

Southgate District Civic Voice

Newsletter No. 271
April 2025

**We cover Southgate, Winchmore Hill,
Palmers Green, New Southgate, Cockfosters
and Hadley Wood**

(Registered as an amenity society with Civic Voice).



ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

**Saturday 10th May 2025
at 2.30pm**

**Walker Lower Hall,
Christchurch Parish Centre,
7 The Green, Southgate, N14**

Come and hear about our recent
and future projects and have your
say about our activities..

See page 3 for more details.

TALK AFTER THE AGM

**“The Palmers Green Heritage Walk”
by Adrian Day**



Palmers Green Station

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Contributions to the July newsletter should be sent by Friday 20th June 2025
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Note:- Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing 14th July 2025

www.southgatedistrictcivicvoice.org

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EXCITING CHANGES COMING TO BROOMFIELD PARK!

Last year Enfield Council secured funding from The National Lottery Heritage Fund to give the park a much-needed refresh, making it a better place for everyone to enjoy.

One major change is the removal of the burnt-out Broomfield House and its scaffolding. Rather than leaving it as a ruin, the Council is planning something special to celebrate its history while also improving the park's overall look and feel. This includes restoring the historic water garden and adding new features designed with the local community in mind.

2025 is a key year for the project. In April, a Design Team will be announced to lead the transformation. While some ideas, like bringing back elements of the original Baroque water garden, have been suggested, the final design will be shaped by the people who use the park.

The best part? Local people—including Southgate District Civic Voice—will have a say in what happens next,

The Council is encouraging the community to get involved in shaping the park's future. Look out for the latest updates at <https://www.enfield.gov.uk/services/planning/heritage/heritage-projects/broomfield-house>

There will also be plenty of fun activities this year, including an archaeology dig, nature walks, and wellbeing events.

This is an exciting opportunity to bring new life to Broomfield Park while celebrating its history. If you want to have a voice in its future, now's the time to get involved!

Unlocking Broomfield

PALMERS GREEN PAINT JAM IN BROOMFIELD PARK

SATURDAY 12th APRIL 10am - 5pm

WATCH Leading street artists and muralists create live paintings

LEARN The how to use spray paint

PAINT Your own piece of street art (spaces limited so come early to grab a spot)

ENJOY The welcoming, joyful, family friendly atmosphere

SEE A major new mural by artists celebrating the history of Broomfield House and Park

The rear of Broomfield House by the construction-site hoardings; the grassed area south-east of the House and close to the Playground

SPRAY PAINT WORKSHOP

Enjoy supervised spray painting with professional artists and facilitators

Open from: 11:00 (drop in)
Finish: Last arrivals 15:00
Not suitable for children under 7
You may have to wait a bit if its busy

Thanks to National Lottery players

THE MATCHBOX

ENFIELD Council

SOUTHGATE DISTRICT CIVIC VOICE ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 10th May 2025 at 2.30 pm

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

This year's Annual General Meeting (AGM) will be held at the Walker Hall on Saturday 10th May. The AGM is essential to the successful functioning of Southgate District Civic Voice (SDCV). It is when our members elect the officers and committee for the coming year. It is also an opportunity to talk about our recent and future projects, help plan the coming year and discuss SDCV's future strategy and campaigns.

Do come to support your Executive Committee, working on your behalf.

Reports from members of the Executive Committee will be distributed by e-mail *prior* to the AGM rather than being read out in full at the meeting. For members without e-mail, printed copies will be available at the meeting. The aim is to give members an opportunity to read the reports in advance, so that the meeting can focus on questions or important decisions. It also means the AGM is more interesting and quicker, without losing oversight by members.

Could you join the Committee?

Most of the Executive Committee meetings are held in the home of one of our members. Occasionally, they are via Zoom.

Meetings are four or five times a year and generally last about 2 hours. While we are all serious about what SDCV is doing, the meetings are friendly and good natured!

