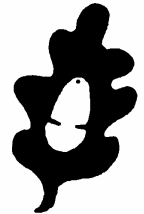


Southgate District Civic Trust

Newsletter
No. 214
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www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk

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COMING EVENTS



OPEN MEETING
Saturday 16th Oct. 2010
2.30pm

at Walker Lower Hall, Christ
Church Parish Centre,
7 The Green, Southgate, N14

**“The Extension of the
Railway from
Grange Park to Cuffley”**
by Dave Cockle

Hear about the history and stories
of the line and its stations.

ALL WELCOME

MEMBERS’ ANNUAL LUNCHEON

**Wednesday 17th
November 2010**

**at 12.00pm
Southgate College
Restaurant**

£10 each

**(Ring Janet Lane on
8886 3303 to book a
place)**

HISTORY GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 3rd Nov. 2010
7.30pm

Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, N21

**“Humour in the Royal
Palaces”**

by Major Peter Horsfall

(Peter spent 34 years in the
Coldstream Guards, retiring as a
Major Quartermaster, followed
by a number of years as Staff
Superintendent at the House of
Lords). **ALL WELCOME**



Contributions to the January newsletter should be sent by Friday 10th December 2010
to the Editors: Mary and Colin Barratt, 13 Beardow Grove, Avenue Road, Southgate, N14 4DG
Tel: 020 8882 2246 e-mail: colin_barratt@yahoo.co.uk

Notice to Newsletter Distributors:- We hope to deliver the next newsletter to distributors during week commencing 17th January 2011

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 **Civic Voice**).

NEWS FROM THE CIVIC VOICE

Civic Day

Civic Day is a new initiative when civic societies across England will invite people to celebrate their area and discover more about where they live. A diverse programme of events and activities showcasing civic society activity is being planned, focused on **Saturday June 25th 2011** as the first Civic Day.

Civic Day builds on a range of current initiatives, including the successful Civic Societies Week in Yorkshire and Humber.

A small group of volunteers led by Deputy Chair, Freddie Gick has been set up to develop and deliver Civic Day in 2011. Freddie is a leading member of Birmingham Civic Society and has pulled together a team of experienced volunteers from across the country from a variety of civic societies.

As more details become available, we will pass them on via the Newsletter, or you can contact the team directly at www.civicday.org.uk or 0151 708 9920.

Street Pride

Street Pride is Civic Voice's national campaign supporting local action to help rid our streets of unnecessary clutter. They are gathering evidence to support a national call for action to create more streets we can be proud of. This campaign is backed by English Heritage and CABA is the Commission for Architecture and the Built Environment, who advise on well-designed buildings, places and spaces.

Street Pride is focused on the four most widespread sources of street clutter: bollards; signs; posts (including lampposts and traffic lights) and guard rails. Street Pride builds on the excellent initiatives already undertaken by a number of civic societies.

More information on the Civic Voice and the latest campaigns can be found at www.civicvoice.org.uk or by calling 0151 708 9920.

Jane Maggs
(jane.maggs@btinternet.com)

OUR WEBSITE

Have you looked at our website yet? The address is www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk, and it's been developed further over the past couple of months, thanks to our Webmaster, Hugh Humphrey. As well as the history of the Trust, it has a number of pages which will be of interest to both members and non-members:

The **Membership** page shows the current subscription rates, and has links to a membership form for new members and the renewal form for existing ones, which can be printed off and sent to the Treasurer.

The **Activities Calendar** gives details of the History Group Meetings and Open Meetings coming up, plus any other events, such as the Annual Luncheon.

A **Publications for Sale** page lists the books we have published, (with brief details and a picture of their front covers), plus the postcard sets we sell. The price and postage is also given, and we have already sold a number of publications through the site. Hugh hopes to expand this to give more details about each of the publications.

The **Newsletters** page has past copies of our newsletter, currently going back for two years, and this is gradually being extended to earlier editions.

