



TIMES PAST

The Newsletter of Kennington History Society

Issue 20

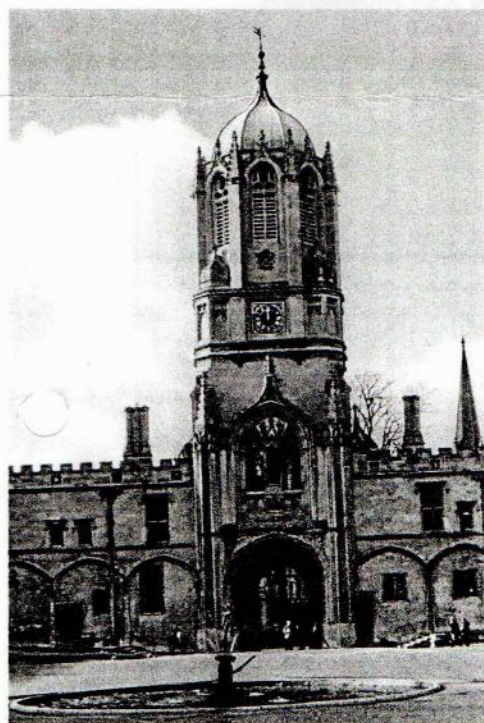
Winter 2011

STRONG SUPPORT MEANS SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS REMAIN UNCHANGED

As Kennington History Society completes its ninth year the Groups finances remain very sound. The large numbers attending Society meetings continue and for the seventh year running members enjoyed a summer coach trip to a historic location, this year to Chichester. Also in the summer of 2011 there was a local history walk around the remains of Oxford City's Medieval Wall. Due to this continuing strong support Subscriptions are pegged at last year's level.

Only problem is to decide where we go to on next year's summer visit!

BLAST FROM THE PAST



It is the 8th of April 1680 and Great Tom, following the bells final recasting is hung in Christopher Wren's newly completed Tom Tower at Christ Church. Originally called 'Mary' the bell had been taken from the tower

of Osney Abbey on its dissolution in 1545.

There is a Latin inscription on the seven ton bell, described as the loudest in all Oxford, which reads

'Great Thomas the door closer of Oxford renovated 8th April 1680 in the reign of Charles II, Deacon John, the Bishop of Oxford and sub Deacon give thanks to the knowledge of Henry Smith and the care and workmanship of Christopher Hodson'

From a local interest point of view Henry Smith, Canon of Christ Church, at that time also owned the Manor House and Kennington Estate.

FAMOUS LAST WORDS

'This is no time to make new enemies'

Voltaire - 30th May 1778

When asked by a priest to renounce Satan!

'My wallpaper and I are fighting a duel to the death one or the other of has to go'

Oscar Wilde - 30th November 1900

'How's this for a headline?' 'French Fries'

James French - 10th August 1966

Just before he was executed via The Electric Chair!

SUBSCRIPTIONS DUE

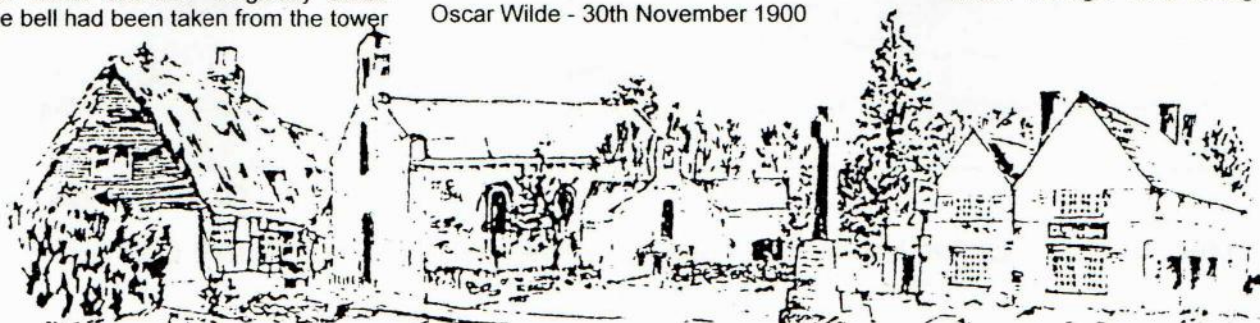
It's that time of year again Annual Subscriptions are due on the 1st January 2012. Subs can be paid, with the completed form provided either at meetings or to the Treasurer Doreen Horseman 9 Manor Grove Kennington Oxford OX1 5LU

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

16th January 2012
The Oxford Pageant 1907
- R Clarkson

20th February 2012
Annual General Meeting & Members' Evening

19th March 2012
'Christmas at Sulgrave Manor' :
Birthplace of George Washington's
Ancestors - a talk about the Traditions
and Feasting of the Season.
Visitor Manager Thea Young