The whole committee are volunteers, and apart from officers who have specific roles, we all help with projects or work on going. The more members the more we can spread the load. Could you help?

Could you be our new Secretary?

We do not currently have a **Secretary**, which is making the life of our committee, much harder than it should be! There are a few roles that are vitally important to the efficient running of SDCV and the **Secretary** is definitely one of them!

What does being the Secretary involve?

The role does not take up excessive time. For the committee meetings: discussing the agenda with the Chair and distributing it to committee members. Taking and writing up the meeting minutes. Plus, a small amount of time is needed to answer or pass on any correspondence.

The role need not be arduous, but it is vital to the smooth running of our society.

Please consider standing! If you would like to discuss how you could help SDCV please contact either Graham Davis, Chair, or Jane Maggs, Vice Chair, at info@SouthgateDistrictCivicVoice.org.

After the formal business of the AGM, there will be a short break, then **Adrian Day**, will talk about ‘**The Palmers Green Heritage Walk**’.

Jane Maggs (on behalf of the Executive Committee)

ELECTIONS TO THE EXECUTIVE COMMITTEE 2025/2026

The following positions are elected at the AGM:

President	Vice-Presidents
Chair	Secretary
Treasurer	Newsletter Editor
Publicity Officer	Committee Members (6 in total)

The role of Vice Chair is elected by the committee, so is not included in AGM elections.

Please note the positions of **Secretary** and **Publicity Officer** are vacant. We also have vacancies for **Committee Members**.

SDCV consistently punch above our weight, raising and commenting on issues of local concern, but we need assistance to keep doing this. Please offer to help, even if only in some small way.

You may not want to join the committee, but we always need support with the Newsletter, Planning Group, marketing, website, organising talks or visits.

For more information or to discuss the roles with no obligation, please contact Jane Maggs or Graham Davis via info@SouthgateDistrictCivicVoice.org.

If you wish to nominate someone, or are interested in standing for the committee, please complete the nomination form on the back page of this newsletter, or contact me.

Jane Maggs

A Portrait of Southgate Art Trail

A Portrait of Southgate art trail is finally in place and can be admired at various points along Chase Side. It is the culmination of the work of various groups and is a fantastically colourful addition to our town centre.

The trail has been inspired by Southgate's unique heritage and celebrates the achievements and stories of the vibrant mix of people who were either born in Southgate or made it their home. There are twenty-eight mosaics in the trail and each one has a unique design referencing a specific topic of historical note or cultural significance pertinent to Southgate.

Local residents Jane Maggs and Poppy Kanu were recruited as 'Public Art Champions' and supported by artist Dan Maier to engage Southgate's communities in generating ideas for a new public artwork in the area. The Public Art Champions took a leading role in developing the brief for this commission and in selecting mosaic artists Alex McHallam and Liz Tiranti to deliver the project.

The artists have created an art trail, repurposing the former hanging basket posts along Chase Side. The themes of the artworks were inspired through community engagement and research. Local residents took part in practical mosaic workshops held at the Southgate Club, St Andrew's Church and Durants School.

All the mosaics have been fabricated by the artists using over 30,000 hand-cut and individually placed glass and ceramic tiles.

The Art Trail Mosaics

There is not enough space in our Newsletter for all the inspiration for the mosaics, so please see the Enfield *Let's Talk* website which explains the background to each of the mosaics:

<https://letstalk.enfield.gov.uk/5370/widgets/119299/documents/81130>

Overleaf are the mosaics with their locations and titles, just to give a flavour of what has been created.



