

Southgate District Civic Trust

Newsletter
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www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk

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COMING EVENTS



OPEN MEETING

Saturday 15th Oct. 2011 2.30pm

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

**“Ally Pally Prison Camp”
by Maggie Butt**

Alexandra Palace was a first World War “concentration camp” for 3000 civilian prisoners. Most of these men had English wives and children. Only their German passports made them “enemy aliens”.

This is their moving story, told through letters, photos and paintings.

ALL WELCOME

MEMBERS’ ANNUAL LUNCHEON

Wed. 16th Nov. 2011

**at 12.00pm Southgate
College Restaurant
approx. £10 each
(Ring Janet Lane on
8886 3303 to book a
place)**

HISTORY GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 2nd Nov. 2011

7.30pm

Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, N21

**“The History of St Albans”
by Pam Wright**

We will hear about Roman Verulaneum, St Alban himself, (the first Christian martyr in Britain) and the development of the town.

ALL WELCOME



Contributions to the January newsletter should be sent by Friday 9th December 2011
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 16th January 2012

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**).

AN APPRECIATION - DR. AUDREY LENNOX, JP

It was with much sadness that the Southgate District Civic Trust learnt of the passing of Audrey Lennox JP; for she was not only a very active founder member, but also and importantly, **the Trust was her ‘baby’**.

I first met Audrey over 50 years ago, when there was much local anger over inappropriate redevelopment proposals of the Georgian cottages at the heart of Southgate, the focal point of its Green. As a result of official indifference, Audrey wrote a letter to the local paper asking whether people would join her in a campaign to save the cottages; thus the Trust was born.

Under Audrey’s leadership a long campaign was mounted to save the Georgian cottages, which probably had been left largely vacant, and therefore subject to deterioration of their fabric. The Trust employed a consultant to research on the history of the cottages and it was found that they were designed by a notable architect and capable of renovation. This led to their listing as buildings of historic interest, their refurbishment and preservation.

Soon afterwards there were proposals for the historic road layout of The Green to be changed into a roundabout scheme. At Audrey’s suggestion the Trust made an application to the ministry for The Green to have conservation area status, and this was granted: the Council were astonished as to who had taken this action as it was considered their prerogative. As a result the scheme was dropped and Southgate Green’s character has been maintained to this day.

Over the years the Trust has continued with Audrey’s initiative to be a voice on environmental and social matters, and for the improvement of Southgate. Although Audrey moved away to Bristol where she studied for a doctorate, she continued her interests there and contact with the Trust, which celebrates its 50th Anniversary next year.

Audrey was the Trust’s very active Honorary Secretary for many years and her shrewd influence steered it on a number of important local environmental issues. Audrey had a strong social conscience, which was reflected in her political interests as a local councillor, and on the bench as a prominent JP. Her environmental interests in respect of the care and the improvement of Southgate were no doubt fostered in her early years by working for the firm of architects Owen-Ward, based in Palmers Green. The latter interest led us as a group to first meet, and I am grateful for the influence she had not only on me, but also the Southgate District Civic Trust, which has much to thank her for. May she rest in peace.

*Christopher Howell
(Founder Member and past Chairman)*



PLANNING GROUP REPORT

Since our last report to the AGM in May the group have commented on twenty three applications, and have met four times. We have had several BT cabinets proposed in all areas, not always replacements, and we object to their position. The Council always refuse permission. We have had applications regarding trees and extensions to properties in all areas. There is no shortage of applications for restaurants/cafes, either to enlarge or change of use from retail to an eating establishment of some kind. We had two in August alone.

At our last meeting in August the “Woodcroft Wildspace”, in Winchmore Hill N21, was discussed, because their 3 year lease will expire shortly and the council are delaying in giving them an extension. I have written to the relevant Cabinet Members of the Council giving our support to the scheme, which has been quite successful, and is an asset to the area.

Our most recent concern is the proposed re-development of Southgate Town Hall in Palmers Green, N13. I received the Draft Planning Brief for guidance to any potential developers of the site, to comment on. Once adopted this Planning Brief will be a Supplementary Document in the Local Development Framework and a significant material consideration in making decisions on planning applications submitted for the site.

Many of our members will know the Town Hall (not a listed building) and the library. The existing buildings are to remain and be refurbished, with the west wing of the library removed and hopefully be accommodated in the main library. The Town Hall could be converted to primarily residential use. Our view is that affordable housing would be a preferred option in the existing building and that any new build is kept to 3 storeys and does not dominate the existing building of the Town Hall that has a Civic Heritage. It will probably come within the curtilage of Truro House (a listed building) opposite. There can also be accommodation for a new health facility and an opportunity to make improvements to other services on the site and in the local area. We did not consider that there was sufficient allowance for car parking at 0.5 per unit and that the density should be kept to nearer the 100 and not 150 units per hectare. We know that the area is well serviced with transport, but it is naive to think that most people will not own cars and then nearby roads will suffer.

*Irene Stone,
Chairman*

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP MEETING – July 2011

“A View of Bethnal Green” by Harold Neville

We were told about this historic area of east London. Brick Lane is famous for its 24 hour beigel shops, and Shoreditch used to resound to trams and horses and carts, but suffered with horse mess and disease. Wapping used to be busy with ships unloading, and there was a Truman’s brewery in Brick Lane. There are still features to be found: workmen have dug up clay pipes and Roman coffins, there are Victorian letter boxes and bollards made from cannons.

Harold had a dry cleaning business in the area, and the Kray family were customers. He never had any problems with the Kray twins in his business. They treated him well. He saw Reggie Kray’s funeral at St Matthews Church, Bethnal Green, where hundreds turned out for it. The brothers’ local pub was the Blind Beggar, in Whitechapel. This was where they infamously committed a murder.

Other locations mentioned were:

- Sidney Street – famous for the Siege, where in 1911, Home Secretary Winston Churchill controversially arrived at the scene and took charge.
- Weavers Field – a name originating from the Huguenot silk weavers who moved from Spitalfields to Bethnal Green.
- Bethnal Green Tube Station – the tragedy of 170 people killed there during WW2, when an anti-aircraft rocket firing caused panic.
- The Museum of Childhood

We were given a glimpse in this talk of an area which many of us knew little about, and learned that it had a long and interesting history.

Colin Barratt

LOCAL EXHIBITIONS to watch out for:

Remembering Star Wars, a Social History of Cinema in Enfield

The exhibition will look at the impact of this classic film: how the cinema experience has changed over the last 30 years, from flea pit to the multiplex, and the influence that Star Wars had on merchandising in the 70's and 80's.

The changing fortunes of the cinemas in Enfield will also be looked at, from the first films that were shown in Edmonton Town Hall in 1899 to the purpose built cinemas of today.

Venue – Dugdale Centre, London Road, Enfield

Dates – opening Friday 7th October 2011.

Enfield and the Transatlantic Slave Trade

This will be another chance to see images and panels from the exhibition of 2007, which commemorated the 200th Anniversary of the abolition of the transatlantic slave trade.

Venue – Millfield Theatre foyer and restaurant, Silver Street, Edmonton

Dates – 1st to 31st October 2011, Mon. to Sun. 10am to 6pm.

SALE OF THE CENTURY?

Enfield Council are considering selling off a number of properties around the Borough, and have created a Disposal Programme for them. Several of these are in the Trust's area:

- Barrowell Green Car Park, N21
- Trent Park Riding Stables, Bramley Road, N14
- West Lodge Park Hotel, Cockfosters Road EN4
- Grange Gardens, N14
- Slopers Pond Cottage, Waggon Road, EN4
- The Bourne Car Park, The Bourne, N14

This has obviously caused much alarm, and there have already been objections.

The Bourne Car Park

The Council have produced a planning brief proposing that the car park opposite the Inverforth Gates entrance to Grovelands Park be sold and turned into housing, as it is “only used occasionally” and is “surplus to requirements”.

To quote the relevant part of the brief, “The car park is generally used on an occasional basis by visitors to Grovelands Park and for the allotments. Car parking for the Park is available elsewhere and allotment holders can gain vehicle access to the allotments on specific occasions. The Council has decided that the car park is surplus to requirements, and should be made available for redevelopment. This is considered to be an appropriate and sustainable use of the Council's assets, and an important opportunity to secure new housing”.

This car park is regularly full, and users of the park are wondering what alternative car parking is available nearby.

We would like to hear your views about this. Write to the editors, or email us.

LOCAL HISTORY GROUP MEETING – Sept. 2011

Local History Quiz

The original subject for this meeting had to be postponed until next year, so a quiz was arranged to test our members' knowledge of the Trust's area and Enfield, with a small prize for the winner. Those who came and took the challenge were faced with 31 questions, which caused much head scratching!

The result was close, as their knowledge was impressive, but the winner of a shopping voucher, with 24 correct answers, was Mrs Castro.

Colin Barratt

ALLY PALLY PRISON CAMP – The Book

The speaker at our Open Meeting on 15th October, Maggie Butt, has published an illustrated book of her research, on which the talk is based. Signed copies of the book are available at the special rate of £8, including P&P, from the author at 115 High Street, Southgate, London, N14 6BP.

Alternatively, you can buy one at the Open Meeting. (See front page for details).

