

Southgate District Civic Trust

Newsletter
No. 243
Jan. 2018



Website: www.southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk
Facebook: www.facebook.com/southgatedistrictcivictrust

COMING EVENTS

OPEN MEETING

Saturday 24th February 2018 at 2.00pm

Church House, Christ Church Parish Centre, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG

“The Conservation Conversation: Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation in the Southgate District”

The speakers at this Open Meeting will be **Ian Harvey**, Executive Director of Civic Voice and **Bridget Pereira**, Conservation Officer, London Borough of Enfield.

Ian will speak about the work of Civic Voice in the ‘big conservation conversation’ and from a national perspective why "My Conservation Area Matters". Bridget will tell us about the important work of the local conservation team in our Borough.

In addition to our speakers there will be exhibitions from local civic and residents groups based in the SDCT area. So this promises to be an interesting and informative afternoon.

PLEASE NOTE the earlier date and start time and new venue

(See page 6 for more details)

ALL WELCOME

Other Dates for your Diary:

AGM - This will be held on Saturday 28th April. (See page 14 for details).

History Group - This year there will be only two meetings, instead of five. These will be on Tues. 8th May and Tues. 11th Sept. The subjects and speakers are still to be arranged.

Contributions to the April newsletter should be sent by Friday 16th March

to the Editor: Colin Barratt, 48 Maplin Close, Winchmore Hill, London, N21 1NB

Tel: 020 3302 4997 e-mail: colin_barratt@yahoo.co.uk

Copies will be emailed, hand delivered or posted during week commencing **9th April 2018**.

Southgate District Civic Trust ~ Established to conserve and enhance the environment in Southgate, New Southgate, 7ockfosters, Palmers Green, Winchmore Hill and Hadley Wood.
(Registered as an amenity society with **Civic Voice**).



Civic Voice Convention and AGM Wakefield 20-21 October 2017



In October, the eighth Civic Voice Convention and AGM were held in Wakefield. [Graham Davis](#), [Chris Horner](#), [Jane Maggs](#) and [Elaine Tyler](#) represented Southgate District Civic Trust at the event hosted by Wakefield Civic Society.

Friday's events started with a welcome by Chair Joan Humble and a lively introduction to Wakefield by Kevin Trickett President of the Wakefield Civic Trust. Followed by a thought provoking presentation by Vice President Laura Sandys.

Then, it was onto the walks and tours. Between the four of us, we managed to see a range of interesting parts of Wakefield. A tour led by Kevin Trickett showed us the County Hall, Civic Quarter and Conservation Areas. We were all fascinated by the historic civic buildings and how they are used now, but recognised the challenges Wakefield faces.



We were particularly interested to see the office space made available to the Civic Society by the council. Here they are able to hold all their meetings as well as have permanent storage. We were all agreed that this is something SDCT sadly lacks.

Other tours included the Theatre Royal, which dates from 1894 designed by Frank Matcham and the amazing David Chipperfield designed Hepworth Gallery opened in 2012.

On both Friday and Saturday, we attended some thought proving workshops, including discussions on change and modernisation in the civic movement, meeting the challenges of recruitment, motivation and continuity. Other workshops focused on Conservation Areas and how civic societies can participate in local development and planning matters. The speakers included a range of industry experts.

An interesting workshop was about the Placecheck tool, by its founder Rob Cowan (see picture right). He explained how the tool worked, how it has been used as the first step to a community-led conservation area appraisal. A group of us then went out onto the streets of Wakefield to test it out. It is an app based system easily used on a smart phone or tablet.



In the picture (left) you can see a group of us entering and reviewing data about this cobbled street. This app is something we will be seriously consider for evaluating our local areas. So if you see a group of people standing talking animatedly whilst staring at their phones – it could be a placecheck!

On the Saturday, of course the key workshop was that on Civic Day, where [Chris Horner](#) and I were able to present to a group of attendees on Southgate Civic Week, both the highlights and the lessons learnt. It gave us an opportunity to share experiences and encourage other societies to have a go.

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As in previous years, the Civic Voice Convention was an opportunity to get together with members of other societies to share their issues, learn from each other and we all came away with new ideas and plans to put in to practice!

At Saturday's AGM there was a discussion about the future plans for Civic Voice. It is clear to all that this organisation has many challenges, but that it is vital as our voice to central government. In this time of local change, with political and financial challenges it is imperative that local civic groups have a voice. The future of this movement and some of the key decisions needed were discussed; these will be included in future newsletters.