A **News** page has a sample of articles from the newsletters, of particular importance or interest.

The **Civic Voice website** page provides a link to the website of this new national body, of which we are a founder member.

On the **Contact Us** page we invite visitors or members to email us, and we have already had a number do this, for instance with a report on the state of the chestnut tree at Palmers Green Triangle, queries relating to membership, an invitation to talk on local radio about the Trust, and about local issues, (such as tree cutting on the railway and demolition on the Lakes Estate). The email address is: info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk.

As you can see, the website has evolved in its first few months, and we are grateful to Hugh for taking on this task, which is proving to have great benefits for the Trust.

Colin Barratt

PLANNING REPORT

Since the last report to the AGM in May (printed in the July edition of the newsletter), we have had four meetings. Altogether there were 24 applications, being a selection from all our areas, although five of them were from Wades Hill, N21. There are no large developments that we are involved with at this time, in any of our Conservation Areas.

We have always had applications for changing existing timber windows and doors to uPVC, and we are well aware of the reasons why this is popular with householders, or in a new build (extension) situation. However, Conservation Areas have to be dealt with under an Article 4 Direction and that means if existing windows and doors are made of timber then this is the material with which they have to be replaced. In spite of this we continually receive applications for uPVC to replace timber and often retrospectively when the owner has not made a legal planning application. Some small properties needing extra space often want extensions and submit for planning permission purpose-made conservatories that are made of uPVC. We prefer to insist that every conservatory on the rear of a property must be made of wood and brickwork and this applies to extensions that are not purpose-made.

If someone wishes to live in a house in a Conservation Area, then it is not acceptable to want to change the status quo by alteration of the fabric of the building and destroying the heritage of that area. There are other areas that could have been chosen where this would not be an issue, and the often used excuse of not knowing that it was a Conservation Area is not acceptable.

The Conservation Areas (CA's) that the Planning Group covers are Highlands CA; Hadley Wood CA; Southgate Green CA; Vicars Moor Lane CA, Winchmore Hill Green CA, and Southgate Circus CA. In addition I often get involved in areas outside of our own, and not always in CA's. It is important to the continuation of our group and the work that it does that we recruit members that live in and around those areas, who can make a contribution to our meetings. As much as professional people connected with building are always needed, it is the desire to make a contribution in the work that we do in these areas, that is the most important thing. It has been proven that our opinions are listened to and acted upon on many occasions. Meetings take place at 6, Eversley Mount, Winchmore Hill, N21, at 8.00pm monthly. Tel: 0208 364 3500.

Irene Stone
Chairman of Planning Group

HISTORY GROUP MEETING – JULY 2010 “The Quakers of Winchmore Hill” by Graham Dalling

Graham, as well as being the former Local History Officer for Enfield, has been a member of the Quaker Meeting House at Winchmore Hill since 1992. He started the talk by giving us a brief history of the Quaker movement.

In the 1600s, Winchmore Hill was a remote parish, heavily wooded, with a small population around the Green. The only churches were All Saints in Edmonton and the Weld Chapel in Southgate. After the Civil War, with the Church of England in Abeyance, Puritan churches developed, such as the Independents (Congregational), Presbyterians and Baptists. In 1652 the Quakers were started by George Fox in Lancashire. It was thought of as dangerously disruptive. It had no ministers, worshipped in silence, did not bear arms, and did not take oaths in court.

The movement rapidly spread south, but suffered much persecution. As Winchmore Hill was remote, away from the city, it was a good place to meet. In 1661 meetings were being held in the Winchmore Hill area and Edmonton. In 1688 the first Meeting House was built on the present site, with the rear of the site let for grazing. It was well supported during the 18th Century. Quakers gained a reputation for honesty, and were good at business, although some businesses and professions were barred from them, and they were not admitted to universities. Well known Quaker families in business around the country were Derby, Barclays, Lloyds, Frys, Cadburys, Rowntrees and Clarks (Shoes).

In 1790 the Meeting House here was rebuilt and the grazing land reclaimed for a burial ground. The small room is known as the school room, and the library was formerly the home of the resident caretaker.

Families who attended Winchmore Hill included:

Barclay (who lived in Quakers Walk), **Gray** (Quaker brewery), **Freame** (partners of Barclay)

Taylor (father of John Donnithorne), **Bevan** (owner of Trent Park and builder of Christchurch Cockfosters),

Forster (who carried out relief work in the potato famine and brought in the Education Act).

(continued overleaf)

Until the early 1800s it was the only place of worship in Winchmore Hill. Then other churches started to be built. The Meeting continued to be well supported, with suburban development and the Peace Movement bringing in more members. Quakers have never been frightened to take an unpopular view, and they had a number of Conscientious Objectors. In 1913 the Warden's house was built next to the Meeting House. There were burials here until 1980. There was still space, but the high water table resulted in it being closed.

Graham took us into the main meeting room, and explained how it was set up and used. There is evidence that there was once a balcony. We moved out into the garden and burial ground and were shown gravestones of notable members of families who were buried there. We had the chance to explore the garden, and look at the building from the outside.

This talk and tour gave us an insight into the history of the Quaker movement, and into this building and grounds, which many of us pass regularly, but few enter, except for our History Group meetings.

Colin Barratt

Graham talking to the Group in the Quaker burial ground



MEMBERSHIP RENEWAL

There are still a number of members who have not renewed their subscription. If you are one of these, you will find a renewal form in your newsletter, or as a separate attachment, if receiving it by email. If you intend to renew, please do so, using this form. If you are not going to renew, we will be sorry to lose you, but please let Alastair know.

RADIO ENFIELD BROADCAST TO THE BOROUGH

(16 - 19 July 2010)

This year marks 40 years of Radio Enfield, which broadcasts to patients in Chase Farm Hospital. To celebrate this, the station was granted a licence to broadcast to the Borough of Enfield and the immediately surrounding area for four days from Friday 16th to Monday 19th July. They contacted a number of local voluntary organisations, including the Trust, inviting them to supply a representative to be interviewed on air about their organisation. Our former Chairman, Geoff Bone, went along to the studio in Chase Farm on the Friday, on our behalf.

As I work outside the area, I listened to Geoff's interview via the Radio Enfield website. He did a good job of explaining about the Trust. This is a summary of the main topics discussed:

Geoff explained who we are, our purposes, links to the Civic Trust (originally) – now Civic Voice, and our connection to LAMAS, other Local History Societies and Residents' Associations. He said how the Trust started in 1962 to try to save the Georgian Cottages on Southgate Green. We were thought of originally as busybodies, but attitudes changed.

An important activity of the Trust is the Planning Group, who meet regularly and are given copies of applications, and pass on comments to the Council, who take notice of the opinions. With planning applications it's important to act early on in the process.

Current projects are Broomfield House, the North Circular Road, Trent Park Campus and Winchmore Hill Green.

We are responsible for a number of Conservation Areas, which are not necessarily selected for their outstanding architecture, but have an ambience.

There has been concern recently about Network Rail cutting down trees along the railway banks in Winchmore Hill, which concern residents.

Geoff was asked how people can contact or find out about the Trust. He said we have a website, which they can look at, either to join or contact us with concerns, by email or phone.

Back at home, I did try to tune in on the 87.7FM frequency used, but was unable to get the station at all. Later I was told that the broadcasts had been affected by a pirate station, transmitting on a similar frequency, so I don't know how many people heard the station around the Borough. If you heard it, or Geoff's interview, let us know.

Colin Barratt

CAROLA HICKS

One of the contributors to *Oakleaves 4*, the eminent art historian Carola Hicks, died in June this year aged 68. Carola was the daughter of actors Margaret Gibson and David Brown, and very kindly agreed to write an article recalling her time with her mother at the Intimate Theatre after I managed to trace her in 2007 while researching Margaret Gibson's career for my own article in *Oakleaves*.

