



The London Tea History Association was established at The Mercers Hall on the 15th of January 2015. Our aim is to record the history of the business of tea.

Welcome to Newsletter No. 4 of The London Tea History Association.

The Board of The London Tea History Association (TLTHA) send our best wishes and thoughts to our readers around the world during this challenging time of Covid – we hope you are all well and staying safe.

We are still commemorating, recording and preserving the history of the business of tea and lots has been happening.

Board Meeting at DCS Headquarters, Banbury



Photo was taken before Covid-hence no social distancing

The Board of The London Tea History Association, met at the DCS Headquarters, Banbury, hosted by Denys Shortt OBE. Our meetings are very lively and away from the business of the day to 'history of the business of tea'.

Notice the sculpture and the tea chest in the picture. Read on for the tea history. The DCS HQ is located at the same site as the old factory of The Northern Aluminium Company (part of Alcan) in Banbury which provided Aluminum for Spitfires. 4500 staff worked there. Alcan incidentally were the largest producers of aluminium foil for tea chests linings.

Denys commissioned a statue commemorating the Spitfire which was made by Cumbria based Artist Blacksmith Chris Brammall. The sculpture is built in steel, galvanized and finished with Chris' signature patination. The propellers are finished to a high polish.

Banbury was also the location of the world's largest tea warehousing complex. Banbury Tea Warehouses Limited ran



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the complex which was with a railway siding and roads for trucks and the most modern equipment of the day. In 1985 McGregor Cory Warehousing and Banbury Tea Warehouses announced the merging of their specialized commodity operations in the UK. Even today, Banbury Tea Warehouses is part of Walter Duncan and Goodricke (Camelia Group)

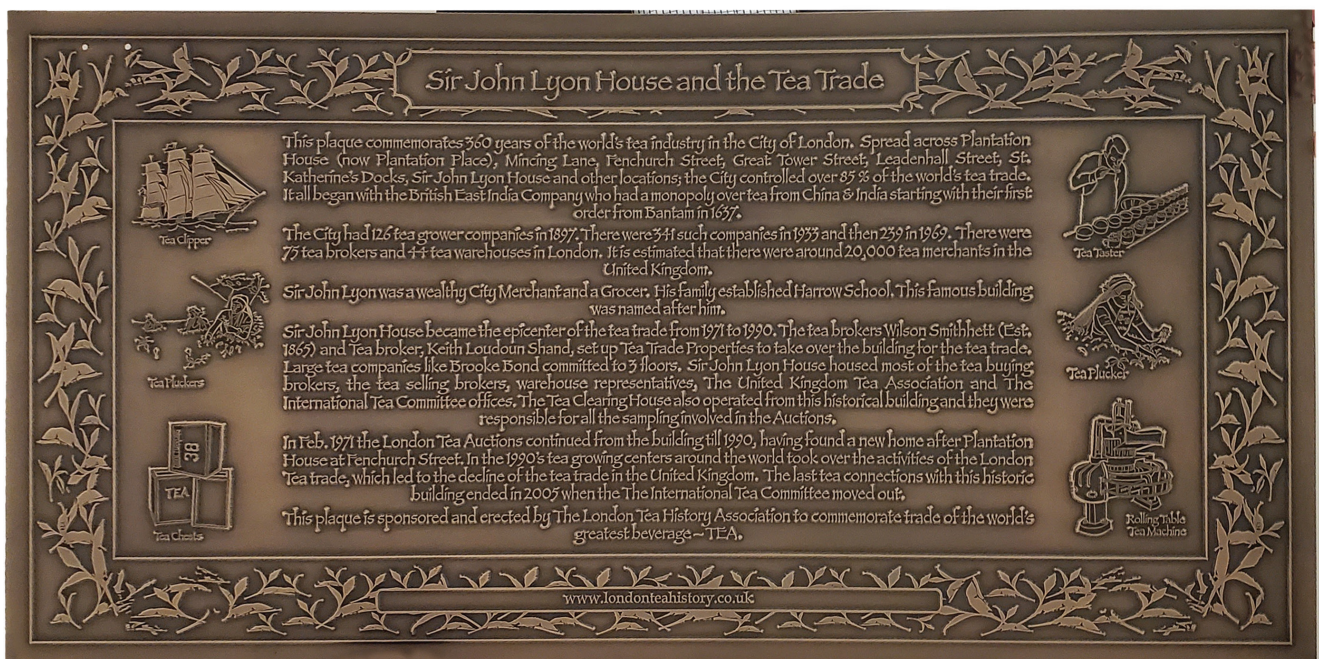
and the Co. exists on paper. Teas used to come from growing countries to Southampton, & then transferred to the Banbury warehouse. After the London Docks closed tea came into many ports: Bristol, Southampton, Hull, Liverpool and others. The Buyers/Blenders were spread out over the country, so the thinking was to put a large warehouse in the centre of England where it would be equally accessible to all. However, when the major shipping lines decided that Felixstowe (largest container port in the U.K.) would be the main port, as vessels could then go onto Antwerp, Rotterdam & Hamburg; the west coast lost out and there was no longer any need for a central warehouse. Banbury Warehouse then became a white goods depot, easy to deliver anywhere in the country.

