were invited to become honorary vice-presidents of Woodford Photographic Society. Fred died in 1966. Daisy became a very useful member and involved the society in the EAF Annual Exhibitions.

Daisy always kept the society in touch with EAF workings and attended club meetings regularly. She also enjoyed evenings at home cataloguing and numbering the annual exhibition prints and planning the panels. In 1984, Daisy was given the Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique's excellence award for her services to photography (ESFIAP). She died in 1985.

JOHNSON, Terrance

Terry Johnson was born in 1924. He became interested in photography in 1953 after spending the night before the Coronation on the pavement. He gained his ARPS distinction in December 1965 and won many awards for his excellent monochrome prints, mostly printed on grades 4, 5 and 6 paper.

Terry was an active worker in WPS and after serving several years as chairman became president in 1994. He died in 1996 after suffering from myeloma for several years. After his death his widow donated a number of his prints to the Museum of London.

MAIN, Hugh

Hugh Main was an analytical chemist by profession who lectured on 'Nature Notes' and specialised in photographing insects as a hobby. He would visit odd places abroad in search of specimens and was particularly interested in spiders, which he carefully measured. He insisted on the prints reproducing the exact size. This task he frequently passed on to Billy Cook, who stated it was one of the most difficult jobs he had ever undertaken in photography.

The MALBY family

Three generations of the Malby family were closely involved with the society. Descended from a long line of artists, inventors, musicians, and entrepreneurs, Henry Thomas Malby, FRPS (1845-1928), founded the

firm Malby & Son, a photographic studio based at the family home in Chelmsford Road, South Woodford in 1890. Three years later, he was a founder member of Woodford Photographic Society. Henry's personal photography included rural buildings and landscapes, plus a series of images of life on the streets of London in the late 1890s/early 1900s, which are held at the Victoria & Albert Museum.

The London Gazette, 17 March 1925

NOTICE is hereby given, that the Partnership heretofore subsisting between us, the undersigned, Henry Thomas Malby and Eleanor Elizabeth Malby, carrying on business as Technical Photographers, at 19, Chelmsford-road, Woodford, Essex, under the style or firm of MALBY & SON, has been dissolved by mutual consent as and from the 7th day of August, 1924. All debts due and owing to or by the said late firm will be received and paid by the said Eleanor Elizabeth Malby, and that in future such business will be carried on by the said Eleanor Elizabeth Malby under the style or firm of Reginald A. Malby & Co. - Dated this 9th day of March, 1925.

H. T. MALBY.

ELEANOR E. MALBY.

Henry's son, Reginald Alfred Malby, FRHS (1882-1924), was also an early member of the society and soon became the youngest person to be awarded the FRPS. Later in charge of Malby & Son, Reginald established the business as the official photographers for the Royal Horticultural Society (RHS). As these photos were taken in the days before colour photography, the firm employed colourists who applied colour to the two-inch square monochrome 'magic lantern' images in staggering detail using a magnifying glass, special inks, and fine paintbrushes. The resulting images would have been projected to show to an audience, or used in an enlarger to create prints. In 1915, the firm received the RHS Medal for photographs of alpine plants. Reginald's own photographs were to be found illustrating books and articles on alpinism until well after the Second World War. The firm also did hand-colouring work for the photographs of Howard Carter's famous Tutankhamen excavation in 1922. These photographs were not by Carter himself, but by Harry Burton, the expedition photographer. Some of the images are on the website of the University of Oxford Griffith Institute, where the firm's colour work is described as 'somewhat imaginative and not very faithful'.

The Miniature Camera Magazine, August 1940

Photography in the Garden

In selecting "Photography in the Garden" as the title for the latest of their well-known exhibitions at Ilford Galleries, Holborn, Ilford, Ltd., have chosen a subject which provides unrivalled scope for demonstrating the remarkable qualities of their new Multigrade paper, and which, incidentally, supplies an adequate answer to the burning question of the moment, "What photographs can I take in war-time?"

