

Obituary - Mary Stella Pache 1929-2014

By Susan Toms

Mary was born in Brixton and educated at La Retraite Convent, Clapham after which she worked at the Bank of England. She moved to Ruislip some time after her marriage and her first home was in Ruislip Gardens, where she was an active member of the Residents Association. It was thanks to Mary that the Association's minute books were deposited in our local history collection at Manor Farm House. Her last article for our *2012 Journal* described the trials and tribulations of the early residents on the estate.

Throughout her time with the Society she was an active member of the Research Group. She could always be relied upon to come up with an unusual topic or a different angle without any cajoling or 'arm twisting'. She relished doing the necessary reading and research. Even when she had to move to Erskine Hall she took some local history books with her in the hope that she could still do some research. For one of her articles 'Thrills and Swoons in Eastcote' in the *2002 Journal* she went to the British Library in an attempt to read the novels of Mrs Bennett Edwards, who lived at Haydon Hall. This was a major undertaking since they consisted of very wordy three-volume tomes. One work had to remain partly unread because some of the pages were uncut and Mary, although tempted, had to resist the urge to cut the pages herself.

Many of her articles reflected her love of English literature as in 'The Three Warrender Sisters' in the *2010 Journal*. This described the work of Alice Warrender who in 1919 founded the Hawthornden Prize for literature, which is still awarded. Her article on Kathleen Hoad's dancing school the *2005 Journal* resulted in the preservation of a fascinating set of photographs in our local history collection.

Some of these articles started life as a talk given at the meetings devoted to member's research. These were always delivered in an entertaining manner with a quiet sense of humour.

Mary also served on the committee for many years and during much of that time she acted as Minute Secretary. In fact she only relinquished this post in 2013. She was always more than willing to help at outside events; I have many memories of sharing a time of stewarding with her on the Society's stall at the Medfest or Eastcote House Gardens.

Mary will be remembered with great affection and gratitude by many members for her unfailing cheerfulness and all her hard work for the Society. She was never one 'to blow her own trumpet' but she will be sadly missed.