The result was *My Mother (and me) at the Intimate*, a delightful account of Carola accompanying her mother on her regular journeys across London from Teddington to Palmers Green and performing with her in *Ring for Catty* (1965) and *Cinderella* (1965-6), full of evocative detail about life front of house and backstage and humorous anecdotes about the personalities involved. Despite her own busy work schedule Carola was most helpful and supportive in responding to queries and supplying photographs for use in *Oakleaves*.

I was fortunate in meeting Carola twice with Geoff Bowden, author of the history of the theatre, *Intimate Memories*; on the second occasion, in July 2008, we looked at the original canvas of Dame Ethel Walker's portrait of Flora Robson in store at the Royal Academy, to be reproduced later in *Oakleaves 4*, gaining Carola's (positive) professional assessment of the painting. Later the same day *Oakleaves* editor Peter Hodge and I attended Carola's lecture 'The King's Glass' (based on her book of that title) at St Ethelburga's Church in the City.

My successful search for Carola was referred to in the article about the publication of *Oakleaves 4* in the *Enfield Gazette* of 3rd December 2009 and full obituaries appeared in *The Times* (29th June) and *The Guardian* (28th July). At the time of her death Carola had almost completed her last book, *Girl in a Green Gown*, about the history of the Arnolfini Portrait in the National Gallery.

Richard Purver

PLAQUE FOR DAME FLORA ROBSON UNVEILED



**From left to right:
Peter Wurr, Elizabeth Tomalin,
Richard Purver, Deborah
Ssekyejwe and Megha Shah**

The unveiling ceremony for the blue plaque for Dame Flora Robson, sponsored by Southgate District Civic Trust and Palmers Green High School, took place on the sunny afternoon of 25th April 2010 at The Lawe, 65 The Mall in Southgate.

The Robsons came to 76 Devonshire Road in Palmers Green in 1907 from the north-east, when Flora was nearly five, and moved to The Lawe, (probably named after the historic headland above the harbour on the Tyne in their home town of South Shields), on 31st August 1910.

Up to 50 people gathered in the front garden, including members of the family of the owner of the house, Peter Wurr, SDCT supporters, and friends from the United Reformed Church in Fox Lane, where one of the foundation stones was laid by Flora Robson's mother Eliza in 1913.

Peter Wurr greeted the guests and explained that he was only the third owner, having purchased the house in 1968 from the man who bought it from Flora's father David Mather Robson in 1921. Richard Purver then introduced Christine Edmundson, head teacher of Palmers Green High School, and three Year 10 pupils studying drama, Megha Shah, Deborah Ssekyejwe and Elisabeth Tomalin, who gave a short presentation about Flora Robson's time at the school, where she started at the age of 13, and her appreciation of the education she received there under Miss Hum and her colleagues.

Richard spoke about Flora's life at the house with her parents, sisters and brothers, referring to her attendance at Miss Watson's school at Southgate Green before she went on to Palmers Green High School and then the Academy of Dramatic Art in 1919, and related various anecdotes about events affecting the family during the First World War.

Deborah, Elisabeth and Megha then released the curtain covering the plaque, (helpfully fixed to the wall two days before by the school caretaker and his deputy), to general applause, (with assistance from Peter when the cord got a little stuck!), and the guests were very kindly invited into the back garden for drinks by Peter and his family.

The event was trailed on the Enfield Council website (courtesy of press officer Suzanne Lindsay), and covered by the Enfield Independent on 21.4.10 and 28.4.10, the This Is Local London website, articles in the Shields Gazette editions of 16.4.10 and 6.5.10, and the Palmers Green High School website (where photos of the event can be seen).