Location: St Andrews Church



Hunting scene



Hunting scene



Turkish Kingfisher and Iznik
Textil



Chinese Crane and Willow
Pattern Print

Location: 79 Chase Side (Helping Hands charity shop)



The Enclosures



The Manor House



Film, TV, and Radio



Musical Connections

Location: 100 Chase Side (Fantozzi Restaurant)



The Blacksmiths at
Fiveways



Ice wells



A Cyprus Coal Tit on
traditional Cypriot Lace



Eastern European Goldfinch
on traditional Polish Folk
textile

Location: 55 Chase Side (Halifax Building Society)



Thomas Lipton



Taylor Walker



N14



Durants School

Location: 64 Chase Side (Post Office)



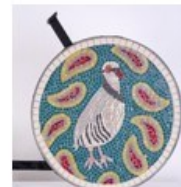
Cuthbert's Plant Nursery and
Seed Company



James Haworth's Print
Works



A Robin to represent Great
Britain on Yorkshire Tweed



South Asia Chakir - the
national bird of Pakistan on
Paisley, the iconic Indian
textile design

Location: 31 Chase Side (McDonalds)



Local Transport - the Omnibus



Local Transport- The London Underground



Local Traders



Literature - Writers of Note

Location: 17 Chase Side (Southgate Club)



The Green



Grovelands Park



African Swift on Traditional African print



Caribbean Hummingbird on a Madras textile

The Artists

Artists Alex McHallam and Liz Tiranti work chiefly with the art of mosaic and community engagement is at the heart of their practices. Both artists have strong connections to N14: Alex grew up in Southgate and attended a local school; while Liz attended Southgate College and has family in the area.

<https://alexmchallamartist.com/>. Instagram: @alexmchallam
<https://www.liztiranti.com/>. Instagram: @liztiranti

A Portrait of Southgate is commissioned by Journeys & Places, as part of the Curate Enfield public art programme and is supported by the UK Shared Prosperity Fund and Arts Council England.

Jane Maggs

*Images: Dan Maier & Enfield Council
With thanks to Journeys & Places for information in this article*



Civic Voice Update

Civic Voice has a new Chief Executive Officer

Following the departure of Ian Harvey at the end of 2024, the Civic Voice trustees recently announced that Rob Hattersley has been appointed as the organisation's new Chief Executive Officer.

Rob is an experienced charity CEO and originally comes from a teaching background where he was a primary school deputy head. He has practical knowledge of local groups having been involved with Hereford Civic Society for several years as a committee member, until he moved to Dorset due to work.



Rob said: "I'm very much looking forward to engaging with as many local societies and regional groupings as possible in coming months, as understanding the needs and ambitions of our members needs to be central to our plans. I'm keen that we proactively support growth in engaging young people, recruiting new volunteers, and developing more efficient systems and communications. There is also potential for thinking creatively on partnerships and funding, in order to further develop and measure our local and national impact."

Robert Osborne, Civic Voice Co-Chair said: *"We are fortunate to have found someone who has experience both of working in the charity sector and being a committee member of a Civic Society. Rob impressed us with his ideas and grasp of the issues as well as understanding the challenges of running a membership organisation. At a time when Civic Societies need to respond to changes in planning along with the expansion of unitary local authorities, the role of Civic Voice is as important as ever and Rob will help us develop the resources and organisation to meet these challenges. We are delighted to welcome him to the team."*

I am looking forward to working with Rob at the start of what is a new era for Civic Voice. He has already started working on plans for 2025 and I am sure that SDCV members will have an opportunity to meet him, either in person or online in the next few months.

*Jane Maggs
Civic Voice Trustee*

Photo: courtesy of Civic Voice

Enfield's Walk, Talk and Do

Following the 'Walk, Talk and Do' meeting on Friday 14th March at the Southgate Club, the team provided us with more details on this initiative (see below) and what it means for our community.

“Walk, Talk and Do” initiatives are designed to empower women by fostering safer communities through active engagement, visibility, and practical interventions. These initiatives provide a platform for women to voice their concerns, share experiences, and influence local safety measures while simultaneously building confidence and resilience.

Through structured activities organised by the Met Police and Enfield Council - such as guided walks in public spaces, open conversations about safety reporting and proactive engagement with community stakeholder – these initiatives help to identify and address environmental and societal factors that contribute to women's feelings of insecurity. By promoting a collective sense of responsibility, they encourage businesses, authorities, and the wider community to act toward making public spaces safer and more inclusive.