There are altogether 40 enlargements, mostly 30 in. by 20 in., from negatives made on Ilford Soft Gradation Panchromatic plates, by R. Malby & Co. Ltd., Woodford. These cover a wealth of flower subjects, together with many examples from the kitchen garden and orchard. There are besides a number of general views.

Eleanor Elizabeth Malby (née Richardson), FRHS (1886-1956), Reginald's wife, also became an expert photographer, noted for her excellent work in photographing gardens. After Reginald's early death, Eleanor guided the renamed Reginald A Malby & Co to continued recognition and success. The RHS awards excellent exhibits of pictures, photographs, floral arrangements or floristry with the Grenfell range of medals and, in 1926, the awarded its gold Grenfell Medal to the company. In 1941, Eleanor received the RHS Veitch Memorial Medal for her photographic work on garden subjects. Today, the RHS Linley Library holds a collection of 300 coloured glass-plate photographs of English gardens between the wars, taken by Eleanor. She was also in charge of illustrations for the Alpine Garden Society *Bulletin*, a post she

held for many years. Eleanor was vice-president of Woodford Photographic Society for a time and allowed members to use the firm's studios and darkrooms for demonstrations and processing work.

In 1945, Henry Reginald T Malby (1920-1994), grandson of the founder, helped to restart the society after the Second World War.

MARRIAGE, Ernest (see *PCCGB Tailboard, February 2024* and <https://tapestry.org.uk/>)

'Rather more than 70 years ago on a Saturday afternoon at the end of the Michaelmas term my Schoolmaster sent me to a chemist shop in the town to get him a box of dry plates'. So began Ernest Marriage's account, written in the early 1950s, of how he became interested in photography.

Born into an Essex Quaker family of confectionery, jam and pickle-makers, Ernest Marriage (1866-1952) was not one of the seven founding members when Woodford Photographic Society the club was formed, but he joined shortly afterwards – on 16 November 1893, when living at 'Ellerby', George Lane, South Woodford. His last recorded attendance at WPS was in March 1927.

At the beginning of 1890, Ernest and his father (James) had bought out the partners of jam-making business Hogarth & Co, Aberdeen Works, 77-83 High Street, Stratford. The previous owners, the Maltby family sold the business as a going concern to the Marriages. James Marriage was probably the Managing Director and Ernest the Technical Director. The business continued under their ownership until it finally closed in the 1920s.

The family home during the period when Ernest and his three sisters (Ellen, 1865-1946; Caroline, 1869-1945; and Mary Elizabeth, 1874-1952) were young adults was 'Ellerby', in George Lane, South Woodford. When he married Belfast-born Margaret Sabina Brittain (1874-1952) in 1904, Ernest and his new wife moved to Loughton, renting a newly built house, 'Doneen', in Algers Road (now no 72). The couple later moved to 3 Park Villas, Loughton (and were there in 1926).

Ernest wrote or contributed to four books with family members: *Elementary Telephotography* (1901); *Pillow Lace* (1907, with wife Margaret and sister Elizabeth); *The Sculptures of Chartres Cathedral* (1907, with Margaret); and *Nine Lives* (1934, with sister Caroline). He also wrote many articles on photographic topics in *The Photographic Journal*, *Photograms of the Year*, and *The Amateur Photographer*. He used his expertise to photograph details of cathedrals for lectures and book illustrations, including guide books.

Ernest regularly exhibited his pictorial work. It is perhaps surprising to those of us who have had several cameras, that the varied body of general and very specialised photographs that Ernest produced for publication, exhibition and education over a period of more than 40 years were achieved with just four cameras; a 7½" x 5" plate camera, a Shew 5" x 4" reflex, a Newman & Guardia Special B, and a Reflex-Korelle.

