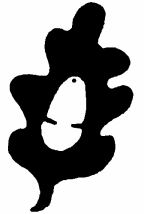


Southgate District Civic Trust

Newsletter
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www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk

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COMING EVENTS



OPEN MEETING

Saturday 12th Oct. 2013, 2.30pm
at Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre,
7 The Green, Southgate, N14

“The Work of Thames21”

by Aimee Felus (Project Manager)

Thames21 is one of the country's leading waterway charities, working with communities across Greater London to improve our rivers, canals, ponds and lakes for people and wildlife.

As part of the **Love the Lea** campaign, Aimee is managing Thames21's major project in Enfield to improve Salmons Brook (the Salmons Brook - Healthy River Challenge). The project includes Grovelands Park, Boxers Lake and Houndsden Stream.

ALL WELCOME

MEMBERS' ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Wed. 13th Nov. 2013
at 12.00pm Southgate
College Restaurant
approx. £10 each
(Ring Janet Lane on 8886
3303 to book a place)

HISTORY GROUP MEETING

Tuesday 12th Nov.
2013, 8.00pm
Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, N21

**“St Paul's Church,
Winchmore Hill”**
by Peter Hodge



Peter will talk about the history of this local church, which was built in 1828, and he will also take us inside it for a tour, as it is just across the road from the Meeting House.

Date for your diary: Sat. 16th November

LAMAS Local History Conference (see page 8)

Contributions to the January newsletter should be sent by Friday 6th December 2013

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 13th January 2014.

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**).

The High Street

Portas slams lack of support



Civic Voice attended a Select Committee meeting to hear shopping tsar Mary Portas blast the Government over her bid to revive flagging high streets. The retail guru said ministers were slow to react to her recommendations and hadn't given her support in the face of a backlash. She also told MPs that saving the nation's high streets was "not one of David Cameron's priorities".

You can watch Mary Portas appearing at the Government Select Committee on the Parliament website (<http://www.parliamentlive.tv>).

Bill Grimsey Report - the 'Vanishing High Street'



Bill Grimsey produced this report as he felt that Mary Portas had failed to highlight to Government the dramatic structural changes impacting the retail industry through the convergence of changing consumer behaviour driven by technology and that brought about by the prevailing economic conditions. There are 31 recommendations from evidence based research, including forcing local councils to draw up 20-year visions, freezing of car parking charges, forcing shopping centre developers to provide affordable shop or market stall space for local traders.

In its response Civic Voice said: "We welcome any report that shines light on the importance of town centres. Town centres should encompass a complete community solution and we have long advocated this".

You can read both the report and the Civic Voice response on the Civic Voice website.

Centre for Cities report – 'Beyond the High Street'



Many policy documents, column inches and even TV shows have been dedicated to the woes of the High Street. All too often, they portray retail as an isolated activity. This report suggests the fortunes of the High Street are dependent on the fortunes of the wider city centre in which they are based. The debate must be about jobs and city centres, not just about shops and High Streets.

The report can be found on the Centre for Cities website (www.centreforcities.org).

Planning Changes

Government publishes 'test' planning practice guidance



The Planning Minister Nick Boles has launched new national online planning practice guidance 'for public testing and comment'. Comments can be made until 9 October; the finalised version will accompany the National Planning Policy Framework (NPPF) and 'go live' later in the autumn.

No current planning guidance and advice is being cancelled for the moment – none will be replaced until the final online guidance is in place.

The new online draft is certainly shorter than the 7,000 pages or so of current guidance and advice that are in use, although it still runs to hundreds of pages, covering a vast range of issues impacting on local plan policy and decision-making processes. If you have any comments please pass them to the Civic Voice Planning Panel info@civicvoice.org.uk.

Greater flexibilities for change of use - Consultation

The Government has published another permitted development rights (PDR) consultation on further changes of use - comments by mid-October. Civic Voice will be opposing these changes. If introduced, the new PDRs would come into force in April next year; they include proposals for changes of use to residential from A1 shops and A2 uses of less than 150 sq. m. Also proposed are new PDRs to change from retail to banks and building societies, from commercial uses to day care nurseries and existing buildings used for agricultural purposes of up to 150 square metres to change to residential use, or of up to 500 square metres to be used as a new state-funded school or a nursery providing childcare.

