

Newsletter

Southgate
District
Civic Trust



No. 203 January 2008

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COMING EVENTS

OPEN MEETING

Saturday 12th March 2008 at 2.30pm.

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

“The Council’s Local Development Framework”

This will be an update, including comments
on the Planning Reform Bill.

We are fortunate to have as our speaker George
Simms, Head of the Planning Policy Unit of
Enfield Council.

George gave a very interesting talk to the Trust
three years ago, when the Development
Framework was being formulated, and we are
pleased to be able to get him again to explain the
present position.

If you remember, in our Newsletter for July last
year, we expressed our concern at the proposals
of the White Paper (“The Great Planning
Disaster”). This has now become the Planning
Reform Bill and, in spite of widespread
objections, nothing has been altered.

ALL ARE WELCOME TO THIS MEETING.

HISTORY GROUP MEETING

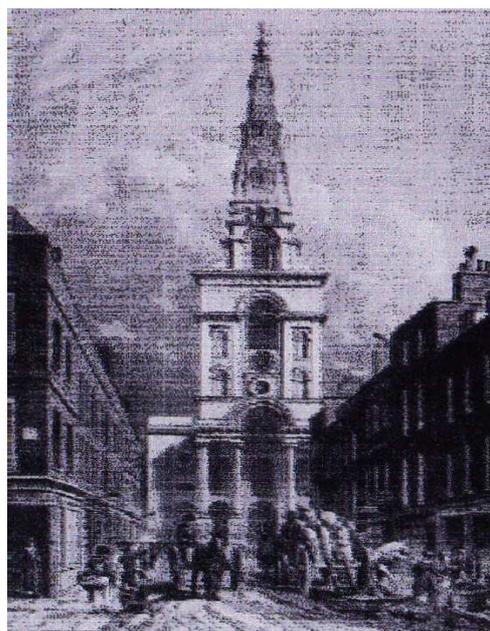
Wednesday 5th March 2008 at 7.30pm.

At Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, Winchmore Hill, N21

“The Christchurch Spitalfields Connection”

by Stan Rondeau

ALL WELCOME



OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wed. 7th May 2008 **History Group: Graham Dalling (Enfield in World War 1)**

Sat. 10th May 2008 **Annual General Meeting (2.30pm in Walker Hall)**

Contributions to the April newsletter should be sent by Friday 14th March 2008

to the Editors: Mary and Colin Barratt, 13 Beardow Grove, Avenue Road, Southgate, N14 4DG

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Notice to Newsletter Distributors:- We hope to deliver the next newsletter to distributors during week commencing 14th April 2008.

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

Obituary - David Hicks

We are sad to report that David passed away at New Year.

David ran Winchmore Antiques on The Green, for many years, and was a member of the Trust. He was an enthusiastic and well respected local historian, and will be greatly missed. The funeral will be held at St. Paul's Church, Winchmore Hill, on 21st January, at 1.15 pm.

A New Secretary!

I have been Secretary to the Trust since 1995, and for some time now, because of failing health, I have wanted to give up.

I am very pleased that Jane Maggs, recently elected to the Executive Committee, and a member of the Planning Group, has now offered to become the Secretary. Jane is, with her husband, enthusiastic about the Trust's aims. She has a very busy full-time job, using computer skills, and is therefore in every way qualified for the extra job as Trust Secretary!

Her address is: Mrs. Jane Maggs, 108 Chelmsford Road, Southgate, N14 4JL.
Tel. 020 8882 4253, e-mail: janemaggs@btinternet.com

Jane should be contacted by any like-minded member who wishes to be involved on the committee.

I wish the Trust well, with a continuing and influential future in local community affairs.

Frances Cook

Annual Lunch—November 2007

We had another successful lunch in November at Southgate College Restaurant. The food was excellent, and our thanks go to Janet Lane for organising the event.



Calling All Authors!

Judging by the good attendances at the Trust's Local History Group meetings, there is no shortage of members interested in the history of our locality. Maybe there is some aspect of local history of which you have special knowledge, or on which you have done research. So why not share your interest with others by submitting an article for the next issue of *Oakleaves*, the Trust's local history bulletin?