In 1895, Ernest was awarded a medal for a set of 12 lantern slides of architectural subjects exhibited at the Royal Photographic Society (RPS) annual exhibition; WPS had 12 prints and 12 sets of slides accepted for this exhibition, as reported in *The Woodford Times*. By 1906, he was one of five members of WPS to have received the distinction of FRPS. By 1910, at the time of the society's 15th annual exhibition, Ernest was using the Autochrome process to produce colour slides. He showed at numerous London exhibitions in the most photographically active period of his life. He continued to exhibit at RPS exhibitions until 1917, with a brief return in 1937, with many selected for RPS exhibitions in Turin, Chicago and New York. Ernest was on the RPS council (the national committee, in effect) for many years between 1905 and 1938. He passed the interest on to his two sons (Stephen, 1909-1999; and Tony, 1912-2000), both of whom were members of the RPS.

Ernest was best known for his contribution to developing and proselytising telephotography, especially its architectural uses. Telephotography, especially applied to ecclesiastical architecture, was Ernest's first love photographically and was the branch for which he was best known in his time. It was also the subject of the only book which he wrote single-handed – *Elementary Telephotography* (1901). At the time, telephotography was a strange and fascinating field at which few tried their hand. It was technically

demanding and practitioners tended to have to make their own equipment, or at least adapt what was commercially available. In order to get the results he desired, Ernest invented his own telephoto lenses, which were mounted in cardboard tubes and fitted to his half-plate camera. They enabled him to win many awards. Subsequently a manufacturer of camera lenses took over his designs and produced them commercially. (Ernest had close contacts with Thomas Dallmeyer – was it perhaps Dallmeyer's optical firm with which he worked?).

Ernest also developed a particular interest in photomicrography – what we today might term macro photography. This was linked to his business in that he was very interested in examining the constituents of competitors' jams to identify ingredients they were using to bulk-up the main fruit (eg. adding cheap apple to more expensive strawberries), a practice he was proud not to adopt in his high-quality produce. Ernest was awarded an RPS medal in the scientific category for his photographs which revealed these adulterations of factory-made jams.

Ernest's photography and photographic experimentation continued as he moved into a career as a photographic lecturer and journalist for the agricultural press.

A selection of Ernest's photographs was donated to the RPS in 1965. Now at the Victoria & Albert Museum in London, nearly all the pictures are lantern slides, which he used to give lectures. The dominant theme is the use of telephotography to capture details of church architecture, mainly in France and Italy. This is the only significant collection of his work in existence, although examples can also be found in all his publications. There are also some of Ernest's photographs of Loughton in the 'Percy Thompson' collection at the London Metropolitan Archives – ref CLC/506/MS06909/004 (Percy Thompson was chairman of Loughton Urban District Council in the years after the First World War and a keen local historian.)

In the 2020s, Ernest's grandson discovered a handwritten note from the early 1950s describing his grandfather's 'Long Photographic Life', which provides a framework to shine a light on 40 years of photography from the 1890s onward.

NEWMARCH, Francis George

Francis George Newmarch was born in 1881 and joined the society in November 1900 when living at 'Fairlawn', Sylvan Road, Snaresbrook. In 1930, he became a Fellow of the RPS. He was an artist-explorer by nature and would go abroad with a few friends to wild and remote places, often sleeping rough. He carried a heavy load of a gross of quarter-plates and a reflex camera with 12 dark-slides. He was one of the first to take up cine work and his public showings were highly appreciated. He served as president for many years and on his retirement presented the society with the Newmarch Trophy. He died in 1954.

OLLEY, Norman George

Norman George Olley was born in 1937. In his youth he did National Service in the Royal Air Force and later worked for Barclays Bank and as a local government administrator. He was a member – and sometimes chairman – of the Leytonstone & Wanstead Camera Club from the 1970s through to its closure in 1999, in which year Norman joined Woodford Photographic. He served for three years as chairman of Woodford Photographic Society from 2007 until 2010, seeing the club successfully through a particularly difficult period and subsequently suggesting the club move its meetings to Wanstead House (where the Leytonstone & Wanstead Camera Club had met all those years ago). Norman was a keen and active photographer over many years, including spending some time as a wedding photographer. Norman died in 2024, at which time he was the club's then joint longest-serving member (1999-2024).

WASTELL, William Louis Francis

William Louis Francis Wastell, the son of a Baptist minister, was born in Hackney in 1863. By 1888, he was living in Woodford. He was a schoolmaster by profession, but he was a born humorist by nature. Every time he got up to speak there were roars of laughter.