VISIT TO CAPEL MANOR GARDENS, 4th August 2011

Geoff Bylett has worked at the Gardens of Capel Manor since 1968, and lives on the site, although he is semi-retired now. The Trust was invited to tour the Gardens by Geoff, (shown on right in photo), who is also a Trustee of the New Southgate Millennium Green. Sadly, in spite of free entry, and the offer of a guided tour for our members from a knowledgeable person, only five of us turned up. Rain was threatening, but held off until the tour was over.



From the modern reception building we were taken through the displays explaining the college's importance as a centre for horticulture, floristry, garden design, arboriculture, animal care and countryside studies. We were shown around all the many different and varied gardens. These included the Japanese garden, the specially designed gardens of "Sunflower Street", the childrens' Jungle Gym Garden designed by former student Kim Wilde, and other themed gardens. We also saw the animal corner and stableyard, plus sections not normally open to the public, such as the student classroom areas for saddlery and horticulture. We also saw the open air theatre, the newly built "Church Ruin" feature (seen at rear of photo), the Which Magazine garden areas and the route of the Roman Ermine Street. It was a fascinating tour of the site, which we had almost to ourselves. We briefly visited the main Georgian Manor House, but this was limited because classes were in progress. However, Geoff offered to take a group around this historic house at a later date.

Colin Barratt

AIR RAID IN PEVENSEY AVENUE, NEW SOUTHGATE

This scene, of the aftermath of an air raid in 1941, was painted by A.H.Brown, a local volunteer ambulanceman, who attended the scene. The photograph of it, by Trevor Springett, was kindly provided by the Enfield Museum Service.

We recently had an email from a lady, Myrtle Byrne, enquiring about WW2 local bomb damage maps. She lives in Australia, but was brought up in Natal Road, New Southgate, which is quite close to Pevensey Avenue. I sent her this picture, and she sent us her memories of that time, which follow here:

“I didn't see houses on fire, but I did see a great gap where houses had been on Natal Road and behind them on Brownlow Road.

On Brownlow Road it stopped immediately next to the house where what we called the home boys lived. There were about 12 or 14 of them in the house (one of them was in my class at Bowes Road Primary School) and the priest who looked after them.

On the wall adjoining their house was a girl standing in the fire grate of the upstairs bedroom. The story went that her dad put her in the chimney just before the bomb hit, and jumped back in bed with his wife and baby. Mum sent me up the road to see if the home boys' house was all right. They knew it was near. Neighbours had gathered and were coming out with mattresses and calling for cushions in case the girl fell. A man put a ladder against the wall and climbed up to speak to the girl. She was about 8, as I remember.

The firemen arrived and were angry that people were walking on the rubble, as they might be killing people who were alive under the bricks. They shouted at the man who climbed the ladder, as he might start to fall, and grab the grate and bring the girl down with him. Men had dogs on leads sniffing. There was an ambulance on Natal Road beside the bomb site, and a 12 year old girl had been found alive. She was on a stretcher and the local bobby, who we normally saw at the traffic lights at Bowes Road and Brownlow Road, was at the foot end of the stretcher. There was a small crowd of people behind him, looking. I was at the other end of the stretcher. The policeman said "She's gone" and all the heads turned away at the same time.

My adult foster-sister Evelyn said "Mrs Griffiths hasn't come out". We tried her front door (she lived on the corner of Wakefield Road and Natal). Part of the stairs was gone. The firemen were called and put a ladder up to the upstairs window in Wakefield Rd. Mrs Griffiths had the wardrobe in front of the window in her bedroom, and it had tipped forward and trapped her leg. She was freed OK”.

Obviously, Myrtle's memories are still vivid, even after 70 years!

Colin Barratt



A VISION OF MIDDLESEX

This book is a special publication, to celebrate the 40th Anniversary of the North Middlesex Photographic Society. It's a collection of more than 120 photographs, recording long-vanished scenes from the 19th and early 20th centuries of Hornsey, Crouch End, Stroud Green, Wood Green, Tottenham, Hampstead, Highgate, Edmonton, Palmers Green and Enfield. The text is by Janet Owen and John Hinshelwood.

Copies can be obtained at £15, plus £2 P&P, from the Sales Manager, HHS, The Old Schoolhouse, 136 Tottenham Lane, London, N8 7EL.

LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE 2011

This annual conference will again be held in the Weston Theatre at the Museum of London. It will be on Saturday 19th November, between 10am and 5pm, and with the London Olympics next year in mind, the theme is "**Sporting London**", and six talks will cover sport from mediaeval times to the present day.

Tickets are £10, and can be ordered online, from the LAMAS website, or by post at: Local History Conference, 22 Malpas Drive, Pinner, Middx. HA5 1DQ.