The Publications Sub-Committee have had a preliminary discussion about the next issue, and there are already one or two contributions in preparation. But we cannot make further plans until we know that there will be enough material to fill another issue. Topics covered might include biographical research, family history, topographical issues, building history, social and institutional change, natural history, personal recollections – to name but a few. As long as they relate in some way to the Trust's area, we shall be interested.

So it's up to you! If there is something you would like to contribute, please contact the *Oakleaves* editor, Peter Hodge, on 020 8360 6465. He would love to hear from you.

Town Planning Group Report

I must correct an error made in my report in the last newsletter, the comments on the trees should have been regarding 18 The Green, N14 and not 18 Cannon Hill. As it happens, **18 The Green** is now applying for new gates and boundary wall and railings, and fencing to replace the boundary there at present. There has been a need to have an amendment to the drawings presented, but the owners are certainly trying to make No 18 as acceptable as possible to its prominent position on the corner and overlooking The Green, N14. (*Also the editors apologise for duplicating a paragraph of Irene's report in the last Newsletter.*)

In the same area **Cannon Hill Mews, N14**, which is a passageway off Cannon Hill, and is at present a Repair Garage, has had an application for 12 flats in two blocks at the rear. This shows an access from Selborne Road, using the same access as the new development of flats on Cannon Hill by Abbey Homes, being erected at the moment. In order to do this there has to be a space provided in a wall separating the two developments. We actually received an application for rebuilding the wall after what was described as a collapse of the wall owing to construction in the vicinity. The rebuilding drawing shows a space being left wide enough to accommodate a road that gives access for the proposed new development to get to Selborne Road. It is not a listed wall.

In the pipe line is an application for redevelopment of the area **65-75, High Street, N14**. This will all be demolished and 3 retail shops and 5 flats above on two floors, has been applied for. It proposes using the narrow road of Balaams Lane for access and with parking at the rear and the turning circle for delivery vans etc, it is quite tight.

There is no further news regarding **Truro House, N13, Broomfield House**, or **Cedar House, N21**. Hopefully there will be something to report in the next newsletter. **Crescent East & Crescent West, Hadley Wood**, are continually asking for extensions and alteration to what are large houses already. **Highlands Village, N21**, has to be watched and the latest application for a block of ten flats in land off Pennington Drive, including Public Open Space is not welcome. There was a small single storey building originally on the site that we believe was a health centre at some time, but it had little impact on the surroundings. This application most certainly would, and we had hoped the open land would be properly maintained and used for the benefit of the residents.

Any member interested in joining our friendly and informal Group who would like to telephone 0208 364 3500, would be most welcome.

Irene Stone, Group Chairman

Identify the Location

The postcard of Powys Lane, printed in the last newsletter, prompted a number of responses. It turned out to be quite an easy one to solve. The view showed the northern end of Powys Lane, looking towards the junction with Alderman's Hill. The 1912 Godfrey map of Palmers Green shows the houses clearly. On the right are the cottages which stood inside Broomfield Park. The houses on the left were demolished to make way for the present houses and for the new road of Forestdale. At this time the junction consisted of a small triangle of trees or bushes, which can be made out in the distance. We also have views of this scene taken in the opposite direction, from Cannon Hill. This rural scene is very different now!

The view in this edition is likely to prove more difficult to identify, although the caption reads "High Road, Palmers Green", so it is presumably Green Lanes. This card was posted exactly 100 years ago, in January 1908, but the scene is probably much earlier. Note the carriage driver in top hat!



History Group (November) – Shopping As It Used To Be

Our guest speaker, David Berguer, is Chairman of the Friern Barnet & District Local History Society, and many would have seen him being interviewed about Friern Hospital in the film clips shown at the recent Open Meeting.

David explained the origins of shopping, the evolution of shops, and the origins of the big stores we know today, illustrated by many views of shops and products from years ago to the present. A comparison of shops in Whetstone High Road, between 1952 and 2000 highlighted how many of the traditional shops, like greengrocers, butchers and bakers have been lost, many replaced by restaurants. The inexorable march of the supermarket chains has been a major factor in this, and just that week the Government had reported on this fact. Their solution? – build more supermarkets!

David had also brought with him many actual products and packaging from bygone years, which stimulated memories and discussion.