*In alignment with the **Women's Night Safety Charter**, Walk, Talk and Do initiatives serve as a practical tool to reinforce its core principles. They offer real-time insights into women's lived experiences, creating a feedback loop that informs policies and interventions. Furthermore, by facilitating collaboration between women, local organisations and the council, the initiatives ensure that the commitments of the charter – such as improving reporting mechanisms, enhancing street design, and fostering a culture of respect and accountability - are translated into tangible, community-led action.*

You can read more about the Women's Night Safety Charter and how to get involved at: <https://www.enfield.gov.uk/services/community-safety/womens-night-safety-charter>

The Southgate Event saw 30 local women and employees come together to discuss unsafe space, crimes were reported, and personal pledges were made as to how we will support each other in the future - We look forward to seeing many more Enfield residents in the future!

*Community Safety Unit
London Borough of Enfield*

Images: courtesy of Enfield Council



Southgate – the latest changes

Southgate is already greener, with plans for even more greening!

Pocket Park – at the end of Station Parade

The felled oak trees from Epping Forest with carved seats are already in use by passers-by, particularly when the sun comes out.

Enfield's Journeys & Places team have told us that their landscape contractor will be adding a few larger plants in the next couple of weeks. The aim is to prevent people from shortcutting and treading on the small plants that were planted in November, by giving them more protection, so they can grow better in the coming months.

These new plants will also contribute to making the whole space greener and more welcoming.



The infamous Blue Container by Southgate Station

TfL expect to remove the container in mid-April, as the work in the messroom should be completed in early April. Apparently, they are not expecting any further delays to the project.

Once it is clear about the dates, Enfield's Journeys & Places team will arrange more community planting events.

The Bee Friendly Trust will be leading the community planting of the two grass beds behind the station, this will be an open activity for everyone that wants to get involved on the day. There will also be a community litter pick at the same time. We are waiting for confirmation of the date for this and I will send out an E-News with the details.

Rain Gardens

The Rain Gardens in Chase Side have now been planted and are already redirecting some of the street water from going straight into the water courses so that the pollutants are removed.

You will have noticed that there are some black patches in the rain gardens, which have been caused by polluted runoff from the road. The rain gardens are specifically designed to filter out pollutants and reducing surface water flooding, so are doing what is expected.



The rain gardens were planted in November, and at the moment it is difficult to fully assess their appearance following a long and wet winter. The plants are still establishing, and the full benefits will become more visible as we move into the spring and summer months. The expected growth during the warmer seasons will help soften the appearance of the rain gardens and may naturally reduce the dark patches.

Contractors will shortly be planting some larger, more horizontally growing evergreen shrubs, which will provide better ground cover and further reduce the visibility of the dark patches over time.

Like all these projects, it takes time to see the full benefit.

Flower bed at the top of Chase Road

The problems with the wall which has become broken and the state of the bed was raised with the Journeys & Places team. Within a few days of my e-mail the wall was fixed. Which is great news and a start to improve the bed.

We have suggested that local volunteers might be able to help with the plants and will continue to discuss with LBE. Updates will be sent via E-News.

Southgate Station Clock

As you are probably aware, this clock was restored but has recently stopped working.

According to the TfL heritage team, the delay to getting it working again is due, in part, to access to the space above the shops. The building has been reconfigured a number of times since it was originally built, making everything more complicated. However, it now seems that the biggest issue is old wiring which has caused the timing device to fail.

Contractors are working on this and we hope the clock will be working again soon.

The heritage team have assured us that it will get sorted.



Jane Maggs

Photos: Enfield Council, Mervyn Maggs, TfL

SPRING OPEN MEETING 2025

Unfortunately, this meeting had to be cancelled at short notice due to the illness of the speaker. This was very disappointing, especially with only a few days notice and so many questions to ask. We apologise for any inconvenience this caused you.