Banbury also had a notable tea merchant by the name of Dossett which traded at 33-35 Parsons Street and 53 North Bar Street, Banbury for 86 years. It was founded by William George Dossett in 1887. He marketed a 'distinctive' form of tea which he claimed was "specially selected and scientifically blended for use with Banbury water". "We guarantee all our teas to be absolutely pure, correctly blended and not packed in paper for months before being delivered to the consumer". This was sold in considerable quantities in the area and then over the years it lapsed with competition from company shops like Co-Op, Lipton, The Home and Colonial, The Maypole Dairy and International Tea Company. Banbury is 'steeped in tea' so to say.

Plaque commemorating Sir John Lyon House

We are pleased to have installed the 3rd plaque at Sir John Lyon House, 8 High Timber St, Queenhithe in the City of London. The plaque tells you the story of this great tea centre. It's the 3rd of the 4 planned plaques for London. The other 2 are at St. Katharine Docks and The Tea Building at Shoreditch. Our efforts for the 4th plaque at Plantation House/ Place are on.

Sir John Lyon House which was a tea office building, is now a location for premium apartments. A 2,780 sq ft will set you back by £ 3,950,000 & the stamp duty is £ 372,750. Another fact - Sir John Lyon had no connection with Lyons Tea.



Tea & Covid: The Indian Tea Association (ITA) in the forefront to protect workers



The Indian Tea Association (ITA) which was Founded in 1881 has taken the lead in corporate social responsibility (CSR) towards their members work force and also enlightened women workers in Indian tea gardens on health & social issues. The ITA has 226 companies as members covering 474 tea estates that jointly produce 400 million kgs of crop. ITA Member estates export more than 50 million kgs of made tea and directly employ 700,000 workers.

The tea industry in North India was not spared for the tragedies of Covid 19. It struck us in March 2020, when the Govt. of India declared a lockdown. The ITA made special appeals to the Govt. to resume work due to loss of crop and the uncertainty of our work force. Most of the tea gardens resumed operations with 50% of workforce from the second week of April, 2020, following the Ministry of Home Affairs. Jobs were saved and so also crop that was being thrown away. SOP (Standard Operating Procedures) were implemented across the tea estates. Masks were distributed

among the workers of all the member gardens. Lessons and counseling on sanitation and preventative measures were made. 'Social Distancing' was looked into which is uncommon on tea estates where workers work close to each other.

In the broader picture the ITA are in the forefront in their programs on health and immunization, compulsory ante-natal checks during pregnancy, Mother and Child care, continuous medical guidance, UNICEF health programs, sound menstrual practices & nutrition. The ITA also tackle alcoholism issues, encourage Mothers Clubs, adolescent groups, tackling Indebtedness to money lenders, monitoring school attendance and drop puts, early marriage issues.

We are grateful to The Indian Tea Association (ITA) for their interest in The London Tea History Association and to Ms. Nayantara Palchoudhuri, the Vice - Chairperson, who incidentally has two degrees from London.

Tea sales during Covid

During the lockdown, there has been an explosion in sales of tea pots, loose teas and tea growers are happy with the auction prices up by 40 to 60 % in Assam and by 124 % at Coonoor (S. India) – we will leave it here for the industry publications.

The Tea History collection



Photo was taken before Covid-hence no social distancing

Our committee member Denys Shortt OBE has decided to create a tea collection at Banbury which will be for private viewing only.

Denys grew up in Assam where his father worked for Jorehaut Tea Company for 20 years and was Manager at Rungagora TE and Langharjan TE.

The idea of the Collection was prompted by a large donation of tea items by Committee member Brian Writer for safe keeping. They amounted to a whole van load of items! Denys decided that these items would be better preserved in a temperature-controlled environment and then they could also be displayed to visitors.

So, in July 2020 Denys set about designing a mezzanine floor at his offices to create a 1500 sq. ft. space. The build phase has been completed and the mezzanine floor is complete with modern lighting and air conditioning. The next phase is the furniture which has been ordered. There will be a kitchen and tea tasting counter, a large boardroom table to seat 10-12 people, and a series of storage cabinets for historical items. Denys' son Charles has suggested a digital archive so a website has been secured at www.teahistory.co.uk.

[teahistory.co.uk](http://www.teahistory.co.uk). There will be a large touch screen in the room for visitors to look at their areas of interest.

The collection comprises of some interesting items. We recently secured four of the large plaques that were on display at Plantation House at the London Tea Auctions. A huge thanks to Keith Writer at Taylors for sending them.

We also have an interesting array of books – including 5 Assam Directories, 5 copies of The Tea Shares from 1932 onwards, and many books on tea from Denys' large personal collection.

Recent donations from Alan Lane, Clive Haines and Committee members Mike Bunston OBE and Malcolm Ferris-lay who have added considerably to the collection. We pass our huge thanks to them.

The Collection will be open from January 2021.

Denys is keen to hear from tea people and from Tea businesses.

If you would like to make a donation or visit - please email Denys Shortt at

denys@dcsgroup.com

The Tea History Collection at the Kew Garden Archives



Photo was taken before Covid-hence no social distancing

The London Tea History Association are grateful for inviting us for a special viewing of the Tea History Collection at the Kew Garden Archives. Kew's Economic Botany Collection (as it is called) holds over 300 tea and tea-ware specimens, ranging in date from 1800 to present.

We were contacted by Ph.D. scholar Ms. Aurora Prehn and her mentor Prof. Mark Nesbitt for this special viewing. In view of the vastness of the collection this was done over several groups on cold January days. The objective of Kew's Economic Botany Collection was to explore the meaning and significance of the collection as a whole, by examining selected items and discussing details and stories found

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within and between objects. Kew also wanted suggestions by TLTHA for suggestions to build a 21st century tea and tea-ware collection.

Here are some images of the collection and Members of the TLTHA Board as well as our members. There was another pleasant surprise for our Member Andrew McMeekin. Andrew's Grand Father was a tea pioneer in Assam (India and Bangladesh) and a partner with James Finlay. This is in the 1860's. There was a lot of interaction with Kew in those days. James Finlay donated a bench to Kew Garden with a small plaque commemorating the centenary of McMeekin & Co. (1873-1973). The bench does not exist any longer, but the plaque was found in the archives. It was indeed a surprise for Andrew and obviously a great warm feeling.

The London Tea History Association are committed to work on a long-term relationship with Kew's Economic Botany Collection to assist them to catalogue and photograph their collection. This includes a sponsorship by our Board Member, Denys Shortt, Chairman DCS Group.

A special Note: Kew Gardens exists from 1759 though some put it as 1840. It's on the flight path of London Heathrow. An American visitor to Kew complained that there should have been better planning and the gardens located far from an airport. Well he was 'politely informed' by the staff at Kew that aviation commenced in 1903, which was 144 years later!



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150th Anniversary of the founding of Brooke Bond by Arthur Brooke 1869 – 2019: Contributed by David Harris– ex Brooke Bond U.K.



There was a celebration to commemorate the 150th Anniversary of Arthur Brooke the founder of Brooke Bond. Today it is part of Unilever. Their famous Red Label Tea is still sold in many parts of the world. David Harris tell us the story.