Colin Barratt

LAMAS Conference 17 Nov. 2007

This year's Local History Conference, organised by LAMAS (London & Middlesex Archaeological Society), was held in a new venue, the City of London School for Girls, as the Museum of London has been undergoing renovations.

The setting was very pleasant, as the school is situated in the heart of the Barbican, next to St. Giles church, and the conference hall had massive windows looking out across the narrow lake and fountains to the Barbican Centre.

The theme this year was **They came to London: 1000 Years of Migration**, and the speakers were specialists who had studied various immigrant communities in London, from medieval times to the present.

The opening talk was about the medieval Jewish community in London. Jews had been admitted to Britain by William 1, around 1070, under certain rules, but were restricted to London. Jewish settlements were first mentioned in the 13th Century. Their main synagogue was sited where Grocers Hall now stands. London Jewry became very wealthy, but their first two centuries in Britain had varied success. There were major anti-Jewish attacks in 1189, Royal protection was granted in 1221, but in 1290 Edward 1 thought Jewry were bringing the monarchy into disrepute, and expelled all Jews to France.

The London Hansa was the subject of the second talk. The Hansiatic League was an organisation of northern European merchants. Trading had taken place on the Thames waterfront from the Viking period. From 1100 the focus was on the wine trade, and the Guildhall was used as the League's base until the 16th Century. This area on the waterfront, known as the Steelyard, was badly damaged during the Great Fire of London. It never regained its prominent status as a trading centre, and in 1853 was sold to the Great Eastern Railway, who built Cannon Street Station on the site.

The third talk was going to be on the subject of the Troublesome Black Presence in the 18th Century, but this had to be cancelled, as the speaker was unwell.

The morning session ended with the announcement of the annual award for the best local history publication. This year it went to Camden Local History Society for "*Wartime St. Pancras*".

The three afternoon talks started with an examination of Little Italy in 19th Century London. Why was London such a magnet? There was seasonal migration from Italian farm workers, which gradually became more permanent. The 1851 census showed 1.3 million adults in London, of which 30,000 had been born abroad (2½ %). Most Italians settled in the Holborn area, and created many ethnic institutions. Their main occupations were street musicians, figure makers, looking glass and picture frame makers. The street musicians often combined this with ice cream selling. There was some anti-Italian feeling, including the so-called "Battle of the Barrels", where the owner of Bass Breweries attempted to ban barrel organs. An act was passed to prohibit street music, but had little impact. Were they a united group, or was class more important? An analysis of marriage records of the period indicated that the lower class London Italians (e.g. street musicians) tended to marry Italian born women and had Italian Godparents, whereas the skilled men (e.g. figure or looking glass makers) more often had English born wives and non-Italian Godparents. An attempt to enter English society perhaps!

The next talk featured the Rise and Fall of the German Community up to 1918. These were originally Hansiatic migrants in the 16th Century, but the Royal Hanoverian links in the 18th Century resulted in many Germans coming to Britain. This increased with the expansion of their population

in the early 19th Century, and refugees during periods of repression. Their occupations were often foreign correspondents, waiters or bakers, and they settled throughout London, although a large proportion were in the East End and central West End. They included all sections of the social scale. When World War 1 broke out, London Germans suffered badly. The Aliens Act resulted in internment, particularly on the Isle of Man, and several locations around London, such as Alexandra Palace. There was intense Germanophobia. Some changed their names, but this was soon banned. In May 1915 there were anti-German riots around the city, with businesses and homes attacked. In 1918 the German community was cut off, and about 60% were sent back to Germany.

The final talk brought the migration story up to date. During the 20th Century, the major groups of migrants have changed, Between 1900 and 1948 they were European, 1948 to 1989 New Commonwealth (due to need for work and workers), 1990 to 2007 Eastern European. The many and varied types of migrant were described, and the reasons why London has been, and remains, such a popular destination for migrants. Many areas of London now have high densities of immigrants from specific countries or regions (“spatial clustering”), such as Westminster (North Africans), Ealing (Indians and Punjabis), Elephant and Castle (Latin Americans). Finally, a case study of Tower Hamlets revealed that in the 17th and 18th Centuries the principal immigrants were Huguenots and Jews, in the 19th Century Irish and Eastern Europeans, and the 20th Century as the 19th plus Africans, Indians and Chinese. The predominant group now are Bangladeshi and Afro-Caribbeans. We were left with the question; “A Promised Land?”

Colin Barratt

Grovelands Park Wins a Green Flag!

The Green Flag Award is the national standard for parks and green spaces in England and Wales. The scheme was set up as a means of recognising and rewarding the best green spaces in the country. Last year, Grovelands Park successfully applied for a Green Flag, and the Green Flag Award website (www.greenflagaward.org.uk) gave the following description of the park:

“Grovelands Park is an area of parkland, fields and oak woodland in Southgate, North London, that contains a rich number of natural habitats, given the area of the park. There are also some important views within the park, particularly those looking to and from the main house (now the Priory Hospital) across an artificial lake.

These views illustrate important and attractive aspects of the Repton landscape. Grovelands Park is very accessible and well served by public transport. The London Underground, Piccadilly Line from Kings Cross and Central London stops at Southgate station, that is ten minutes walk from the park via Bourne Hill or Queen Elizabeth Drive. Besides those who play pitch and putt, bowls and who visit the children’s playground, the majority of visitors to Grovelands Park do not use formal facilities nor take part in organised activities; they quietly enjoy their visit by walking, exercising the dog, jogging, birdwatching or feeding ducks, squirrels and other wildlife, playing, picnicking, meeting friends and relaxing. There is a cafeteria in Grovelands Park, situated adjacent to the children’s playground. A “Friends of Grovelands Park” group was established in 2001. Local residents, visitors and persons representing such organisations as the local police, have become actively involved.”

It needs to be remembered that this award is given on an annual basis, and winners must apply each year to renew their Green Flag status.

Recognition for the Architecture of Arnos Grove Station

In October 2007, the Guardian newspaper ran a special series to showcase the best modern architecture around the world. The 12 buildings were the Empire State Building, Guggenheim Bilbao, Pompidou Centre, Casa Mila, Jewish Museum in Berlin, Eden Project, Swiss Re (Gherkin) Building, Sydney Opera House, Phaeno Science Centre, Notre Dame du Haut, Fallingwater and last but certainly not least Arnos Grove Station.



In the Enfield Independent, this ‘star’ status was greeted with surprise, but I’m sure most of us were glad to see recognition for one of our great local stations.

Arnos Grove station was built in 1932, when the Piccadilly Line was extended from Finsbury Park to Arnos Grove. It was designed by Charles Holden (1875-1960) for Frank Pick of the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB), the forerunner of today’s Transport for London.

Frank Pick as Chief Executive of the LPTB, wanted to fulfil his ideal of producing the best looking public transport network in the world. He recognised and recruited some of the most influential and talented artists of the time to develop a new generation of transport architecture, posters, typefaces, buses, tube trains, signs, tiles, maps and even litter bins. For us, in this area, it was his collaboration with Charles Holden which has most shaped our local environment.

Holden and Pick made numerous foreign trips to investigate modern architecture in northern Europe. Holden was particularly inspired by Stockholm City Library designed by Erik Gunnar Asplund and completed in 1928. The central rotunda, the simplicity of the design as well as the use of brick, steel and glass can clearly be seen as a major influence in Arnos Grove Station. The use of these materials and clean functional lines were incorporated into the other local Piccadilly Line stations he designed, such as Cockfosters, Oakwood, Southgate, Bounds Green and Wood Green. At the time these were considered daringly modern!

Pick’s vision of a functional but holistic transport system has been retained in many parts of the system. The danger for the future is that the clean simple lines are being eroded. Outside Arnos Grove the new signage for Transport for London and the various traffic signs make it difficult to see the frontage as it was originally conceived. Now as you move inside the first thing you see is a bright blue stand for the free newspapers, completely out of tune with the original design.

Recognition from architectural critics and major newspapers can only help us in our determination to maintain and conserve these important buildings. More importantly, perhaps it will encourage future generations of architects and council planners to reconsider the importance of integrated design within good quality local buildings.

Jane Maggs

Open Meeting 20 October 2007 'Our Local Area on Film'

This meeting had a late change of subject. Our Chairman suggested a repeat of the film show I did at the last History Group meeting, so I hoped that the interest shown there would be repeated here. Fortunately, there was time to publicise the subject, and it generated one of the largest attendances we have had. Almost 60 people turned up, including our local MP, David Burrowes.

