

Newsletter

Southgate
District
Civic Trust



No. 206 October 2008

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COMING EVENTS



OPEN MEETING Saturday 18th October 2008 at 2.30pm.
At Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14

“An MPs View on Southgate, Past, Present and Future”

David will be drawing upon his family's archives of life in Southgate over a period of 70 years, reflecting upon his time as a local Councillor, and now MP representing the local area, outlining some of the challenges and opportunities facing Southgate and its district.

ALL WELCOME

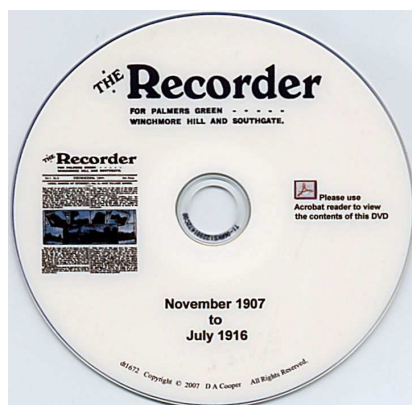
MEMBERS' ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Wednesday 19th
November 2008**

**at 12.00pm.
Southgate College
Restaurant**

(See note on page 2
for details)

**HISTORY GROUP
MEETING
Wednesday 5th November
2008 at 7.30pm.
Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, N21**



**“The Recorder for Palmers Green,
Winchmore Hill and Southgate
(Nov. 1907—July 1916)”**
by David Cooper

During the Recorder's short life of just under nine years, life in the old Borough of Southgate went through greater changes than the area had in probably several hundred years previously. David will be showing some of the articles, pictures and advertisements, to open a window into a Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Southgate very different from that we know now.

A number of copies of the first issue, printed from the data DVD, will be available at the talk.

Contributions to the January Newsletter should be sent by Friday 5th December 2008
to the Editors: Mary and Colin Barratt, 13 Beardow Grove, Avenue Road, Southgate, N14 4DG
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Notice to Newsletter Distributors:- We hope to deliver the next newsletter to distributors during week commencing 19th January 2009.

Southgate District Civic Trust ~ Established to conserve and enhance the environment in Southgate, New Southgate, Cockfosters, Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Hadley Wood.
(Registered as an amenity society with the Civic Trust).

Griff Rhys Jones is New National President

In June, Griff Rhys Jones became the new President of the Civic Trust, the national body to which the Southgate District Civic Trust is affiliated.

Their Chairman, Philip Kolvin, said "In Griff, we have a passionate, articulate advocate for our towns and cities whose architectural heritage, modern design and green space are hallmarks of our civilisation and integral to our national identity. For 50 years, the Civic Trust has celebrated and defended the public realm, and Griff is a natural figurehead for what we do and spokesperson for the quarter of a million people we represent."

Griff commented "All over Britain people who love and care about their towns and cities work to take responsibility for something that affects us all – our urban landscape. I salute them, respect them and am delighted to be made their President and to support the work of the Civic Trust."

LAMAS Local History Conference 2008

This year's conference is being held on Saturday 15th November, again using the City of London School for Girls, Barbican.

The title of the conference is "**London Recorded: by Word, Map and Camera**", and the lectures will cover this topic, in various ways. Tickets are available at £10. If you are interested in attending, please write for tickets to Local History Conference, 24 Orchard Close, Ruislip, Middx, HA4 7LS.

Our Trust will be manning a table at the conference.

Members' Annual Luncheon

Our annual luncheon has again been booked at Southgate College, for Wednesday 19th November, starting at 12 noon. The anticipated cost will be approximately £9. All members will be very welcome.

Anyone wishing to attend should ring Janet Lane on 020 8886 3303 to book a place.

Events at MoDA

A new exhibition is opening soon at MoDA, in Chase Side, Southgate, running from November 2008 to August 2009. It's called "**Designer Style: Home Decorating in the 1950s**"

In the years after the Second World War, Britain experienced a new sense of optimism about the future. Following the Festival of Britain, there was an emphasis on good design for all aspects of home furnishing. Manufacturers increasingly employed artists to design textiles and wallpapers, and used their names as a selling point. Consumers welcomed the new brighter colours and fresh approach to pattern.

This exhibition will draw on MoDA's own collections to show a wide range of wallpapers and textiles from the 1950s.

Identify the Location

We had no replies about the photo in the last edition, (Palmer's Green Carnival 1922), so it remains a mystery. If anyone has recognised it, but hasn't contacted us about it, please do so.