The photo left shows the four SDCT attendees with the Civic Day Award. This was taken outside the convention venue while Storm Brian battered Wakefield! L to R: Graham Davis, Elaine Tyler, Jane Maggs & Chris Horner.

Next year, the Civic Voice Annual Convention will be heading to the historic city of Birmingham. [Why not join a delegation from SDCT?](#)

Jane Maggs

Photos courtesy Chris Horner, Jane Maggs and Civic Voice

SOUTHGATE CIVIC WEEK 2017 An award-winning week



We are thrilled that at the **Civic Voice Convention** in October, Southgate District Civic Trust was presented with a **CIVIC DAY AWARD 2017**, for 'An Outstanding Contribution'.

The award was collected by Chris Horner and Jane Maggs, pictured on left with all the Civic Day award winners and Civic Voice Chair Joan Humble (photo courtesy Civic Voice).

We were all delighted to receive this award as it recognised the amazing week we had with *Southgate Civic Week 2017*. It also acknowledged the wonderful spirit of community in this area, and the work put in by everyone involved to make the week happen.

Civic Day 2018 will be on Saturday 23rd June. If you want to be involved, just e-mail : info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk.

Jane Maggs

HISTORY GROUP MEETING NOV. 2017 “RURAL LIFE” – A DVD

As announced in the last newsletter, I hired a DVD from Film London, one of their “Britain on Film” series, for this meeting, which contained 12 short films of various rural activities and events over the past 100 years.

The first gave us a tour of the Cambrian hills of Scotland in 1929. The second followed a shepherd in 1932 checking his sheep and searching for a lost lamb. The third showed a village celebrating the Silver Jubilee of King George V in 1935, including traditional children’s sports events. The next was a BBC film from 1964, which discussed the pros and cons of a village in Northern Ireland that was a “dry” village, with no pubs, and its neighbour with six pubs visible from the village centre. A 1931 film called the Village Pet showed a seal which had somehow found itself in a village pond. It had been adopted by the villagers who brought fish for it. A 1951 film “West of England” explored the various industries in this part of the country, with a script written by author Laurie Lee. The most recent film “Cold War Villages” spoke to residents of villages which had been set up with rudimentary defences, supposed to protect them from nuclear attack. It could almost have been a “Dad’s Army” episode.

Unfortunately, the DVD stopped at this point and, in spite of several attempts, wouldn’t show us the final five films. (Annoyingly, when tested a few days later it worked perfectly!).

This DVD, and the others in the series, show us how important it is to preserve these films of the past for future generations.

Colin Barratt

THE DRAFT LONDON PLAN

The London Plan is one of the most important documents for this city. It’s a strategic plan, which shapes how London evolves and develops. All planning decisions should follow London Plan policies, and it sets a policy framework for local plans across London.



This new London Plan will be used to develop the Enfield Local Plan, which is currently in progress. It will have a huge bearing on our lives in Enfield.

Although, the current 2016 consolidation Plan is still the adopted Development Plan, the Draft London Plan is a material consideration in planning decisions. It gains more weight as it moves through the process to adoption.

Consultation on the draft London Plan

Consultation on this plan is now open. All comments must be received by 5pm on Friday 2nd March 2018. SDCT will be examining the plan and intends to enter comments during the consultation period. If you would like to be involved in this review, please contact me via:
info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.co.uk.

You can find more on the plan on the London Assembly website (www.london.gov.uk).

There will be a number of consultation events, including one in Enfield on 12th January. See the London website for details.

The full link to the plan is: <https://www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan>

Jane Maggs

OPEN MEETING – Saturday 28th October 2017

London recorded by camera: Street Photography in the East End *Stefan Dickers from the Bishopsgate Institute*



Stefan Dickers gave a fascinating talk to a packed hall and showed a wide range of street photographs from the Bishopsgate Institute collection dating from the 1850s to the present day.

Stefan is the Special Collections and Archives Manager at the Bishopsgate Institute and looks after its numerous collections on London History. He started at the Institute in 2005 and has previously worked in the archives of the London School of Economics and Senate House Library.