SDCV is very grateful to Christ Church who did not charge us the full fee for the hall hire. This is very generous of them, as they did not have enough time to relet the hall and the fees are used to cover the cost of providing the parish centre.

We will be back there for the Autumn Open Meeting, which is in the planning stage!

Jane Maggs

PALMERS GREEN FESTIVAL 2025

We have booked a stall again at the Festival this year and the committee would appreciate help from any members who can spare an hour or two to join us and promote our Society. The Festival is on Sunday 7th September in Broomfield Park and runs from 12pm to 5pm. If you can help, please contact us via the email address shown on the front page, or speak to one of the committee.

BARBARA WALSH

In the last newsletter we announced the sad news about the death of our long standing member Barbara Walsh. We also said that we would include a more detailed obituary in this newsletter.

We had been in contact with her husband Peter Walsh about her life, but sadly he died unexpectedly a few days before we could get together.

Under the circumstances, we have decided to postpone this article until we can write a more fitting tribute.

MEMBERSHIP REMINDER

Your subscription for the year 2025/26 was due on

1st APRIL 2025

and remains unchanged at £15 for the year.

A MESSAGE TO THE FUTURE AT PALMERS GREEN LIBRARY



As recounted in my article *A Large and Mainly Umbrella-ed Crowd: The Southgate Flitch Trial of 1937* (Newsletter 266, January 2024) Alderman GB Massa turned in an impressive performance as Counsel for the Flitch in Broomfield Park in May of that year. He went on to become mayor in November and evidence of his continuing spell in the limelight can be found on the foundation stone in the brick pillar to the left of the steps to the bridge which leads to the entrance to Palmers Green

Library with its inscription, *This Stone Was Laid by the Worshipful the Mayor of Southgate Ald. George Bilton Massa J.P. on the 29th Day of October 1938*. In researching the background to this event I made a surprising discovery.

The Foundation Stone Ceremony

The foundation stone was laid for the building of extensions to Southgate Town Hall, which included the Central Library and additional offices and were designed by the Borough Surveyor JTW Peat. The occasion, which took place in ‘beautifully fine’ weather, was reported in full by the two local papers in their editions for Friday 4 November 1938.

The headlines in the *Gazette* were *Town Hall Extensions Ceremony / Has Southgate Missed the Boat? / “May Be That You Have Lost The Opportunity Of Getting a Fine Civic Centre” / £32,000 Extensions / Alderman Fuller Congratulates – Up To A Point* in contrast to the *Wood Green and Palmers Green Weekly Herald’s* *Mayor Lays Foundation Stone / Of Southgate Town Hall Extensions / Central Library and Better Offices / A Modest £31,950 – New Civic Centre Might Have Cost Ten Times As Much*.

The guests – ‘a large assembly of public men and women ... including several visiting Mayors, members of Middlesex County Council and other bodies’ – assembled first in the council chamber at the town hall, where ‘beautiful bouquets were presented to the Mayoress [Mrs Edith Massa] and Mrs [Grace] Hopper by four years old Ann Cochrane, grand-daughter of Mr SR [Sydney] Carter, Assistant Borough Engineer’. In the ‘brief ceremony of speech-making’ Alderman Tom Hopper, chairman of the General Purposes Committee, spoke about the need for the extensions because of overcrowding in the existing offices due the council being ‘the largest property owners, the largest employers of labour and the largest money-lenders. We do not like spending thirty-two thousand pounds at these times, but in this case it is absolutely necessary’.