A very well written article has been contributed by David

Harris ex-Brooke Bonder and Member of The London Tea History Association, as well as Mark Dawson. This will be released as a separate newsletter.

Brooke bond family members at the anniversary luncheon October 2019. These include:

Victoria Arrowsmith-Brown, Matthew Arrowsmith-Brown , Laura Bailhache, Henrietta , Molinaro, Roger Brooke, Trevor Brooke ,Robin Brooke, Rollo Brooke, Nina Brooke, Andrew Milne, Lucy Milne, Felix Milne ,Trevor Winton, Amy Winton, Brooklyn Winton, Elijah Winton ,Nicola Jordan , Adam Goff, Ann Goff, Burçin Goff, Gerald Goff, Henry Goff, Susan Goff , Claudia Callingham, Margaret Manousos, Nick Manousos, Tim Manousos, Gerald's Branch, Juliet Abbott, Steven Longland, Catharine O'Neill, Mark Powell, Richard Brooke Powell, Michael Powell, Dominic Powell, Sylvia Roberts



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Dr Sharon Hall joins board of LTHA



The UKTIA's Chief Executive, Dr Sharon Hall, has accepted our invitation to join the board of the London Tea History Association. Dr Hall is the Chief Executive of the United Kingdom Tea and Infusions Association (UKTIA), a role she took on in May 2018. UKTIA works on behalf of the world's major tea producing countries, UK tea packers and allied UK companies, providing support and information of a technical, scientific and regulatory nature. Since joining UKTIA Dr Hall has

represented the UK tea industry at International conferences and at the FAO-Inter Governmental Group on Tea. She is a member of the International Editorial Review Board of the Journal for the Korean Tea Society and she sits on the UK Tea Trade Dinner Committee. She has extensive experience of high-level stakeholder engagement, strategic leadership, communications and issues management, utilized to both protect and enhance the reputation of the sector she is representing. As well as higher degrees in Plant Science, Dr Hall also has a Masters in Science Communication and she has delivered events and outreach initiatives to engage the public, stakeholders and policymakers in agricultural and horticultural science. We are delighted to welcome Dr Hall to our board and are sure that her input into achieving our aims will be invaluable.

Membership of the London Tea History Association.

The London Tea History Association invite all those connected with the tea trade and if you are interested in tea history, to join as Members.

Please get in touch with us as we seek your support in recording and preserving the history of the business of tea. Your membership will assist us in efforts to put up plaques commemorating tea history, buying of important archival material etc.

Our Membership categories will be as under:

- Individual membership is £25 per annum
- Corporate Membership is £100 per annum.

• Membership will begin on 1st January each year and will be payable by Bank standing order. If you live abroad, we will send a reminder each January.

Our bank details are : Account Name: The London Tea History Association . Bank: Barclays Bank Plc, Market Cross, Stratford upon Avon, Warwickshire CV37 6AP, United Kingdom Account Number: 93160408 . Swift Code : BARCGB22. IBAN: GB93 BARC 2048 0893 1604 08. Sort Code: 20 48 08

Kindly contact Ranit Bhuyan at teaplaqueinthecityoflondon@outlook.com

What's next for TLTHA?

Our committee is still very active and we have several things that we are working on:

Tea Walk - this will be undertaken by Committee member Alexandra Messervy. Her company The Culture Concierge will hold walks for people interested London's tea history. Her business already offers education around tea and the taking of afternoon tea.

The 4th Plaque - this is very much the next focus. Our aim is to get a plaque displayed at Plantation Place to commemorate The London Tea Auction at Plantation House – a building which no longer exists. This has been ongoing for 4 years now and the difficulty has been trying to find the owners of these large office blocks and then getting permission to put a plaque up. We will not give up!

Two tea collections - these are currently in storage in London and we are trying to reach these people to see if they want to include them at Banbury in The Tea History Collection.

Exhibition items - 2 years ago we helped with a tea exhibition at Dunstable and we are trying to reach the organizers for the artwork. We had a wonderful display there that could add to the Tea History Collection.