He started this talk with a brief history of the Bishopsgate Institute, which first opened its doors in 1895. The nearby parish of St Botolph-without-Bishopsgate had been collecting charitable endowments from their congregation for over 500 years. Eventually, the church had to do something positive with all this money, so the Rector, Reverend William Rogers, set up the Institute to provide a public library and cultural centre for people living and working in the City of London. This remains their ethos to this day.



It started as a lending library, but has gradually evolved into a special collections library. They were extremely fortunate that the first librarian spent a huge amount of money buying books, maps and street photographs. Fortunately, the library continues to expand with new material acquired either through donation or purchase. Amazingly, the Institute is still supported by that original church fund.

Having given us some background, Stefan went on to explain that the photo collection started in response to concerns about how many buildings in the area were being knocked down. It was conceived as a way of recording the streets as they changed. A process that continues to this day, as in 2006 Stefan sent his staff out to photograph all the buildings in the streets around Bishopsgate Institute. Once they were all documented, he sent them out to start again! This is creating an incredible continuous archive of the area for future generations; an idea we should consider for our area.

Stefan showed the work of various photographers, explaining the reasons they were taken and the original use made of them. What he emphasised was his interest in the content i.e. historical, political and cultural. It was amazing to be able to zoom in on particular shops or people, to look at their clothes, shop wares, crowds and other details of daily life.



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The East End of London has changed enormously over the years, with waves of immigration and political changes. It has played a central role in the development of photography where the social conditions of the area and its people have fascinated generations of photographers. This talk gave us a unique look at the changes and developments. I have found it impossible to include details of all the photos and collections shown, but I am sure that everyone who came to the meeting will agree it was an interesting and thought provoking afternoon.

Jane Maggs

Photos: Courtesy of Bishopsgate Institute & Mervyn Maggs

OPEN MEETING – 2pm Saturday 24th February 2018

The Conservation Conversation: Celebrating 50 Years of Conservation in the Southgate District

The speakers at the Open Meeting will be **Ian Harvey**, Executive Director, Civic Voice and **Bridget Pereira**, Conservation Officer, London Borough of Enfield.

We are pleased to welcome these two speakers at such a timely moment for us in this area. As you are aware in 2017, the civic movement celebrated the 50th anniversary of the enactment of the Civic Amenities Act, which enabled the formation of Conservation Areas. This anniversary was the theme of Southgate Civic Week 2017. In 2018 we will be celebrating 50 years since the creation of **Southgate Green** and **Winchmore Hill Green** Conservation Areas.



When conservation area legislation was introduced 50 years ago, there was widespread public concern over the pace of redevelopment in our historic towns and cities. Today there are over 10,000 conservation areas in the UK reflecting the popularity of this legislative tool in identifying and protecting our most valued historic places.

In the London Borough of Enfield we have been very fortunate in our Conservation Officers and the level of support for conservation in general. However, nationwide there has been a 33% reduction (since 2008) in these key officers. This means that the civic movement forms a key line of defence to champion the importance of conservation areas. With funding cuts and continued pressure on local authority conservation staff, the problem is likely to get worse and there is always a danger we could find ourselves joining the ranks of 'Conservation Areas at Risk'.

At this key time, we are incredibly fortunate to have **Ian Harvey** to speak about the work of Civic Voice in the 'big conservation conversation' and from a national perspective why "My Conservation Area Matters". We also look forward to hearing from **Bridget Pereira** on the important work of our local conservation team.

In addition to our speakers there will be exhibitions from local civic and residents groups based in the SDCT area. So this promises to be an interesting and informative afternoon.

Time & venue (note earlier start time and new venue):

2pm Saturday 24th February 2018

Church House, Christ Church Parish Centre, 7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG

Photo of Ian Harvey: courtesy Civic Voice

PLANNING GROUP REPORT

Hadley Wood now has a Study Group of its own and we no longer deal with any applications for that area. We are continuing to send reports on Town Planning applications in Winchmore Hill Green and Vicars Moor Lane, even though recently they created a Study Group for themselves, because we have many members there and we represent them. This applies also to Southgate Green Study Group, with whom we have worked very closely since their conception some 12 years ago. Our broad field of interests and opinions should be included in our planning meetings, as this gives us a wider scope of involvement.

The SDCT and our Planning Group with its representation on the Conservation Advisory Group has always had a good name with LBE and looked after conservation areas when they asked us to, going back to when they were designated in the 1970/80's. Winchmore Hill Green and Southgate Green were in 1968. It is right that local residents should be providing Study groups of their own after all this time. We still have a responsibility for Southgate Circus CA and Highlands CA.