The presentation included two DVDs which were not shown at the History Group. Although the showing was intended to be of our local area, I wanted to start with a taster of some of the very earliest films existing, produced by Robert Paul, a local cinema pioneer and instrument maker, who lived and worked in Muswell Hill. The first was a short scene of a rough sea at Dover, made in 1895, which was used by Thomas Edison in his first film shows in 1896. The next film showed a very busy Blackfriars Bridge in 1896, with horse drawn cabs, bicycles and pedestrians filling the scene.

Extracts from the Edgar Chard films of Southgate Methodist Church (1928, 1937 and 1950), Southgate area (1950) and Southgate celebrating the Coronation (1953) were shown again, as was the opening of St Paul's School, Winchmore Hill (1961) and Trolleybuses in North Finchley and Barnet (1961). Coming right up to date, I then showed part of a DVD of an episode of Hidden House History, made by the History Channel in 2006, which featured Friern Hospital (formerly Colney Hatch Asylum and now the luxurious Princess Park estate). This included an interview with local historian David Berguer (see also page 4), who described the life of inmates and the design of the asylum and grounds.

The meeting concluded with four more of Robert Paul's films with local connections:

- *The Camp Smithy* (1899) was a reconstruction of a Boer War scene, filmed on Muswell Hill Golf Course.
- *An Unfortunate Cab Accident* (1903) was a short comedy, shot in Sydney Road, Muswell Hill, where a man falls under a horse drawn cab, pretends to be dead, then runs off with his lady friend.
- *The ? Motorist* (1906), probably Paul's most well known film, a fantasy, where a couple out driving their car, run over a policeman, and escape capture by driving up the side of the Orange Tree pub in Friern Barnet, up into space, round the Moon and the rings of Saturn, before falling to Earth. They are caught, but bewilder their captors by changing their car into a horse drawn buggy, before turning it back into a car and speeding off!
- The final film was *The Unfortunate Policeman* (1905), which starts with a jealous young decorator tipping a pot of paint over a policeman, who then chases him around the streets (filmed in Wetherill Road and Colney Hatch Lane, Muswell Hill), colliding with various others on the way, who join the chase. The young man gets away, leaving the policeman to suffer the wrath of the others, to the piano accompaniment "A policeman's lot is not a happy one"!

As I said in the last newsletter, these films are a valuable archive of our local history. We know that others exist, and the Trust would like to add to its collection of local films. If you have one, or are aware of any, which we could borrow and copy, please let us know.

Colin Barratt

TO REMIND YOU.....

..... about **PUBLICATIONS** available from the Trust

The Cresswells of Winchmore Hill: a Gifted Victorian Family

By Peter Hodge - The story of a talented family and their achievements.

£9.50

Winchmore Hill: Memories of a Lost Village

By Henrietta Cresswell - A facsimile reprint of a charming account of Victorian Winchmore Hill, first published in 1912.

£6.00

Broomfield: An Illustrated History of the House and Garden

By Steven Brindle - A fully researched account of this historic Palmers Green Estate.

£2.50

Heritage Walks in the London Borough of Enfield

An illustrated guide to six walks in local Conservation Areas, including Southgate and Winchmore Hill (published by Enfield Preservation Society in association with Southgate District Civic Trust)

£7.50

Maps

Reprints of large-scale Ordnance Survey plans of the village centre:

Winchmore Hill, 1865

£1.50

Winchmore Hill, 1896 (published by Alan Godfrey)

£2.50

Postcards

Coloured postcards of Southgate, Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green

Southgate, set of 6 cards

£1.50

Winchmore Hill and Palmers Green, set of 7 cards

£1.50

Early 20th century views of the district, set of 4 cards

£4.00

Oakleaves No. 3

The latest issue of the Trust's local history bulletin, including articles on New Southgate, Bowes Manor, the New River, John Walker of Southgate, Stevie Smith of Palmers Green and much more.

Members

£4.75

Non Members

£5.25

Prices include post and packing.

All these publications are available from the Trust at 64 Houndsden Road, N21 1LY.

Please make cheques payable to *Southgate District Civic Trust*.