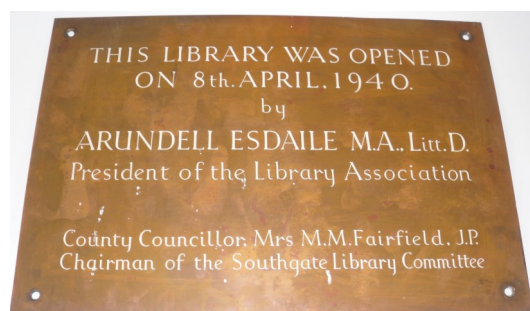


The Mayor then described in detail the ‘tremendous growth of Southgate from the time when the Local Board rented offices on The Green’ in 1881 when there were seven staff compared with the current 90, rateable properties only numbered 1,700 against 22,000 and there was ‘a great extension of municipal services within that period’. They had decided on the current scheme in response to this situation rather than build a new civic centre on grounds of cost and the difficulty of finding a suitable site, thus avoiding the ‘large sums being expended on the provision of new town halls and municipal offices’ throughout the country. (One nearby example of this trend was Hornsey Town Hall, completed in 1935.)

After the Mayor declared the stone had been well and truly laid the guests were served tea in the ‘florally decorated’ fire station (located to the west of the site but since demolished). Alderman JC [John Charles] Fuller gave a vote of thanks to him on behalf of Middlesex County Council (which was a partner in the scheme financially and was responsible for running the library, hence their coat of arms on each side of the bridge and high on the facade (with the original signage ‘County Library’ above the door since replaced by ‘Palmers Green Library’)).¹

As pointed up by the headlines in the *Gazette* Alderman Fuller had a distinctly equivocal attitude to the project. He said he ‘was not sure they were going to get a building worthy of Southgate and it might be they had lost their opportunity of providing a fine new civic centre’ which he felt would be a focal point to cultivate the civic pride lacking in the new inhabitants in the area ‘from all the shires and counties of England as well as from London’ who [only] saw themselves as units amongst great masses of people’. He conceded that ‘at any rate, you are going to get improved accommodation for the administrative staff and a cultural centre in what I believe will be a very good library, and up to that point you have my warm congratulations’. One imagines his qualified approval didn’t especially please all the Southgate representatives but they stayed friendly, with the *Gazette* even reporting a ‘Hear, Hear’ at one point. In a ‘final word’ the Mayor said he ‘looked on the ceremony as a red-letter occasion and expressed his delight in playing his part’.

The Opening



The library was ready to occupy in September 1939 but immediately requisitioned for national registration and food offices.² Although the date given on the plaque recording the event is 8 April, it was actually on Saturday 6 April 1940 at 3pm that the library was formally opened by Dr Arundell Esdaile MA, Litt.D, FLA, President of the Library Association and retiring secretary of the British Museum. The library remained open

after the ceremony for inspection by the public and provided a service to them from the Monday. The plaque was removed during the 2014/5 refurbishment of the library but it is planned to reinstall it during this 85th anniversary year.³

The *Gazette* headed its report of 12 April *Southgate's New Central Library / 15,000 Books For Your Delight / Never Was A Better Time For Reading / Dr Arundell Esdaile As Opener*, stating that ‘the new library was claimed to represent “the last word” in

modern library construction' and contained 15,000 fiction and non-fiction books, a well-stocked children's section and a lecture hall. The opening ceremony was presided over by County Councillor and Chairman of the Southgate Library Committee Mrs MM [Maud Mary] Fairfield JP and attended by the Mayor and Mayoress Robert Grant and his wife [Catherine], aldermen, councillors, borough officials and representatives of many local organisations. Although current conditions meant 'it was not possible to make a great occasion of this house-warming' Mrs Fairfield said 'it was one of the happiest days of her life. Public work sometimes brought disappointment, but such an occasion as this made up for all the setbacks'.

Mrs Fairfield may have been referring to the contentious background to the construction of the library, which Councillor AE [Albert Edward] Lauder had set out in an article in the *Herald* of 5 April castigating the reactionary (as distinct from 'enlightened') members 'to whom any literary culture was an abomination' for opposing Southgate starting its own modest library service back in 1919 on the grounds that it would add to the rates, thus delaying the project and necessitating reliance on the County Council for their financial assistance. He also called them 'Philistines' and 'obscurantists'. This was followed by a mischievous piece in the *On the Southgate Front* column of 19 April naming the councillors responsible for the decision and wondering which of them, as alleged by Councillor Lauder, were now happy to associate themselves with the project (as these apparently included Councillor Grant one wonders whether the two remained on speaking terms).