A new Nandos restaurant has opened in Southgate Circus, N14 in a very prominent position near the listed station and it could liven up Station Parade and its listed buildings. They have now asked for seating on the curved external area and we have suggested a temporary approval to see if it does not obstruct the pedestrian way and is kept clean and tidy.

Tudor Way, N14 also in Southgate Circus has a car park in the centre of a semi-circle at the rear of shops with flats above. It is not attractive but it is on the borders of the conservation area, and has to be treated as such. A previous application proposed four houses. This was refused, and we now have a proposal for ten flats that could be an over development of that piece of land.

There has been an amended application for a fourth Cottage on Church Hill, N21 that is an improvement in our opinion. The alternative would be that it is decided by the conservation officer that there should not be an additional cottage there at all, because the three existing Cottages are considered an historic group and recommend that it be refused planning approval.

The Fox Public House in Palmers Green, N13 (locally listed and an Asset of Community Value): Its application to be partly demolished and have an extension of flats has now been received and there have been many objections from every interested association in Enfield.

The empty Winchmore Hill Police Station, 687, Green Lanes, N21 (Grade 2 listed) is proposed to become residential flats and houses, and this is acceptable. The existing frontage is to remain with the steps, railings and lamp. The cell blocks at the rear and the main building will be converted into living accommodation but it is whether the new buildings at the rear and side will be of a sufficient interesting design is the concern.

Broomfield House: In the coming months officers will undertake further work required by Historic England for further testing options.

Irene Stone

ALL PARTY PARLIAMENTARY GROUP FOR CIVIC SOCIETIES

Civic Voice will continue to be an ever-present voice for the movement in Parliament through the **All Party Parliamentary Group for Civic Societies** events. There are currently three events in the pipeline with the first event taking place on **31st January**, debating the "*The future of conservation areas*". SDCT is a member of Civic Voice, so this event will be open to all SDCT members.

As the Newsletter went to print, details of how to register were not available. These will be sent out in an SDCT E-news mail when received. If you are not on e-mail, or do not currently receive SDCT E-News and would like to be informed, please contact me on 074153 16818.

Jane Maggs

CAPTAIN ALLASTAIR McREADY-DIARMID VC – A COMMEMORATION IN NEW SOUTHGATE

As reported in the last newsletter, a ceremony had been arranged for Friday 1st December in Grove Road, New Southgate, to unveil a memorial paving slab commemorating the award of a Victoria Cross to Captain Allastair McReady-Diarmid. He was born at 8 Grove Road in 1888, and his name was originally Arthur Malcolm Drew, but he changed it when he joined the army. The ceremony was organised by Enfield Council, with the help of members of Southgate District Civic Trust and the London, Westminster and Middlesex Family History Society. This was one of hundreds of ceremonies which have been held across the country to recognise the brave actions of VC winners from World War 1.

Each ceremony and method of mounting the slab is different. After a group of us visited Grove Road earlier in the year, we suggested a location to Enfield Council, which was alongside the main footpath through the Grove Road Open Space (known locally as “The Bombie”, as it was a bomb site for many years after WW2). This small park had recently been upgraded, and would provide a good site for the ceremony. This was agreed, and a large granite block was obtained for the mounting.

The slabs are provided by the Government, and contain simply a large engraved Victoria Cross, the name, rank and regiment of the recipient and the date of the action which resulted in the award. It was thought that there should be more details shown about why the award was made, and a stainless steel plaque was produced with an engraved inscription explaining the details of the action. Two recesses were cut into the granite stone, so that the engraved slab could be set in one, and the plaque in the other.

The plaque reads *“Allastair Malcolm Cluny McReady-Diarmid was born in Grove Road, New Southgate in March 1888 and was a posthumous recipient of the highest award for bravery, the Victoria Cross, whilst serving as a soldier in World War I. On the 30th November 1917 at the Moeuvres Sector in northern France, after the enemy had penetrated into the allies position, Captain McReady-Diarmid of the Middlesex Regiment (Duke of Cambridge’s Own) led his company in a series of engagements through a heavy barrage to drive the enemy back. The following day, though the enemy continued to attack, Captain McReady-Diarmid led a further successful counter-attack, driving the enemy back to their original starting point, but was sadly killed by a bomb”*.