Flora Robson is the second pupil from her age group at Palmers Green High School to receive such an honour, following the English Heritage blue plaque for Stevie Smith, which replaced the Enfield Council plaque, at 1 Avondale Road in September 2005, perhaps creating some kind of record.

The plaque for Flora Robson joins the two previously arranged by Southgate District Civic Trust, for Leigh Hunt in High Street, Southgate and Henrietta Cresswell at 16 Station Road, Winchmore Hill.

Richard Purver

HISTORY GROUP MEETING – SEPT. 2010

“The History of Trent Park” by Keith Hammond

The speaker had worked at Trent Park for many years, and gave us an interesting and informative history of the park, the house, its owners, and the features in the house and grounds.

The oldest evidence of habitation in the park is around Camlet Moat, which is now an overgrown area, but excavations during the ownership of the Sassoon family found wooden structures from Norman times.

The name of the estate originated from the first recorded owner, Sir Richard Jebb, who had spent time in Trento, Italy. A subsequent owner added two wings to the house in the early 1800s before it was acquired by the Bevan family, who lived there for 65 years, followed by the Sassoon family for another 41 years, up to 1939. The final private owner was Hannah Gubbay, who lived there until 1951. During WW2 the estate was used as a POW camp, and in 1951, it was taken over by Middlesex County Council, who set up a teacher training college. In 1968 the estate was split between a college and country park. The college became part of Middlesex Polytechnic in 1983, then as Middlesex University from 1992 to date.

Jebb had built the first lodge and had landscaped the grounds, and later the terrace was built. Sassoon reused artefacts from other London houses, and interiors were decorated by Whistler. We were shown views of the many impressive rooms in the 1930s and how they looked now. Then the Swimming Pool, Orangery, Lily Pond, Long Garden and Wisteria Walk. Many of the statues were bought by Sassoon from Stowe, and relocated around the estate. He bought the monument (obelisk) from Wrest Park, and created sight lines to it from the house. The famous daffodils were also introduced by Sassoon. He had invited Prime Minister Stanley Baldwin to visit, and discovering Baldwin's like of daffodils, Sassoon had 5 million bulbs planted in front of the house!

At the beginning of WW2 the house was used for low ranking German POW's. Then from 1942 it was changed to high ranking officers. There was a network of listening devices installed, and valuable information was obtained, such as details about the V1 and V2 flying bombs.

Work on the park is ongoing, with tree planting and memorial benches. However, the future of Trent Park is uncertain. The University is closing the Cat Hill campus, and are due to move out of Trent Park in 2014/15 and relocate in Hendon. The National Trust may be interested in purchasing the estate, but this depends on whether funds are available.

Colin Barratt

ENFIELD'S LOST TREASURES

Back in January it was announced that, thanks to a grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund, a number of large scale mosaic panels would be created, mainly by young people, depicting some of Enfield's lost and forgotten architectural gems. This was being led by Edmonton charity Art Start.

The co-ordinator, Debbie Dean, said that the purpose of this was to enable young people to learn about their heritage and to do this through an accessible art medium. It would teach them practical skills and develop a sense of pride in their local communities. All the mosaics have now been completed, and are being installed as close to the location of the original buildings as possible.

One of these lost buildings was in our area, the Coronation Cinema, in New Southgate. The block of flats now occupying the site of the former cinema was originally going to be used for mounting the work, but this block may be demolished as part of the Ladderswood Estate redevelopment, so the mosaic has now been located on the side of flats at the top of the remnant of the High Road, near to Friern Barnet Road.

The design of the mosaic was based on a photo taken shortly before the cinema was demolished in 1970. Although slightly simplified, the result retains most of the design features and colours of the original building, and has been carefully and skilfully constructed. It is a fitting reminder of this once loved venue. However, I suspect that few of the current residents knew the building, so will there be a sense of pride in it? I hope so. Will it end up being trashed and graffiti covered? I hope not.