He joined WPS on 15 March 1899 when living in Malmesbury Road, South Woodford. In 1905, he was awarded his FRPS. His last recorded attendance at WPS was on 14 November 1928.

As well as being a distinguished photographer, William was a violinist, an elocutionist, a painter, and a Justice of the Peace. He was Mayor of Wanstead & Woodford Borough Council during 1939-1940.

From 17 January 1903 to 18 January 1928, every week William Wastell wrote a humorous but instructive column entitled 'Piffle' in *The Amateur Photographer* under the *nom-de-plum* 'The Walrus'. His articles were full of good advice, but were also witty and humorous commentary on the events of the day running to 1,300 pages without a gap of a single week. They included sayings such as 'the simplest lens is a hole of air' and 'the chief use of hypo is to necessitate prolonged washing of plates and prints in order to assist the trade of the Water Board'. Wastell was sub-editor of *The Amateur Photographer* from 1923 to 1929.

William Wastell would play around with his Christian names, writing provocative letters under the name of William Francis and replying to them under the name of Francis Lowis. After 25 years of 'Piffle' he started a series in *The Amateur Photographer* entitled 'With the Beginners', which continued until 1941.

In the Golden Jubilee issue of *The Amateur Photographer* (20 June 1934), Consulting Editor R Child Bayley wrote:

Record in Journalism.

Wastell we are fortunate still to have with us, although an absurd misapprehension concerning the juvenility of seventy years or so has caused him to end the life of "The Walrus." The issue of January 17th, 1903, contained the first "Piffle" page bearing that signature, and that of January 18th, 1928, the last. For a humorous commentary on the events of the day, thirteen hundred pages without a gap of a single week is not only a record in photographic journalism, but I fancy in journalism generally.

Newer comers amongst our readers, who are not familiar with the writing of "The Walrus," may get a very fair impression of its character from the description of early hand cameras he has given on page 560 of this Jubilee Number. The coming-of-age of "Piffle" was celebrated by a dinner on January 14th, 1924, by which date its author was Assistant Editor.

The particular feature just mentioned was only a part of the work Wastell has done on the paper. Lessons for beginners, together with much for those that are of riper years, have been contributed by him since 1929; and of all the writers whose work has been printed in these pages, his name deserves to head the list.

In *The Amateur Photographer* of 20 December 1939, the editor, F J Mortimer, noted Wastell's appointment as Mayor of Wanstead and Woodford. He added:

It may come as a surprise to many of his vast circle of friends in the photographic world, to whom he is affectionately known as "The Walrus," that he has other activities outside photography, in which he is so eminent, as there is probably no other man in the photographic world who has so endeared himself to all with whom he has come into contact either personally, by correspondence or through the columns of the "A.P."

Yet we learn that he has been made Mayor of Wanstead and Woodford after 25 years of active participation in Local Government work, and apart from a large portion of his life being spent in educational matters, he is a Justice of the Peace and is one of the Land tax Commissioners for Essex, is on the South-West Essex Regional Town Planning Committee, has for many years been a member of the Waltham Joint Hospital Board, been Chairman of the Finance Committee, and also served for many years on the Jubilee Hospital Committee, having been Hon. Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee. In his spare time he is President of

the Woodford Operatic and Dramatic Society, Vice-President of South Woodford Cricket Club and Vice-President of Woodford Town F.C., in addition to being associated with many other public organisations!

But it is probably for his connection with photographic journalism that he is best known. His performance as the writer of the page of "Piffle" in this paper for 1,300 consecutive weeks (1903 to 1928) has constituted a record in journalism, and it was moreover a page that not only established him as a great humorist, but as a jester who amidst the tinkling of his bells uttered many words of wisdom and instruction. "Piffle" and "The Walrus" will always stand out as an achievement and a personality unique in photography.

At one time he was Assistant editor of the "A.P.", and fortunately we still retain his services as a regular contributor to these pages, where his sound common sense and knowledge of photography are of inestimable value to our readers. He is an Hon. Fellow and Past President of the Royal Photographic Society and has contributed to photographic publications all over the world, in addition to being a lecturer and exhibition judge. Long may he flourish!

Wastell's last contribution to *The Amateur Photographer* (1941) contained the words:

I want to make every beginner realise that on the day he begins his photography he becomes a member of one of the finest associations of people in existence. Few bonds draw men together with such democratic results as the one given by sharing a common interest. Duke and dustman toe the same line, not because they are made to do so but because they see no sense in doing otherwise.

He died in Woodford on 26 April 1941, aged 77. The following is his obituary, taken from *The Photographic Journal* [of the Royal Photographic Society] in June 1941:

Although all those who were acquainted with W. L. F. Wastell will have the feeling of a personal loss at the news of his death, there are thousands of others who have never met him to whom the loss will be almost as great, as he was the friendly guide and mentor of so many. He had been associated with the photographic world for over fifty years, and had been a member of the Royal Photographic Society for over forty years, having joined in 1900, and was admitted to the Fellowship in 1906. He was President of the Society 1922-23, and was made an Hon. Fellow at the termination of that period. He also served on the Council of the Society for a great number of years.

*It is, however, in another capacity that he was probably most widely known to photographers all over the world, and that was as a contributor to *The Amateur Photographer*. For twenty-five years (1903-1928) his famous humorous articles, entitled "Piffle," appeared over the signature of "The Walrus." This series of pages numbered 1,300, and they were contributed without the break of a single week - a record in journalism. They were brilliantly written, instinct with wit, humour, and keen observation, and, incidentally, contained much wisdom and good advice for the photographer.*

As "The Walrus" he was known throughout the photographic world, although the fact that "The Walrus" and W. L. F. W. were synonymous was not so well known at first. The coming-of-age of "Piffle" was celebrated by a change to "The Walrus" in January 1924 at which a great number of well-known people were present.

*He wrote many other photographic articles in various journals and books, and was a regular contributor to *The A. P.* up to the time of his death. His contributions were distinguished by their perfection of diction, and his extensive acquaintance with contemporary literature gave him a broad outlook in his treatment of every subject on which he wrote. He acted also on many occasions as a judge and critic, and always his opinions were sound, and contained friendly and helpful advice. He had a very complete knowledge of both the technical and pictorial sides of photography, and was able to write with authority on almost any phase. At one period he was*

Assistant Editor of The Amateur Photographer, and in his early days was a well-known lecturer. His "spoof" lectures, founded on his "Piffle" articles, with appropriate illustrations, will be well remembered.

He was a well-known and much-respected figure in his home town, Woodford, and served on the Woodford Urban District Council since 1915. When the town was made a Borough in 1937, he became its first alderman and deputy-mayor. In 1939, he became Mayor of Wanstead and Woodford - the first "War Mayor," at the age of 75. His Borough suffered severely during the air raids last autumn, and as Chief Municipal Officer he had many exacting and strenuous duties to perform, dealing with matters of devastation and evacuees, etc. This work was, needless to say, carried on with the greatest thoroughness, although he was handicapped throughout with an illness, which persisted and ultimately caused his death. He met every difficulty, however, with characteristic pluck and with a smile and a helping hand for all those who were in need.

He was made Mayor of Wanstead and Woodford after twenty-five years of active participation in Local Government work, and apart from a large portion of his life being spent in educational matters he was a Justice of the Peace and one of the Land Tax Commissioners for Essex. He was also on the South-West Essex Regional Town Planning Committee, and for many years a member of the Waltham Joint Hospital Board, and Chairman of the Finance Committee. He served for many years on the Jubilee Hospital Committee, having been in turn Hon. Treasurer and Chairman of the Finance Committee.

In his "spare time" he was actively connected with the Woodford Operatic and Dramatic Society, of which he was President, and was also Vice-President of the South Woodford Cricket Club, and Vice-President of the Woodford Town FC. He was also a violinist of distinct talent, a gifted elocutionist, and a painter of more than a little merit.

He was sustained in all he did by a youngness of heart and clearness of perception towards everything around him that enabled him to mix freely in any company, and he always enlivened it with his sense of humour. He could make a good speech in public, or in private, and was always worth listening to, as invariably he had something interesting to say, and never failed to brighten his remarks with shafts of wit and appropriate stories, of which he had an inexhaustible fund.

Several years ago he was involved in a serious motor accident from which he made a remarkable recovery, but from which he undoubtedly sustained a considerable shock.

So passes a much-loved figure, one who had no enemies but many friends, one who will be more missed than mere words can suggest, one who in his outlook on life and in his relations with others was the true embodiment of a kindly gentleman.

F. J. M.

WOOD, H T

This man is a bit of a mystery. Club records show that H T Wood joined Woodford Photographic Society in 1896, and his last recorded attendance was in November 1931. He was described as an artist by inclination and much respected and admired as a critic of pictorial photography. It was reported that during his 35 years of membership H T Wood never produced a photograph, but very rarely did the society have to call upon the services of an outside judge.

An earlier version of the club history stated that H T Wood was a member of a family of watchmakers in the City of London. I have found mention in *The Watchmaker & Jeweller, Silversmith & Optician* of 2 July 1888 of a Mr H T Wood, Secretary to the Executive Council of the British Section for the Paris Exhibition, writing from 2 Walbrook, in the City. A letter by the same man appeared in the 13 July 1888 issue of *The Photographic News* drawing the attention of photographers and makers of photographic apparatus to the arrangements being made for the British Section of the following year's Paris Exhibition. This H T Wood was Henry Trueman Wood (1845-1929), Secretary to the Society of Arts, 'a gentleman whose knowledge

of photography is not less than that possessed by his eminent predecessor, Mr Le Neve Foster' (*The Photographic News*, 27 January 1888). However, despite the photographic connection, he could not have been 'our' H T Wood, for Henry Trueman Wood died in 1929 and H T Wood was attending Woodford Photographic Society meetings until at least 1931.

The earlier history also said that H T Wood was the brother of the famous conductor and founder of the BBC Proms, Sir Henry Joseph Wood, but this could not have been so - Henry Joseph Wood was an only child, and searching the Ancestry website has thrown up no potential family links to any H T Wood ⁸.

⁸ (Sir) Henry Joseph Wood (1869-1944) was born in Oxford Street, London, the only child of Henry Joseph Wood (1829-1902) and his wife Martha (née Morris, c1829/1832-?). Wood senior had started in his family's pawn-broking business, but by the time of his son's birth he was trading as a jeweller, optician and engineering modeller, much sought-after for his model railway locomotives and steam engines.

Trophies and awards

Trophies previously awarded at the Annual Exhibition

Prints

NEWMARCH TROPHY

Awarded for the best pictorial print in the exhibition. Presented in 1953 by Francis George Newmarch, past president of the society.

GEORGE HALL TROPHY

Awarded for the best landscape or waterscape in the exhibition. Presented in 1969 by George Hall, past president of the society.

FOWKES CHALLENGE CUP

Awarded for the best set of four prints (colour or monochrome) in the exhibition, with regard being given to variety of subject matter. Presented in 1961 by Reg Fowkes, past president of the society.

PORTRAIT CUP

Awarded for the best portrait in the exhibition. Presented in 1968 by G R Tuckey.

CLUB TROPHY

Awarded for the best black and white print in the preliminary and intermediate sections. Introduced in 1964.

VINCE MANSI CUP

Awarded for the best colour print (home or trade processed) in the exhibition. Presented in 1991 by Mrs Mansi.

RECORD TROPHY

Awarded for the best record print in the exhibition. Introduced in 1973.

ANDERSON SHIELD

Awarded for the best animal print in the exhibition. Presented in 1993 by Marsden Anderson.

MARSDEN TROPHY

Awarded for the best wildlife study, print or slide in the exhibition. Presented in 1997 by Marsden Anderson.

FLORA SHIELD

Awarded for the best floral picture in the exhibition. Presented in 2000 by Derrick Holder.