Eileen Bostle, who is a member of SDCT and the Family History Society, had traced a number of descendants of McReady-Diarmid’s family who, although living elsewhere in the UK, were able to be present at, and take part in, the ceremony. I had been asked to provide a short history of what Grove Road and its surroundings were like when McReady-Diarmid was born there, which was used in the printed Order of Service.



At the start twelve cadets from Queen Elizabeth’s School in Barnet formed a line either side of the memorial stone, as a guard of honour. (McReady-Diarmid had attended this school, while living in Barnet).

There were several members of the Princess of Wales’ Royal Regiment (successor to the Middlesex Regiment), and the Royal British Legion. We were also honoured to have a current VC recipient in attendance, Sgt Johnson BeHarry, who received the award in 2005.

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Cllr Doug Taylor, Leader of Enfield Council, opened the proceedings, saying “The bravery and sacrifice shown by Enfield’s Victoria Cross winners is humbling, and it is right and proper that the communities in which these brave men were raised should celebrate their bravery”. Speeches were also made by Ann Cable, Deputy Lieutenant for the London Borough of Enfield, Cllr Daniel Anderson, Cabinet Member for Environment and Lieutenant Colonel D W Utting, Army Headquarters London District.

Unveiling the stone is former Mayor of Enfield, Cllr Patricia Ekechi, and Andrew Leach, a descendant of McReady-Diarmid’s family.



There followed prayers and the blessing of the stone by Rev Fr Mark McAulay of nearby St Paul’s Church, New Southgate. Wreaths were laid in front of the stone by Doug Taylor, Cllr Anderson and Diana Bladwell (also a descendant of the family). The ceremony ended with The Last Post and The Reveille, by a bugler from the Princess of Wales’ Royal Regiment.

We moved across to St Paul’s church hall for refreshments afterwards, where I had set up a small display about McReady-Diarmid.

This was a very successful event, attended by many local organisations and local people, and was carried out with due reverence for his sacrifice exactly 100 years ago. The memorial stone will now be a permanent reminder to local people of this brave man.

Colin Barratt

FRIENDS OF THE LAKES ESTATE CONSERVATION AREA

Do you live in the Lakes Estate Conservation Area? Are you interested in helping preserve its character? We are a group of residents who assist Council officers in safeguarding the Estate’s unique character as described in the Conservation Area Appraisal.

One of the roles of the group is to comment on planning applications in the area. Another role is in sharing suggestions on how residents can modernise their homes whilst also keeping the character of the area.

The Friends are also represented on the Enfield-wide Conservation Advisory Group giving us a voice in wider conservation and heritage issues.

We are looking for new Friends to sign up. There is no formal organisation so, depending on your time, interest and expertise you can express your general support through to advising on design and planning issues. We are also looking for one Friend to help as the coordinator.

If you are interested in being a Friend, please contact: adrianeday1@btinternet.com

You can find out more about the Lakes Estate Conservation Area at:

<https://www.palmersgreencommunity.org.uk/pgc/friends-of-the-lakes-estate-conservation-area>

SDCT VISIT TO BISHOPSGATE INSTITUTE & SPITALFIELDS

Tuesday 30th January 2018

Following on from the hugely interesting talk by Stefan Dickers at the Open Meeting, we have arranged for him to give us a tour around the Bishopsgate Institute.

We will be able to look around this unusual Grade II* listed building and see the collections in more detail, including some of those described in Stefan's talk.

In the afternoon, we will visit the spectacular Hawksmoor designed Grade 1 listed Christ Church, Spitalfields, with our member Stan Rondeau. Time permitting we will also explore the streets around the church.

Stan helps at the church regularly and you can find out more about his association with church in a Spitalfields Life article (<http://spitalfieldslife.com/2010/08/13/stanley-rondeau-huguenot/>).

Details of the day:

Both Bishopsgate Institute and Christ Church are minutes from *Liverpool Street Station*. Details of the meeting place will be sent out closer to the time.

11am: tour of Bishopsgate Institute with Stefan Dickers, Special Collections and Archives Manager

2pm: visit to Christ Church, Spitalfields and if time nearby Spitalfields with Stan Rondeau

Note: These visits are separate, so you can opt for only one or both.

In between the visits there will be time for lunch at one of the many local hostelrys.

The visit is open to all, but you must register in advance with the number of people included, preferably by e-mail to: info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk (with subject: Bishopsgate Institute & Spitalfields Visit) or you can call me on: 074153 16818.