Civic Societies do not believe the voice of the community should be removed on an issue as sensitive as the high street. This consultation is another example of the Government regarding the planning system as an obstacle to growth. As such, it was pleasing to hear Clive Betts MP and the Chair of the influential DCLG Select Committee say "our committee can find no evidence of planning acting as obstacle to growth".

The consultation can be found on the Government website (<https://www.gov.uk/government/consultations/greater-flexibilities-for-change-of-use>). Any comments on this consultation can be sent to Civic Voice Planning Panel at info@civicvoice.org.uk.

Jane Maggs



Civic Voice has moved

On September 1st, Civic Voice moved to their new office. Contact details are:

Civic Voice, 60 Duke Street, Liverpool, L1 5AA.

The main telephone number stays as 0151 708 9920.

Or you can contact them on info@civicvoice.org.uk.

Website remains www.civicvoice.org.uk

THE LOBBYING BILL AND THE VOLUNTARY SECTOR

On 3rd September 2013, the Transparency of Lobbying, Non-Party Campaigning and Trade Union Administration Bill had its second reading in the House of Commons. This bill contains proposals to make it a criminal offence to spend more than £390,000 on campaigns that affect European, national and local elections. However, you may also be aware from media reports, that this bill has caused concern to civil societies and charities.

The National Council for Voluntary Organisations (NCVO) is leading the sector response against this bill. A charity lawyer has warned that it is not only a threat to large charities, but also to coalition and grassroots local activity, as each entity, no matter how small, will have to report its entire spend on campaigning in the run-up to a general election if it is considered to be for 'election purposes'.

On the day of the second reading, the NCVO organised a drop in session to which all MPs were invited. Southgate District Civic Trust (SDCT) passed on the details to our MP David Burrowes, but unfortunately he was unable to take part due to prior constituency and parliamentary commitments. However, in his reply to us, he explained his reasons for supporting this bill:

"This Bill is about bringing transparency to the way third parties interact with the political system. Campaign groups play an important role in our political process, helping inform policy making and allowing different views to be heard from across society. My colleagues and I are clear that we want this to continue.

It is very important to note that these new proposals are only for third party organisations which campaign for the electoral success of a particular political party or candidate. An organisation campaigning only on policy issues would not be included in these changes."

The bill passed the second reading. On 6th September Sir Stuart Etherington, Chief Executive of NCVO met the Leader of the House of Commons, Andrew Lansley, to discuss 'non-party campaigning' rules in the lobbying bill, as these will have a significant effect on campaigning activity. Following that meeting, the Government agreed to change the test of whether or not an activity can fall under these rules.

The revised test should ensure that for the vast majority of charities operating within charity law, their activities will not be subject to the regulation outlined in part two of the Bill. However there is still concern about other parts of the bill, in particular, the impact on voluntary organisations without charitable status (such as SDCT) and the lack of clarity around the new rules.

The NCVO will continue to follow this bill and SDCT members will be updated with developments. Further information can be found on the Civic Voice and NCVO websites.

Jane Maggs

TOUR OF MYDDELTON HOUSE
GARDENS – 4th August

Janet Lane booked a guided tour, led by one of their experienced gardeners. We had 18 in the group, and were shown around these beautiful gardens. We were told many stories about former owner and renowned gardener, artist and botanist E.A. Bowles, and we saw the Victorian conservatory, lake, restored kitchen garden, alpine garden and Lunatic Asylum. We were shown the route of the redundant loop of the New River, which wound through the gardens, but was filled in during the 1960s. We finished our visit in the Bowles Tea Room, to end a pleasant afternoon.

Colin Barratt



HISTORY GROUP MEETING
September 2013

Local Films, presented by Colin Barratt

Rather than a speaker, this was a film show, presenting a number of short films from compilation and local history DVDs.

The selected films were shown in chronological order, starting with the early days of the London Underground's Piccadilly Line, which opened in 1906, and the building of the stations on its extension to Cockfosters in 1932/33. The early carriages had doormen, to control the passengers, and the film showed a humorous scene of the wrong and right way to board the train. It suggested the novel idea of letting the passengers off first! The second film was a Pathé newsreel following a young housewife in 1948 as she wheeled her baby's pushchair around the shops of Crouch End and into Hornsey Town Hall, using her ration book for the transactions. Thirdly, we toured the 1951 Festival of Britain, with all its futuristic designs and the crowds of excited visitors.

The last three films were all from 1953. "The Elephant Will Never Forget" took a nostalgic look at the last week of trams in London, in the Elephant and Castle area. Then "Children's Coronation" showed children preparing for and travelling to the Queen's Coronation, and enjoying the spectacle of the processions on the Embankment. This included groups of Enfield Grammar and Suffolk Schools, who boarded the buses at Enfield marketplace. (I wonder if any of these children have seen themselves!). The final film "Beauty in the Borough" allowed us to see the many flowerbeds and communal gardens around Hornsey, Muswell Hill and Alexandra Palace, as well as some private gardens, of which the Council were obviously proud. If only they were kept as well now!

Colin Barratt

HISTORY GROUP MEETING
July 2013

London's Waterways by Roger Squires

Roger is a volunteer at the London Canal Museum, Kings Cross, and spoke to us about the main waterways which pass through north London, including the Thames, Lee, Stort and New River. This was illustrated by excellent photos, most of which he took himself.

New River. He started with a brief look at this marvel of an artificial waterway, which celebrates its 400th Anniversary this year. It was built between 1608 and 1613, by Hugh Myddelton, starting from Chadwell Spring, near Ware. By following the 100ft contour line, the builders managed to achieve a very gradual descent to Islington, allowing the water to flow. Chadwell Spring became unable to supply the requirements, so water was taken from the River Lee. The New River is still a valuable resource, but it has been superseded by the Thames Water's underground water ringmain.

River Lee. Navigation has been possible on the Lee since the 9th Century. It is navigable from Hertford which had a number of grain stores by the river. Ware was a centre of grain collection, and barges took it to Bromley by Bow, a centre of milling for London. The Olympic Stadium is now close by. Near here the Lee reaches the Thames via Bow Creek. Limehouse Cut, built in 1770, goes off from Bromley Locks to join the Thames at Limehouse.

Regents Canal. This opened at Limehouse in 1820. The old coal dock has now been turned into a marina. John Nash and the Prince Regent proposed a canal through Regent's Park to the basin at the barracks, which would continue to link with the Limehouse Basin. It was a major trade route for timber and coal (for local gas works). As with most waterways today the towpath is used by joggers and walkers, and has pavement cafes and new flats on either bank. It runs through the Islington Tunnel to St Pancras and on to Camden Lock. The lockkeeper's cottage is now a Starbucks! The canal passes London Zoo in Regents Park. Nash set aside plots in the park for luxury houses – but these didn't get built until the 1990s! Further along is Maida Vale (Little Venice), where there is a barge café. Behind Paddington Station is the basin, built in 1801 to transfer goods from the canal to the new road. One use of the canal today is for barges of demolition waste. The towpath along the length of the canal has been used to bury high voltage cables, and the ground above them is warm to the touch!

Grand Union Paddington Arm This went over the North Circular Road. The aqueduct was rebuilt as a dual carriageway for boats near Park Royal. It joins the main Grand Union Canal at Bullsbridge. The Slough branch, built in 1892, is level through to Slough, which is a dead end.

Grand Union Canal This runs to Brentford, and Norwood Lock. This is a major interchange where goods are taken north to Birmingham. It is also linked to the Thames here.

As boatmen were constantly on the move, it was difficult for their children to get an education. In 1904 the Boatmen's Institute was set up at Brentford for these children.

River Thames The upper reaches are mainly used for leisure, paddle boarding and rowing.

The 2012 Olympics helped with the development and renovation of locks and the River Lee. A new lock was built, and new landscaping created. When work is finished on the Queen Elizabeth Park it will be fully open, and boat trips will be available.

Although the use of these waterways for goods transportation has now diminished or disappeared, Roger showed that they are still a valuable asset for London and its inhabitants.

Colin Barratt

HERITAGE ACTION CONFERENCE

I was invited to attend a Heritage Conference at the Dugdale Centre, Enfield on 16th July 2013, at 1.00pm, and was able to take two of my planning group colleagues with me. It was to raise awareness of the Council's Heritage Strategy, engage the community in partnership and develop a shared understanding of priorities.

The Leader of the Council Doug Taylor and the Chief Executive Rob Leak gave an introduction and welcome. Dr Nigel Barber from English Heritage regarding Planning and Conservation gave an interesting insight into the conservation work that they are involved in, and an idea of how they saw the future. The Government will be providing £80million for a new charity to be established under License in 2015, so Conservation and Planning Advice will have a new name, no longer English Heritage although a new name had not been chosen at that time.

This was followed by talks from Janet McQueen, Chairman of the Enfield Society, and Dennis Stacey, Chairman of the Conservation Advisory Group.

Cllr. Bambos Charalambous opened the discussion regarding the three Workshops that we had to choose from, these were led by Paul Drury on Heritage Strategy; Tessa Hilder on Partnership Working and Paul Walker with Future Heritage, and this was the one that I and my group colleagues joined. It dealt with what local stakeholders see as the strengths, weakness, threats and opportunities?

Cllr. Charalambous took the Feedback Session / Outcomes that were dealt with separately by the group's leaders, so that everyone heard what the other groups had discussed, and their conclusions.

It all ended on a positive note, at 4.30pm. Any Council interest in Conservation/Heritage is to be encouraged although there was an emphasis on lack of money, which was not surprising. Associations on the other side of the Borough do feel that they are being left behind in conservation terms, although The Crescent is being refurbished and there is a Fore Street Conservation Area. They also have representatives on the CAG.

Irene Stone

PLANNING GROUP REPORT

The May newsletter contained my report for the AGM, and since then we have had three meetings (monthly) and dealt with 26 applications. In addition to these, we dealt with several other situations that occurred, and I wrote letters on the North London Waste Plan that is likely to continue, and on an update on Neighbourhood planning for the London Assembly at City Hall that covered the last 2 years with the on-going proposals to simplify and relax the planning system, which we do not agree with.

Grovelands Park. The proposed school that has been the subject of meetings and prior discussion by residents and the Council will be on our agenda in any future meetings if it becomes more of an issue. We are already in touch with a new residents' committee that has been formed. It will also be a development that will be discussed by the Conservation Advisory Group. English Heritage will have to say that it does not compromise the House and Park to get the needed approval from them. Like Cat Hill, Cockfosters, it is a site that has environmental issues with wildlife and scrubland etc. The Cat Hill development had planning permission, but the Mayor had the final decision. We have just heard that the Mayor of London has considered it and is leaving the decision to Enfield Council because it is in accordance with The London Plan. The Cat Hill Committee may still decide to go for a Judicial Review.

It is now public knowledge that the Trent Park Campus former Middlesex University buildings in Oakwood, will become a Malaysian University. That it should stay in educational use is what the Trust agreed with Enfield Council when there was the opportunity to give our opinion on the future of the University Site.

The Auction Rooms, High Street, N14, have a proposed development of 9 houses using both the High Street and Balaam's Lane. It is proposed to have 2 detached properties facing Balaam's Lane, 3 in a terrace facing the High Street, and 4 detached properties backing on to the Walker Ground. Large gates on the frontage to the High Street have been indicated. We had several objections to the scheme, although not to a redevelopment of the site. A development on the corner of Balaam's Lane/High Street that received planning permission some time ago has not yet been implemented.

There was notice in local papers and elsewhere that the Enfield Planning Department could lose its powers if it did not speed up its decisions. However on being asked about this it was dismissed by the officers as not applicable as they say that they have indeed had the correct percentage to overcome the problem. Heloise Brown, who has been the Conservation Planning Officer for a couple of years has now left the Council, and we are hoping that advertising the post results in a replacement soon.

I received an invitation to a Heritage Conference at the Dugdale Centre in Enfield held by the Council. It was on Local Heritage Action Planning. I was able to take two of my planning group with me, so Elaine Tyler and Graham Davis attended too. I have written a short note about it elsewhere in the newsletter.

Our group have a wide field of interest and would welcome any member who has any knowledge of our conservation areas or strong views on planning decisions locally. It is satisfying to know that you can give an opinion that is reported to the council planning department, and we are well known. The group meets monthly, at 6, Eversley Mount, N21 1JP. Tel: 020 8364 6500. Email: irenestone@blueyonder.co.uk

*Irene Stone
Group Chairman*

SUMMER FESTIVALS

Southgate Summer Festival

In July, the Southgate Chamber of Trade organised a summer festival, centred on Southgate Circus and Chase Side. The Trust had a stall, and we were given a location outside the police station. Joe Studman got there early, to claim our position, and he was able to fix our new large banner on the railings. We set up a good display, which attracted many visitors, although we only sold a few publications. The festival was a success, with music, food and lots of gazebos and stalls. It may become an annual event.