This time, we have a postcard, posted in 1941, but the photo is likely to be from the 1930s. It shows Winchmore Hill Road and, going by the shadows, looking eastwards. There is one car, and nothing else, but some of the houses are probably still there. If you can recognise where the picture is taken from, let us know.



Destruction of Trees by Network Rail

Those members who live near or use Winchmore Hill Station will be aware of the appalling destruction caused by Network Rail in the Conservation Area. All the trees on the railway bank are being cut down. Those who have experienced this devastation first hand know the shock that this overwhelming slaughter has created.

Network Rail appear to be above the law and are able to destroy trees and wild life habitats as they wish, (including listed trees and endangered species) while in addition causing distress and anger in local communities. If this is not happening now on a railway bank near you it soon will be.

It does not take much to realise how many healthy trees and varieties of wild life this programme will destroy across the UK. Network Rail, who allegedly have not done any maintenance on their trees for many years, of course claim that this is a 'health and safety' issue. Clearly dead or dying trees should be removed; the only logical conclusion to the destruction of strong healthy trees set well back from the track is that total clearance is the cheapest way to avoid expensive maintenance. The remaining stumps are poisoned so that there is no chance of them sprouting.



In the light of recent knowledge in the field of climate change and global warming this license to destroy must be reviewed. Clearly this will be a lengthy and difficult process, hopefully helped by the support of local MPs and councillors, so please write as soon as possible. Pressure from the local community is essential, and the contacts are listed below.

denise.thompson@networkrail.co.uk (Community Relations) 01904 383170 (direct line)

diane.booth@networkrail.co.uk (Head of Environment Policy) 0207 557 8499 (direct line)

Winchmore Hill elected representatives:

martin.prescott@redmail.co.uk (Councillor Martin Prescott, London Borough of Enfield)

david@davidburrowes.com (Local MP) 0207 219 5414, 1C Chaseville Parade, N21 1PG

Both the above elected representatives are challenging Network Rail but need a high volume of complaints in order to have sufficient weight behind their challenge.

Audrey Kirby

Town Planning Report

Since the AGM in May we have received 35 applications, many of which have come from Hadley Wood Conservation Area, where some of the proposed house extensions are at the rear and not particularly visible. There have been quite a number requiring approval for alteration or removal of trees in that area too. The applications for side extensions give the most concern because most of the properties in Hadley Wood are large to start with. A detached house in Crescent East wanted extensions to both sides of the existing house and there is always the danger of creating a 'terraced appearance' by building too close to the boundary.

The King Easton Site, The Green, N21, has been given a great deal of consideration recently, the latest application has been revised and this was due to a meeting arranged at the site by the Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group, Dennis Stacey, together with us (SDCT planning group representative), Dr Jephcot (Enfield Society) Christine White the Conservation Planning Officer LBE, and the Architect. We now have a scheme that is more in keeping with the surrounding area. The proposed shop and flats

above have now been moved back from the Station Road frontage, some roofs are now pitched and not flat, and a change in the materials on the elevations from timber to brick. There will be 8 flats, 5 terraced houses, 1 single dwelling and a retail unit, with access from Compton Road. Anyone wishing to see drawings of this scheme can contact me.

Staying on The Green, N21, residents will have seen the replacement of the missing benches by a very different style of bench. The one that we dedicated to Stan Smith should by now have the memorial plaque replaced on the bench opposite to Wades Hill where the bus stops. We are told that the council now has to conform to a Disability Discrimination Act and European set of rules with regard to benches. We cannot say that we like this style in a Conservation Area, and we were not shown any pictures, or given any choice, but I was told that Christine White, LBE Conservation Planning Officer, had given it a Conservation Area approval.

Highlands Village, N21. We attended and spoke at an Appeal that was held regarding Land off Pennington Drive, including open space. The council supported our argument against any further development in that Conservation Area. However the Inspector did not agree, and permission for 10 flats will now be granted. We will be keeping an eye on this as it proceeds.

There are not many days when town planning applications and drawings do not come through my letter-box, but it is only once a month that the Group meet to discuss them and it can sometimes be quite a full evening, but we have tea and it is sociable. It is also interesting and involving our areas, and we get a chance to air our concerns to Enfield council about what we think about developments.

As you can see with our involvement with the King Easton site the council value our opinions and they listen to them. Join us at my home in Winchmore Hill for meetings at 8pm, tel: 8364 3500.