There were complementary detailed accounts of Dr Esdaile's speech in the papers; it was described in the *Gazette* as 'full of amusing, sagacious comment' as he considered 'various aspects of our civilisation' with the *Herald*



saying he 'delighted a large gathering ... with a highly entertaining and thought-provoking speech'. Even then though certain of his views may have made some of his listeners uneasy as he developed his theme that it was the arts including great literature as represented here by serious books and libraries that made life worth living and those who couldn't engage were beyond the pale. These included people without books in their homes ('a house without them was unfurnished, as was the owner's mind') and women who 'drove away the day with inanities' when they had nothing to do after seeing to their husbands and children and completing their housework instead of accessing the 'vast and thrilling wealth of all that had been thought and done in the world' through reading.

He also criticised the BBC for playing 'useless hours of horrid noises' rather than 'real music' and said that while it was right for the British Museum to preserve 'copies even of books that are rubbish, yet I would snatch from the present necessity a hope that war may cause a large destruction of books. Not of course in libraries, but everywhere else – in houses and shops, in stalls and cellars are millions of useless volumes, never likely to be rare, useless when printed, useless now and useless in the future'. No doubt he excluded his own published books from this category and endeavoured to save them when the Blitz started five months later.⁴

The Discovery

Photographs in the *Gazette* and *Herald* and in the Enfield Local Studies collection of the 1938 gathering show the scene in Broomfield Lane, with Mayor GB Massa accompanied by his grand-daughter [Sheila Barraclough], assembled dignitaries and spectators and the foundation stone in place though still attached by chains to a tall metal tripod.



The pleasant surprise was to read in the *Gazette* the information that ‘Underneath the stone was deposited a metal box containing a copy of “The Times” newspaper, a 1938 threepenny-piece, the Council’s 1938 year book and local newspapers, including the current issue of “The Palmers Green and Southgate Gazette” and the version in the *Herald* (similarly carefully avoiding naming their local rival), ‘Underneath the stone was a

casket in which were deposited a copy of the Borough Council’s year book for 1938, a new three-penny piece and current copies of “The Times,” a copy of the “Weekly Herald” and other papers’, with the photo caption ‘In a casket by the stone a copy of the “Weekly Herald” was placed’.

Time Capsules

The casket cannot be seen in the photographs so may have already been installed and as far as I’m aware has never been removed. The term ‘time capsule’ was apparently only just coming in around that time and is not used by the *Gazette* or *Herald* but the practice of burying similar contemporary items beneath new structures was already widespread and there is another example in Enfield, at the war memorial cenotaph at Chase Green which was unveiled in 1921. The Historic England listing information states that it ‘contained a capsule, within which were placed copies of The Times, The Enfield Gazette and Observer, an autographed list of members of the Enfield Patriots’ Committee, and coins of the realm’.

Time capsules have continued to be placed in a variety of settings, with some having recorded instructions on when they should be opened and others being forgotten about, like the one at Palmers Green Library. There is even an International Time Capsule Society website, which has registered thousands of examples.

Furniture makers also liked to leave little messages for the future concealed in their work, as I found a few years ago when I accidentally knocked over the round wooden draughts and chess board made by my maternal grandfather Edwin Evershed, the already insecure top became detached from the base and a tiny silver threepence dated 1912 fell out. I assume he placed it there to indicate the year he made the board (which is also when my uncle, his son Edwin, was born) with the possibility that someone from a future generation would discover it one day. As did happen, about 100 years later.



¹ A detailed account of the establishment of the library service in Southgate is given by Eileen Bostle in *An Early History of Palmers Green Library* (Enfield Local Studies Library & Archive, 2015). In her memories the Branch Librarian Ivy Clark recalls that the workmen were there all night prior to the opening. Apart from Central Library other names used were Southgate Central Library and Southgate Library.