Palmers Green Festival

This was the second year for the Palmers Green Festival, held in Broomfield Park on 1st Sept. The Trust didn't have a stall, but Joe Studman kindly allowed us to display some of our publications on his stall, where he was promoting his local history course and oral history project. The festival was a great success, with several thousand visitors, who enjoyed the music, dancing, food and other entertainment, centred around the bandstand and the House. We sold a number of publications, and Joe said the display attracted many to his stall. We are considering having our own stall next year.



RESTORATION OF THE PLAQUE FOR LEIGH HUNT

In 1986 the Trust and Southgate Reform Synagogue arranged for a plaque to be installed on the wall of the synagogue in High Street, Southgate, opposite the Woolpack pub. This was to record the fact that poet, essayist and critic James Henry Leigh Hunt was born on the site. His house, Eagle Hall, was severely damaged by bombing in WW2, and was demolished in 1941, to be replaced later by the synagogue. More recently, the synagogue itself was demolished, and replaced by blocks of flats, and the plaque was replaced on the wall of the flats.

About three years ago Peter Hodge was contacted by descendants of Leigh Hunt, who wanted to visit his birthplace. Leigh Hunt's 3x Great Granddaughter, Jean Erbé, and her son Nigel, were given a tour of the area, including the plaque, Leigh Hunt Drive, and the Minchenden Oak Garden. The plaque has faded badly over the last few years, and the Trust decided to have it restored. When the family heard that we needed to have the plaque re-painted, they offered to pay some of the cost. Later, they generously offered to pay the whole cost.

This summer, the plaque was removed and sent off to the sign makers for restoration. The family asked to return to Southgate to see the plaque re-installed. On 22nd Sept. a small group of Trust members had lunch with the family at the Cherry Tree. Jean, now 85, was again brought by her son Nigel and his partner Diane. Nigel's cousin Jennie also joined us. We then transferred to the site, to join more Trust members, where the plaque was to be fitted. The group were shown the restored plaque, and photos were taken, as seen here. After it was re-fitted, Jean read from one of

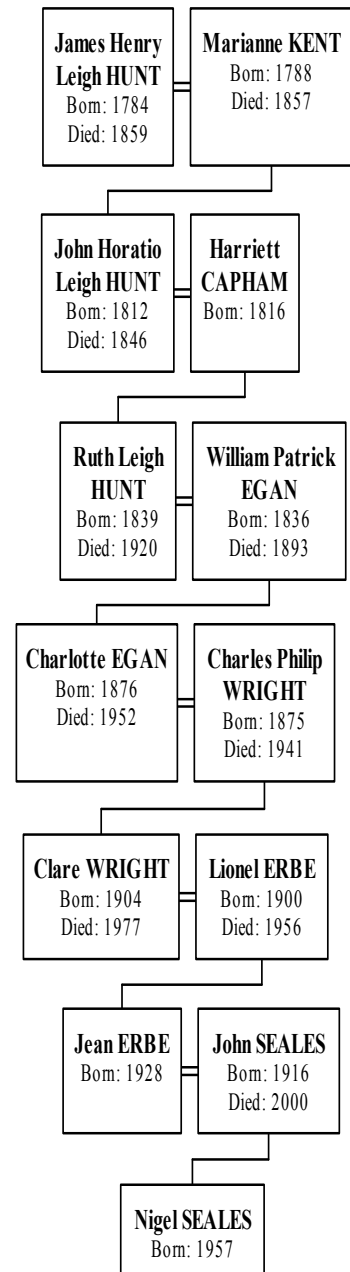


Nigel and Jean Erbé, with her niece Jennie

Leigh Hunt's poems, Abou Ben Adhem. It was an emotional occasion, as Jean was obviously very proud of her illustrious ancestor, and she was pleased that he is being remembered in this small way at his birthplace, which Hunt himself described as "a sweet village, in the midst of truly English scenery, a prime specimen of Middlesex".

Colin Barratt

Descendants of James Henry Leigh Hunt



LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

Sat. 16th November 2013, at the Museum of London

This year's Conference is entitled "**The River and Port of London**". Tickets are now available, and details can be found in our July newsletter. The Trust will be having a stall to publicise ourselves and sell our publications. The details of the programme are on the Trust's website.