Jane Maggs

WHAT'S IN A NAME?

Southgate District Civic Trust (SDCT) hardly trips off the tongue as a name for our organisation. It would be good to identify a new snappier name that made clear what we are about and also caught the attention of prospective new members.

The name should indicate both the area we cover and our interests. So we clearly need to include Southgate in the name. Should it be Southgate District or Area? Does Civic mean much to people these days? What is a Trust? Should we try to get across the idea that we are a community based organisation? Should we show some affinity to the national organisation to which we are affiliated, Civic Voice?

My suggestion for a new name is Southgate District Voice. Do you like that name or do you have other suggestions?

One possibility would be to adopt a shorter name for most purposes, but leave the official full name unchanged. This would have the advantage of requiring no change to our website address.

Please send me your views on a change of name for SDCT. My email address is:

grahamjdavisuk@gmail.com

I should like to propose a change to our name at the AGM in April.

Graham Davis
Chairman

GRAHAM BEECH MEMORIAL AWARD

Last year SDCT created an annual award in Graham Beech's name, as a way to remember him and his commitment to Southgate District Civic Trust.

The award will be presented at the AGM to a member of the Trust who has made an outstanding contribution to the trust or the wider community. Last year the recipient was Peter Hodge.

As last year any member of the Trust can make nominations for the award, however, please note, nominees cannot be members of the Executive Committee.

Nominations to be sent to the SDCT Secretary by 28th February 2018, either by post (Jane Maggs, 108 Chelmsford Road, Southgate, London N14 4JL) or by e-mail (info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk).

The current Chair and members of the Committee will judge the nominations and the winner will be announced at the AGM in April.

If you have any questions about this please contact a member of the Executive Committee.



Nomination Form Graham Beech Award

Your name:	
Contact details: (E-mail or tel number)	
Date:	
Name of nominee:	
Reason for nomination: (Use extra pages if needed)	

SDCT SPRING DINNER

The S.C.T. Spring dinner will be held on 8th February 2018 at Nissi restaurant 62, Aldermans Hill, London N13 4PP.at 7.30pm.

The restaurant is a modern venue serving Greek and Mediterranean style mezze, fresh seafood and grilled meat..

The set meal costs £26.95 and this comprises a selection of cold starters followed by hot starters. A selection of seafood follows and then salads and a meat skewer. Drinks would be paid for individually.

If you are interested in attending the supper please let me, Christine Davis know by Friday 19th January either by phone or email

02083640480 Chrissiedavisstar11@gmail.com

LENIN AND TROTSKY IN NEW SOUTHGATE: OR WERE THEY?

Listening to *The British Road to Bolshevism* on Radio 4 on 16 October 2017, presented by Martin Rosenbaum about Russian revolutionaries in London in the early years of the 20th century and the series of congresses held here by the Russian Social Democratic Party during that time, my attention was caught by the reference in an extract from an archive talk by H. N. Brailsford to the final meeting in 1907, at which Lenin and Trotsky were present, being held in a tin tabernacle in New Southgate.

This raised the prospect of these historical giants arriving on the train from King's Cross and making their way to a corrugated iron building somewhere in the streets opposite the station. I looked in vain for it in the 1912 Ordnance Survey map and was preparing to ask colleagues knowledgeable about the area for their advice when further research revealed that all was not as it seemed.

H. N. Brailsford's BBC Talk

H. N. Brailsford gave his talk *Lenin and Trotsky in London* on the BBC Third Programme on 17 December 1947 with the billing in *Radio Times*:

A corrugated iron chapel in the London suburb of New Southgate was the setting in 1907 of a remarkable conference of the old Russian Social Democratic Party. Among the delegates were Lenin and Trotsky. Chance involved H. N. Brailsford in the proceedings, and in this talk he relates the strange story behind the conference.

The transcript of the talk appeared in *The Listener* of 1 January 1948 as *When Lenin and Trotsky were in London: H. N. Brailsford recalls memories of forty years ago*. The programme was repeated on 2 February 1948 and (with an introduction by Leslie Perowne) on Radio 4 on 28 October 1967.