Slides

ROBERTSON CUP

Awarded for the best colour slide in the exhibition. Presented in 1961 by R S Robertson.

DANE LANDSCAPE TROPHY

Awarded for the best landscape or seascape slide in the exhibition. Presented in 1993 by Margaret and Frank Dane.

Trophies previously awarded annually for achievement in the monthly competitions

CRITTALL CUP

Awarded for the most points scored in the trade-processed colour print section.

COLOUR PRINT CUP

Awarded for the most points scored in the home-processed colour print section.

SLIDE LEAGUE TROPHIES

Awarded for the most points scored in the slide leagues, one for each of the A, B and C sections. Presented in 1977 by Reg Fowkes.

L FOAKES CUP

Awarded for most points scored in any of the slide leagues. Presented in 1961 by L Foakes.

BLUE RIBBON AWARD

Certificate awarded for the most points scored in the advanced monochrome print section.

Certificates were also given for the most points in the trade-processed colour print section and the most points scored in the intermediate monochrome print section.

Current awards

Annual competition categories: Prints

Ark Build Man-Made World Trophy. Architecture, machinery - the majesty of buildings, industrial scenery, trains, cars, fountains, sculpture. Successful entries might be those that make best use of angles and perspective, lighting, picking out detail, or those that evoke a reaction of surprise, intrigue, sentiment or wonder. This award is named after Ark Build PLC, a Loughton-based company that delivers construction services across London and the South East from contemporary developments to period and listed properties. Ark Build provided sponsorship to WWPS when it was in financial difficulties around 2010.

George Hall Trophy. Landscape, waterscape, snowscape, skyscape, nightscape. The most successful entries will be those that evoke a reaction of surprise, intrigue, sentiment or wonder. George Hall was a past president of the society.

Anderson Trophy. The natural world - animals, including insects and the details of nature. The most successful entries will not just be technically proficient, they will have added elements such as movement, stories, or interaction. The details of nature can include macro photography and representation of natural elements in an imaginative way. Marsden Anderson was a past president of the society.

People and Stories Cup. Portraits, group scenes, reportage, pictures that tell a story. Emotions, moods, sport, movement, dance, music, the arts.

Newmarch Trophy. Creative imagination - the most successful entries will show artistic imagination, through the use of original concepts, abstract creations, and/or artistic manipulation through computer techniques. Francis Newmarch was a past president of the society.

Vince Mansi Cup. Overall best print. Awarded to the best picture, including all in other categories and more traditional shots. Vince Mansi was a former member of the society. This award was later re-named in honour of Norman Olley, a past president of the society.

Challenge Cup. Best Panel. Awarded for the best set or panel of four prints - the most successful entries will include those that together tell a story. This could include a set of prints of a sporting event or a simple chain of events. The sports setting on a camera might help here, as might an imagination to create a story using characters/friends or 'reportage'.

Annual competition categories: Projected images

Panel Award. An award for the best set or panel of four projected images. The most successful panels will include those that together tell a story. This could include a set of a sporting event or a simple chain of events. The sports setting on a camera might help here, as might an imagination to create a story using characters/friends or 'reportage'.

Chris Saunders Award. Overall best image. Awarded to the best picture, including all in other categories. Chris Saunders was a past member of the society.

Monthly club competition categories

Crittall Cup, for the most points during the year for colour prints.

St Christopher Trophy, for the most points during the year for monochrome prints.

Cup/Trophy, for the most points during the year for projected images.

Awards in honour of recently deceased members

George Mayne, for the best image in a monthly competition held in March each year.

Norman Olley, for the best print in the annual print competition.

Chris Saunders, for the best image in the annual projected image competition.

Discontinuation of trophies

An important decision made by the committee in 2017 was to discontinue presentation of trophies for the various club competitions. Several of the trophies had become broken or were dented and looked unappealing, and as the competitions had changed over the years, there were now several categories for which there was no trophy to present anyway. It was decided that, beginning in the 2018-2019 season, the winner of each competition would receive an attractively designed certificate to keep, but this never happened ...