A brief description and dates are shown on a brass plaque alongside the mosaic, but a commemorative booklet and DVD of the project are being produced, giving more historical details of the buildings, plus memories of people who used them. This will go to all those who took part. Copies will also be held at Enfield Local Studies Unit.

(photos overleaf)



Original Coronation Cinema in 1970



Mosaic of Coronation

Colin Barratt

TREES ON THE RAILWAY LINE IN WINCHMORE HILL

The removal of the trees along the embankment has and continues to be a major concern to local residents and anyone interested in the environment, ecology and management of wildlife. The embankments create 'wildlife corridors' which can be vital to the viability of some species. Clearly it is vital that these links are maintained and properly managed.

The concerns of both the Southgate District Civic Trust and other residents have been raised with David Burrowes, our local MP. I have received the following information on the actions he has taken in this matter:

I have along with local residents received some clarification from Network Rail about the works programme. In short, the works are not purely maintenance as was the case on previous occasions. The primary purpose is to stabilise the banks which as a consequence involved the removal of trees etc. Network Rail have indicated that they will look to replant where possible. However this does not exonerate Network Rail for their continued lack of proper consultation with me and residents despite previous promises. I have continued to meet on site and correspond with local residents affected by the works. I raised the issue with the Transport Minister who has confirmed the Government's commitment to make Network Rail more accountable to customers. We will have to see how this will be implemented to improve Network Rail's responsiveness and accountability to local people and the environment.

I met in Parliament last week with the WAGN group which involves all the key stakeholders responsible for the line. I raised the issue of the destruction of trees etc along the embankment with both Network Rail and the Department of Transport.

If you would like further information on this matter please contact Audrey Kirby.

Jane Maggs

RECYCLING OUR WASTE

Whether you love them or loathe them, wheelie bins are here to stay. They may look an eyesore, lined up like sentries outside our front gardens or doors, but they have allowed waste to be recycled in an organised way. Colour coded lids are used for separating the waste. Blue lids are for general recycling, and as well as paper, cardboard, glass and cans, Enfield Council has now added Tetrapak drinks cartons, plastic packaging and aerosol cans. Green lids are for garden and food waste, which are turned into compost. (You can also apply for a free small caddy and liner bags, for kitchen waste, which can be placed directly into the garden/food bin). Anything else which cannot be recycled goes into the grey lidded bin for landfill.

The advantage of these bins is that they keep smells locked in and animals, such as foxes and rats, out. They keep the rubbish securely stored and reduce litter on our streets.

It's claimed that wheelie bins help to reduce street litter by up to 50%.
In the UK 30–40% of food is never eaten. A quarter of the rubbish we throw away is food.
One recycled tin can save enough energy to power a television for three hours.
So keep recycling!

Our Stan's Link with Rhiwbina Civic Society, South Wales

Newsletter of Rhiwbina Civic society
affiliated to the Civic Trust for Wales

Vol.13 No.3 September 2010

DERI



Forthcoming Meetings

N.B. Due to unforeseen circumstances, the lecture planned for 25th September has been temporarily postponed.

Tuesday 19th October

'CRIME WRITING'

Speaker: **Dr. Bernard Knight**

Tuesday 16th November

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

December - No Meeting

All meetings are at Canolfan Beulah starting at 7.30 pm.



London based, Society member Stanley Rondeau will be visiting Rhiwbina from 18th - 20th October. Stanley was evacuated from London to Rhiwbina in 1941 and attended the Junior School. Stanley is planning to attend our next meeting; he is hoping to find some class photographs and more memories from that period. If any member can help with any leads or contacts, please contact us.

LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE 2010

After several years at the City of London School for Girls, this year's conference is returning to the Museum of London, using the Weston Theatre, on Saturday 27th November. The title is "LONDON UNDER ATTACK – Wars and Insurrections". Tickets are £10, and can be ordered online, from the LAMAS website, or by post from Pat Clarke, 22 Malpas Drive, Pinner, Middx, HA5 1DQ.