Irene Stone, Group Leader

Tin Chapel in Winchmore Hill Road

In the July Newsletter we mentioned the Tin Chapel which was shown on the 1911 map of Southgate, (page 9), and asked whether anyone remembered it. I am pleased to say that Peter Hodge provided some information about it, plus a photo. The chapel was opened on 15th October 1905 as a mission church of St Paul's, Winchmore Hill. Known as St Thomas's, it served an outlying part of St Paul's parish. It closed after the last service on 28th April 1935, and the site was sold in the following year. Proceeds of the sale were used for the building of the new church of St Thomas, in Prince George Avenue, Oakwood. The tin chapel stood for some years after closure, and was used as a cleansing station during the Second World War.



The registers and records of the chapel survive, and are held at St Paul's, Winchmore Hill. Peter is the archivist, and would be pleased to show them to anyone interested (tel. 020 8360 6465). The photograph was taken outside the chapel, but the date is not known.

New River Walk

The New River, famously, is neither new nor a river. On Thursday September 4th, a group of walkers from the Trust discovered that the castle that towers over the reservoirs at Stoke Newington is not even a castle! It is a pumping station, built as just a part of the construction of the New River.

In 1609 Sir Hugh Myddleton carried out the inspirational task of making an artificial stream to carry the fresh spring water of Chadwell and Amwell in Hertfordshire to the burgeoning population of London.

In 1988 the New River was declared redundant, as by now, a new ring main was planned to draw domestic water from the aquifers (water-bearing permeable rock below the ground), and the New River Action Group was formed. They encouraged the then MWB to open as many river paths as possible to the public.

Our group met at Haringay station and quickly found a footpath. Within minutes we had reached Finsbury Park, where the stretch of river has an incredibly rural feel, peaceful and serene.

In the middle of this built up area a heron preened, unhurried, on the bank, and various species of ducks glided slowly along. The bank is lined with beautiful trees, some with silver leaves, which also add to the beauty.

Further on, a long pathway took us past black-berry bushes laden with fruit and we saw some of the larger trees had just been cut down and were being sawn into logs.

Although there were some signs of urban decline, with plastic bottles and cans having been thrown alongside the path and into the river, someone had shown their affection for the area, by carving a complete seat out of a tree trunk and, despite some debris amongst its leaves, a lovely water lily flowered beautifully and defiantly alongside the bank.



The sight of the first reservoir at Stoke Newington was most uplifting. It is large, and overlooked on the far bank by a beautiful church with a tall spire. Here, it seems, the cormorants have taken over, on everything floating they sat, wings wide open, taking in the sun.

The second reservoir has a completely different identity. It is now used for yachting, and a new marina has been built alongside. We commented that there was a reservoir for the human species, and one for the wildlife; a fair balance.

Inside the marina we discovered a cafe with a large terrace overlooking the water. We ordered teas, coffees and homemade cakes and spent a relaxing time reflecting that this peaceful spot was a world away from the busy life all around us.

The New River may be redundant so far as domestic water is concerned, but it will never be redundant whilst people need areas of natural beauty in over-built areas. Such a source of spiritual uplift is essential in our urban lives.

Our thanks as ever, go to Chris Royall for taking us on this most enjoyable walk, and we look forward to discovering another stretch of this lovely 'river' next year.

Janet Lane

HISTORY GROUP MEETINGS

2nd July – The Mystery of Middle Row by Richard Selby

I suspect that many of us who travel past Barnet Church, at the top of Barnet Hill, had no idea that the church once looked out onto a row of buildings running down the centre of the road, known as Middle Row, which ended in a point, splitting the roads to Hatfield and St Albans. Richard had gathered a lot of information, maps, engravings and photos of this almost forgotten feature, and gave us a fascinating and entertaining talk on the various buildings and people which made it up, and the other buildings around it. We heard about how the Row was used, and its eventual demise. He ended by showing us a video tour of the site, as it used to be, with the aid of a large 3D model he had made. This was an interesting and different approach to a local history subject.

Colin Barratt

3rd September – The Chase Farm Schools by Frank Bayford

The speaker had been closely associated with Chase Farm Hospital for many years, previously as Chief Pharmacist and more recently as a keeper of historic records. Drawing on these and on written reminiscences, he traced the history of the buildings before they became a hospital. For some 50 years, from 1886, they were the Chase Farm Schools, home to the pauper children of the Edmonton Union and its successors. Far from having to endure the harsh regimes of the workhouse, these children, the speaker claimed, were well cared for and received a liberal education which often exceeded in quality that provided by other local schools. The several pictures of rows of smiling and contented young faces he showed certainly lent support to his claim.

Peter Hodge