Photographic distinctions

The RPS grants distinctions to members either on the basis of a portfolio of work, which is assessed by a panel of experts, or by exemption for qualifications already held. There are three levels of distinction:

- Licentiate (LRPS)
- Associateship (ARPS)
- Fellowship (FRPS)

The Photographic Alliance of Great Britain (PAGB) also awards distinctions to members of clubs affiliated to the PAGB as follows:

- Credit (CPAGB)
- Distinction (DPAGB)
- Master (MPAGB)

The Fédération Internationale de l'Art Photographique (FIAP) distinctions are awarded for artistic achievements and are based on the number of acceptances the candidate has obtained in international salons with FIAP patronage. They are:

- AFIAP (Artistic FIAP)
- EFIAP (Excellence FIAP)
- ESFIAP (Excellence Services Rendered FIAP)

Sources and archives

The major sources of information were the records of meetings, council and committee minutes, attendance books and membership books - a list is given below. Additional sources of information were newspaper cuttings, annual programmes and exhibition catalogues. Some of the financial papers and a few oddments of correspondence also survived and were consulted. In addition to these written sources, the memories of long-standing members also helped to fill in some of the gaps.

Records of meetings books

October 1893-October 1899
1899-1902 missing
December 1902-January 1910
March 1910-May 1921
1921-1922 missing
April 1922-March 1931
1931-1960 missing
1961-1972
1972-1975
1975-1983
1989-1993

Were weekly meetings minuted after 1993?

Many of these records have the subject of the meeting at the top of the relevant page.

Council minute books

1893-1905 missing
1905-1924 (This is a small book compiled by Francis Emler)
1924-1952 missing

Committee minutes

October 1952-September 1961
October 1961-January 1972
March 1972-October 1975
October 1975-October 1983
1984-1985 missing
1985-2024 assorted minutes, but incomplete

Attendance books

1893-1901
1901-1922 missing
1922-1935
1935-1945 missing
1945-1948
1948-1952
1952-1988 missing
1988-2018

The early attendance books have the subject of the meeting at the top of the relevant page.

The club's archives

Over the last 125 years, WWPS has accumulated quite a volume of source material. This ranges from committee and AGM minutes and accounts, old club programmes and exhibition catalogues, to genuinely historic photographs and negatives of Woodford and the surrounding area. The society has never been in a position to make this material readily available to researchers and others interested, so over the years much of it was deposited with what is now the London Borough of Redbridge Heritage Service (<https://www.redbridge.gov.uk/libraries/archives-and-history/>). Much use of this material was made by Gillian Hutchinson at the time of the 2002 updating of this history.

When Alan Simpson took on the role of archivist in 2014, he started to get to grips with that part of the club's archives not already deposited with Redbridge Heritage Service. While some of this material was still useful for the day-to-day running of the society, much of it was of more historic interest and required better storage and more public access than the society could offer. These particular items included:

- Minutes of committee meetings and AGMs (including accounts). These covered the period 1990 onwards, but with a gap in the 2000s. There were also a few odd minutes from the 1970s and 1980s.
- A run of club programmes for the period 1992-2012 (plus odd ones from 1970-1971, 1971-1972, and 1986-1987).
- Attendance books and paid-up subscriptions books for the period 1993-2013.
- Papers relating to the club's annual exhibition/competition from the late 1980s onwards (plus exhibition lists for 1969 and 1976).
- Fifty-seven original large photographic negatives - some glass - of Woodford scenes in the early 20th century. These were taken by William Wastell and are the negatives donated by Wastell's daughter, Ruby Ta Bois - see 'Surveys' section.
- Mounted photographic prints, packets of small unmounted prints, 35mm photographic negatives and paperwork for the 'Woodford into the 21st Century' millennium survey (which took place in 1999-2001).
- Mounted photographic prints of buildings around Redbridge taken by society members in 2003. These were used in a display at the Exchange shopping centre in Ilford around that time.

When sorting of this material is completed, it is the Society's intention to deposit it with Redbridge Heritage Service to join the earlier material already there.