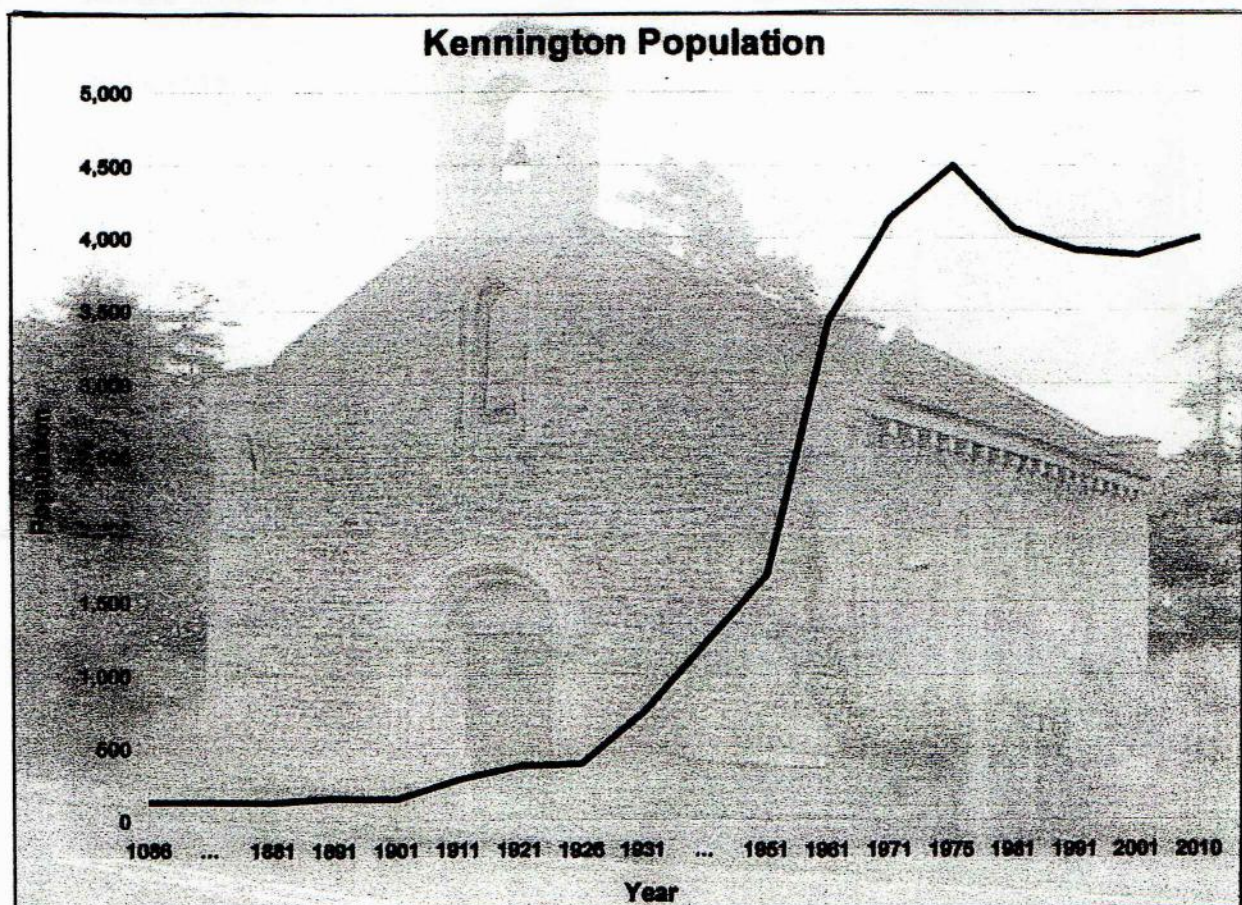
THE STORY OF KENNINGTON'S POPULATION GROWTH

This year, 2011, was designated by the government as one in which a National Census should be taken. These audits of the country's population have taken place every ten years for more than 200 years and the holding of this year's count in March prompted Paddy Landau, the editor of the Kennington Chronicle, to ask about the history of the growth the Village's population. This article is the result of this conversation and the research that followed.

The first and perhaps most famous survey of population in this country was the Domesday Book, which was commissioned in 1085 by William the Conqueror and completed in August 1086. It contained records for 13,418 settlements in the English counties south of the rivers Ribble and Tees (then the border with Scotland). Domesday recorded Kennington's population as between 120 and 130, based on numbers given for villans, bordars, cottars and slaves and it is interesting to note, as the 1881 Census figure was 129, the hamlet had not grown in almost 800 years.

The increase in population started at the end of the 19th Century with the Census figure for 1891 being 159, with 151 in 1901 and 281 in 1911. Due to the sale of the Kennington Estate in 1913 this increase gathered pace with the population of the Village doubling between 1921 (370) and 1931 (738). There was no National Census held in 1941, due to World War Two and when the next count was taken in 1951 the population had doubled again to 1676. The next 25 years saw the Village's most rapid growth, by 1961 the population had risen to 3432 with the figure of 4140 recorded ten years later in 1971. Rather surprisingly to some it is believed Kennington's population peaked in 1975 when it is estimated that the figure was 4500. Then began a steady decline in inhabitants, 4062 in 1981, 3914 in 1991 and 3881 in 2001. We must wait for the final figures from this year's Census to see if the trend of the last 25 years has continued.

How can the population be falling with available housing increasing?. In 1925 the average size of a household was 3.64, by 2001 it was 2.46, and is predicted to have fallen to 2.27 by 2011.



George Ross