Middlesex County Council's own building programme included at this time De Bohun school, library and health centre in Southgate (1936-9) and Bowes Road library, swimming pool and clinic (1935-40), all designed by WT Curtis and HW Burchett and Grade II listed. Unfortunately Bowes Road is one of seven branches included in Enfield Council's current library closure plan.

² The 1939 Register was released in 2015, providing valuable information for family historians as the 1931 census was destroyed in a fire and a census was not carried out in 1941 because of the war. The Register lists George B Massa as Railway Goods Supt (retired) with Edith E Massa at 90 Hazlewood Lane, which is where they were living at the time of the 1921 census. This records that Edith was originally from Wiltshire and George from Yorkshire and his occupation as goods agent for the Great Northern Railway at King's Cross, where his daughter Kathleen (staying overnight elsewhere) was also working as a clerk.

³ Palmers Green Library is described in *The Buildings of England: London 4: North* (1999) by Bridget Cherry and Nikolaus Pevsner as having 'A bleak symmetrical front, slightly moderne, with fluted jambs to the central doorway' and in the 2024 Enfield Local Heritage List as 'A two storey modernist building with a handsome facade fronting Broomfield Lane with a central entrance accessed via a bridge and through a grand stone entrance with the Middlesex County coat of arms'. The grounds for its significance are given as 'Rarity; Historic Association; Architectural Quality; Landmark Status; Urban Design Quality; Social and Communal Value; Aesthetic Merit'.

There was a description of the interior at the time of opening in the *Herald* for 19.4.40: 'The entire library may be seen as one enters the main door. There is neither partition nor shadow to obstruct the view. Lighting by day comes through the large windows; by night illumination is provided by subdued lights hidden in the bookcases, producing a delightfully mellow effect'. The *Gazette's* similar report of 12.4.40 added that the shelves and furnishings were in Australian silky oak, with 'a splash of colour being lent to the scene by the bright red upholstery of the chairs and upper parts of the study desks'.

A colour scheme of pale green and terracotta was chosen for the library's first major refurbishment in 1997 and new shelving, display panels, computer benches, lighting and signage installed. The company which carried out the design was Gresswell Projects whose owner Don Gresswell MBE gifted Jubilee Hall in Parsonage Lane to Enfield Preservation Society [now The Enfield Society] to mark their golden jubilee in 1986.

A film of the opening of what is now Ridge Avenue Library, *Edmonton Public Libraries New Branch at Bush Hill Official Opening 20 April 1963* is available on the London's Screen Archives website.

⁴ A photograph likely to date from October/November 1941 of Arundell Esdaile giving a lecture at the University of Michigan library can be found on the Ann Arbor District Library website.

Images: foundation stone at Palmers Green Library by R.P.; Mrs Grace Hopper, Ann Cochrane, Mrs Edith Massa, courtesy Enfield Local Studies and Archive; plaque for the opening of the library by R.P. courtesy of Enfield Libraries; former Southgate Town Hall [now Prytaneum Court] and Palmers Green Library by R.P.; Gordon H Taylor, Town Clerk [in barrister's wig], Deputy Mayor Herbert F Wauthier [in robes], Grace Hopper [with bouquet], George Evans, Mayor's mace-bearer, Mayor George Massa with his grand-daughter Sheila Barraclough, Alderman Tom Hopper, Mayoress Edith Massa [with bouquet] courtesy Enfield Local Studies and Archive; 1912 silver threepence by R.P.

Richard Purver

NOMINATION FORM

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING - 10th May 2025

To:

From: (Your name & address)

Southgate District Civic Voice
info@SouthgateDistrictCivicVoice.org

I wish to nominate _____ for election as:

- An officer of Southgate District Civic Voice, in the post of

- A Member of the Executive Committee

(Delete as appropriate)

Signed: _____ Date: _____

I agree to be nominated for the above position.

Signed:

Address:
