

Newsletter

Southgate District Civic Trust



No. 199 January 2007

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COMING EVENTS

OPEN MEETING Saturday 10th March 2007 at 2.30pm.

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

“Current GLA Projects which will affect Enfield”

Joanne McCartney, of the Greater London Authority, will be discussing the proposed projects which are likely to affect the lives of residents of our area. These will include “green” initiatives, planning proposals and the North Circular Road.

Everyone welcome.

HISTORY GROUP MEETING

Wednesday 7th March 2007

at 7.30pm.

**Friends Meeting House,
Church Hill, N21**

ALL WELCOME

“The History of Southgate Cycling Club”

by Tom Morley



OTHER DATES FOR YOUR DIARY:

Wed. 2 nd May 2007	History Group	“A Tangled Web: London’s Overground Railways” by Peter Hodge
Jan./Feb./Mar. 2007	Three Suburban Walks	See page 3
Sat. 5 th May 2007	Annual General Meeting	See page 6

Contributions to the April newsletter should be sent by Friday 9th March 2007

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Notice to Newsletter Distributors:- We hope to deliver the next newsletter to distributors during week commencing 9th April 2007.

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).

Report of the Open Meeting (28th October 2006)

RESTORATION OF BROOMFIELD HOUSE

The speaker at our Open Meeting in October was the architect Peter Riddington, a local resident who has had a major part to play in preparing the detailed proposal for the future restoration of fire-ravaged Broomfield House. The meeting attracted a large audience of approximately 60.

It is now almost 23 years since the first fire at the house, and Peter posed the question, “why was it important to restore it?” He started by stating that he would not be discussing the issues of changing the covenant or the sale of an area of the park.

Broomfield House is a Grade II* listed building and part of a metropolitan open space. It had fabric dating from 1550, in a historic landscape. Peter illustrated how the house had begun, as no more than a hall and wing in 1550, and over the next 270 years how it was extended and re-modelled into a multi-gabled country house. He stressed that the history of the house was shared with the garden – it cannot be separated.



*Watercolour of the west front of Broomfield House, c.1800.
(From 'Broomfield. An Illustrated History of the House and Garden' by Steven Brindle. Publ. SDCT, 1994)*

Its first owner was a John Broomfield, and by the early 1600s it was owned by the Jackson family, who made major alterations in the 150 years of their ownership, to both the house and the surrounding land. The Jacksons employed Gerard Lanscroun to create the murals in 1726, which consisted of 50 figures, and they had the baroque staircase built at the same time.

In 1820 the Jackson family sold the house to the Lybbe Powys family, who removed the gables and installed a parapet roof. In 1903 Southgate Urban District Council bought the house and created a public park. In the 1930s they removed the stucco and put half timbering on the front.

In the 20th century the house was used as a school after 1907, and many would remember the baby clinic, which was there until the 1980s. Its museum was its most well known feature, and was, in fact, the most popular local museum in the country!

The fire in 1984 started in a cupboard under the stairs, and destroyed much of the roof, but also exposed medieval fabric, which no-one was aware of previously. A second fire in 1994 was actually more damaging, when arsonists set light to a stack of rescued wooden items, in the central area of the house, but much material still survives.

The Task Force, which was set up to consider the restoration, had several issues for the house:

- It should be accessible for the community
- It must have a long term future
- Any changes should be relative to the wider park area
- Archaeology should be taken into account
- New uses may affect the fabric and the park.

In any restoration project, a change of use has to be viable, and it was proposed to build an additional extension, to be used for lettings. There is a shortage of large function rooms in this area, and this would seat up to 150. The present stable yard would be converted to a car park. The house itself would be restored to the Lybbe Powys form, not the 1930s half timbered façade.

The plan included a café with a conservatory, various rooms for rent and a shop. The first floor would provide a large room, accessed by lift, and the original staircase and murals would also be restored into their original position.

In 2003 Listed Building consent was given for these plans. We were shown an animated architectural impression of the restored house and extension, revolving in the style of Time Team!

Peter concluded by answering his question of why the house should be restored.

- The 1726 stair hall is the gem of the house
- The panels and chimney are 16th century
- It is the centrepiece of the 18th century park
- It forms the cohesive remains of a country house
- It has local significance, as the last pre-suburban area in Palmers Green

The current estimated cost of the restoration is £4 - £5 million. At the end of November 2006 a Land Tribunal was due to consider the application for a change of use which would involve lifting the Covenants, and as Peter was appearing as an expert witness he could not discuss these.

If the application is successful, he hoped that work on the restoration could commence in the near future, assuming that funding was available. This was outside the scope of his presentation.

(Two weeks after this meeting, Enfield Council withdrew its bid to lift the covenants before the Land Tribunal case had started, so the future of Broomfield House is again uncertain.)

Colin Barratt

THREE SUBURBAN WALKS

The Museum of Domestic Design and Architecture (MoDA) have produced booklets of three walks, going from and to our local Underground stations. Sue Jacobs has offered to lead walks based on these booklets over the next three months.

The details are as follows:

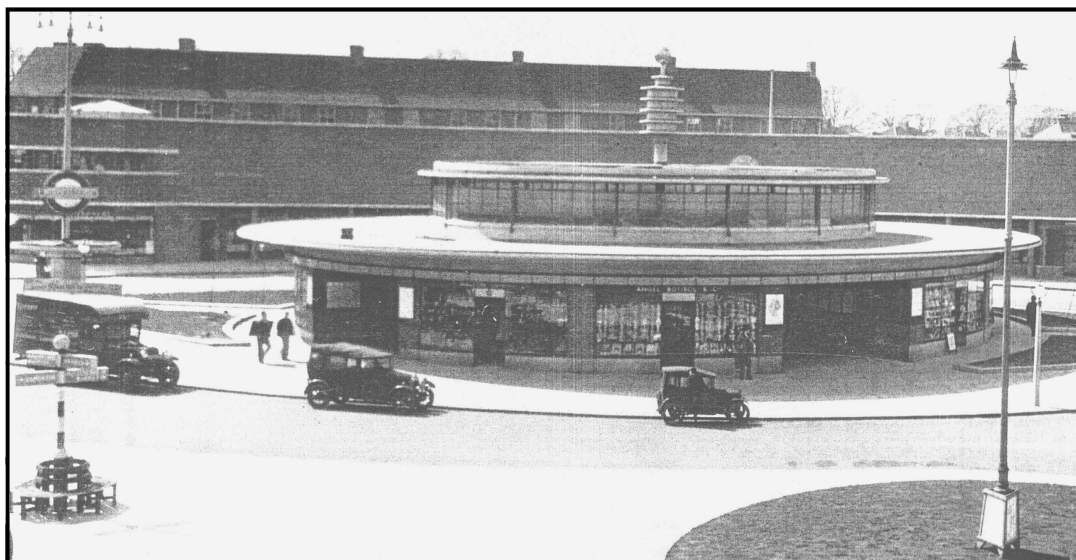
Saturday 27th January Arnos Grove to Southgate
(meet at Arnos Grove station at 2pm)

Saturday 24th February Southgate to Oakwood
(meet at Southgate station at 2pm)

Saturday 24th March Oakwood to Cockfosters
(meet at Oakwood station at 2pm)

These will be linear walks, returning to the start point by tube, and will look at architectural points of interest en route. Duration of each approx. 2 hours.

For further information ring Sue Jacobs on 020 8360 0268.



Southgate Station. It doesn't look like this now!

“LOST LONDON”

LAMAS LOCAL HISTORY CONFERENCE

Museum of London, 18th November 2006

The annual Local History Conference of the London & Middlesex Archaeological Society (LAMAS) has become a regular fixture in the Trust's calendar, and we were well represented at the 2006 Conference which took as its theme “Lost London”. This was explored from various angles in six lectures.

Dr. Jeremy Ashbee of English Heritage spoke about the lost royal palace at the Tower of London. There was little archaeological evidence of this, but from illustrations and documents it had been possible to piece together the history of this structure. Buildings from the reign of Henry III (1216 - 1272) had served as royal lodgings for more than a century, though they had never been popular with the royal court and had from time to time been used for more mundane purposes such as the storage of documents.

Staying in the Middle Ages, Dr. Vanessa Harding of the University of London traced the origins, development and demise of the many religious houses in London. The Benedictine and Augustinian orders were later joined by the Knights Templar, the Carthusians and the various orders of Friars. Although none of these houses survived the Reformation, the names of some live on in London place names such as Austin Friars, Charterhouse and of course the Temple.

The morning session closed with an overview by Hermione Hobhouse of lost London buildings (and some that were saved). In the afternoon we explored the lost rivers of London with Nicholas Barton, whose book on that subject was first published over 40 years ago. Jim Connor, a railway historian, then took us 'down the Tube' on a visit to some closed deep-level Underground stations, whose dark and dank passages and subways still lie, silent and unsuspected, beneath our feet. The conference concluded with Kelvin MacDonald, from the Royal Town Planning Institute, highlighting some of the lost opportunities of the Abercrombie Plan for the rebuilding of London after the Second World War.

Winner of the 2006 LAMAS local history publications award was the Camden History Society; the runner-up was Merton Historical Society. These, together with the Trust and other societies, displayed their work and publications at the Conference. All the signs are that the study of London's local history is alive and well. One hopes, however, that when the ongoing rebuilding of the museum is complete, a lecture theatre that neither bakes nor freezes its occupants will be provided. On this occasion we sweltered!

Peter Hodge

Events at MoDA in 2007

Exhibition "Come Out to Live – Come In to Play"

This runs until 3rd June 2007, and tells the story of the relationship between London and its suburbs, and the impact the extension of the Underground lines had on the development of suburbs. This is done by using London Underground posters from the 1920's and 1930's. These represent some of the best of poster design in the 20th Century, by some of the most famous graphic artists of the period. The posters show how commercial designers were influenced by the avant-garde and modernist art of the time.

Tour Saturday 3rd March - Informal guided tour of the above exhibition, by curator Jane Audas (cost £6).

Study Day Saturday 17th March – "Constructed Landscapes"

Speakers will discuss how the 1920's and 1930's posters, and other material, represented the suburban and rural environments of the period. (cost £35, concessions £27).

TOWN PLANNING GROUP

Since the last Newsletter report the Group have dealt with 23 applications apart from other planning business that we find ourselves involved in.

Also, during the winter months, we have been meeting in the afternoon, at 2pm, to avoid as far as possible the dark evenings. Of course only those members of the Group who are not working full time can attend during the day. If any member of the Trust feels that this is a more suitable time for them and would like to attend a meeting please contact me. The Festive Season and public holidays have fortunately given us fewer applications during this period.

It is now possible for Town Planning applications to be seen by any member of the public on the Enfield Council website at 'www.enfield.gov.uk'. We will continue to receive applications and plans for our Conservation Areas from the Council. Should anyone wish to see one of these that is of interest to them they can still contact me.

The latest and most locally interesting application is that for the re-development of the former **King Easton Garden Centre**, Station Road, N21. This is a very narrow piece of land and not particularly suitable for residential purposes. The application included a shop with flats above, fronting Station Road. We objected to the eight flats development and the proposed shop, as did the neighbouring residents and the Conservation Advisory Group. We expect further drawings to be produced.

Trees are playing a part in our applications more often now, and we do try and conserve as many as possible. Alex Campbell is the arboricultural officer at the Council should anyone wish to ask his advice on any tree matters.

*Irene Stone
Group Chairman*

“EDMONTON: ANCIENT VILLAGE TO WORKING CLASS SUBURB”

by David Pam, FR Hist.S

Published by Edmonton Hundred Historical Society

David Pam's latest publication comprises an introduction and 11 stories about aspects of Edmonton history. Education and pauperism feature prominently among them. Latymer School (founded 1624), the Girls' Charity School (1784) and the boarding schools of Fore Street (19th century) have their own sections. The stories of the Parish and Union workhouses seem shocking to the 21st century reader, while the goings-on at the pauper children's home at Millfield House would constitute a modern social worker's worst nightmare. Other accounts cover the two railway lines through Edmonton, the lost mansion of Pymmes, and All Saints Church. The author concludes with personal recollections of his childhood on the Hyde estate.

As with so much of David Pam's writing, solid history is enriched with anecdote and incidents drawn from extensive research undertaken over many years. Whether it is rioting 17th century anti-papists pulling down the Leake Chapel at All Saints Church, or disgruntled 19th century workmen hurling the contents of their dinner baskets at the railway police, colourful characters emerge to enliven each story as it unfolds. The 38-page text is supported by 22 well-reproduced illustrations and a map of Elizabethan Edmonton. Although the latter includes those parts of Southgate then in Edmonton Parish, the text is confined to that part of the former parish now commonly called Edmonton.

The booklet is available from Edmonton Hundred Historical Society, 18 Huxley Place, Palmers Green, N13 5SU, price £5.50 including postage and packing. Cheques should be made payable to EHHS.

Peter Hodge

AGM REMINDER

This year's AGM will take place on **Saturday 5th May** at Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14, starting at 2.30 pm. Put the date in your diary!

THE SAVOY VAULTS – an Update

Following the unveiling in September of an information board at the Savoy Vaults, in New Southgate Cemetery, (reported in the last newsletter), the Cemetery Manager contacted me in December, suggesting I may like to look at the area again.



When I visited the vaults, I saw that the board was now at the centre of a flower bed, with a small paved area around it. This was quite a surprise! It has made the board a more attractive feature, and may encourage more visitors to stop and look at it, while providing a more stable surface to stand on.

Colin Barratt

CORRECTIONS - DAVID BURROWES, MP.

Some of the details in the last Newsletter relating to surgeries by David Burrowes MP, have now changed. The correct times and venues are as follows:

1st Friday at Bowes Library, 4 – 6 pm on a first come, first served basis.

2nd Friday at 1 Chaseville Parade, Winchmore Hill, 10 – 12 noon, on an appointment only basis.

3rd Friday at 1 Chaseville Parade, Winchmore Hill, 3.30 – 5.30pm, on an appointment only basis.

4th Friday at 1 Chaseville Parade, Winchmore Hill, 10 – 12 noon on an appointment only basis.

The last Saturday at Southgate Town Hall, next to Palmers Green Library, 9.30 – 11.30am, on a first come first served basis.

To make an appointment for 2nd, 3rd and 4th Fridays, please ring 020 8360 0234. If you have any difficulty with these times, David is introducing a mobile surgery, so you should ring the same number to make an alternative arrangement.