Henry Noel Brailsford (1873-1958) was a journalist and author with a great interest in left-wing politics who is commemorated by a Greater London Council blue plaque at his house at 37 Belsize Park Gardens NW3, which has the inscription *Writer, Champion of equality and free humanity*. Brailsford got to know several of the leading opposition politicians in London during the period before the Russian Revolution and in his talk discusses the struggle between the Mensheviks and Bolsheviks over their differing approach on how to achieve the overthrow of the ruling Tsarist government, culminating in Lenin's victory for the Bolsheviks at the Fifth Congress, held from 13 May to 1 June 1907.



Of All Places in the World

Brailsford found himself at this momentous occasion through a particular circumstance: his Russian colleague at the *Daily News*, Fedor Rothstein asked for his help in urgently obtaining a loan of £500 to assist the sea passage home of the three hundred delegates (including Joseph Stalin) after the sessions finished, as the Party was “stony broke” due to having to travel from country to country to find a location where they could gather without pressure from the authorities. Rothstein “revealed that the party was meeting in congress, of all places in the world, at New Southgate in the northern suburbs of London – N.11 to be exact”.

Brailsford successfully petitioned ex-patriot Russian millionaire Joseph Fels who although not a socialist was sympathetic, having fled persecution himself as a young man from the Tsarist regime. Fels agreed to the loan on the advice of his almoner, future Labour Party leader George Lansbury: “Soon all four of us were in a taxi that took us to New Southgate, after calling for the cash at Fels’ bank. The party was meeting in a rough temporary building made of corrugated iron, known as the ‘Socialist Church’”.

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When they arrived at about 1pm a “rapt audience” was listening to Lenin’s crucial speech, which he had started the evening before, drawing to a close:

Finally he sat down, manifestly well content, for in this speech he had contrived to split the Russian Social Democratic Party beyond repair. The breach between Mensheviks and Bolsheviks was never healed, and after the October Revolution Lenin’s faction dropped the old name and called themselves Communists ... In this conference in the tin tabernacle at New Southgate, held though it was in the darkest days of his party’s history, days of black rejection and persecution, he was sorting out those he could trust and rejecting the rest.

Afterwards Lenin joined Fels in the gallery and signed a document agreeing to pay back the loan “after the victory of the Revolution” and this was honoured when Fels’ widow was repaid the £500 in due course.

In his concluding remarks Brailsford says that

Ten years after that obscure conference of penniless rebels and exiles in the tin tabernacle at New Southgate, the workers of St. Petersburg swept the Tsar of all the Russias from his throne, captured the Winter Palace with Trotsky as their general, and set up, under Lenin’s leadership, the Soviet Government that endures to this day.

Impressive: it’s not often you hear or see the words “New Southgate”, “the Tsar of all the Russias”, “Trotsky” and “Lenin” in the same sentence after all.

But here’s the thing: H. N. Brailsford wrote to *The Listener* of 8 January 1948 to ask, “May I correct a slip in my talk on the visit of Lenin and Trotsky to London in 1907? The Socialist Church in which the congress of their party met was not in New Southgate. It was the Brotherhood Church, Southgate Road, Islington”.

One can only speculate as to what led H. N. Brailsford to state with such certainty that the congress meeting was held in New Southgate and whether he misremembered when preparing his talk (despite his detailed memory of the vivid events of that day back in 1907) or had for forty years believed that is where it took place; and whether he realised the error himself or someone had a quiet word in his ear.

The Brotherhood Church

Unexplained however and equally puzzling, is Brailsford’s description of the venue as a “tin tabernacle” and “a rough temporary building made of corrugated iron” as the Brotherhood Church was actually a substantial rag-stone structure in the Gothic revival style, as shown in photographs which appeared in the national press at the time of the “Russian revolutionists” arriving for the congress. The Congregationalist building, located on the north side of the junction of Southgate Road and Balmes Road, dated from 1854 and was designed by ecclesiastical architect John Tarring (whose other works include Christ Church URC in Chase Side, Enfield). It was previously known as Southgate Road Chapel and has since been demolished.

The Brotherhood Church became celebrated in Soviet history, with a request from the Russian Ambassador in 1930 for a tablet to be put up there to commemorate the 1907 Congress and a retrospective painting of 1947 by Joseph Serebriany of Lenin, Stalin and Gorky in discussion amongst the delegates inside the church.

Richard Purver

Photograph of Henry Noel Brailsford plaque by R.P.

SDCT VISIT TO THE REED BEDS, SLOPERS POND FARM, STAGG HILL EN4 0PX

Sunday 29th April at 10.30am

Southgate District Civic Trust has been given an interesting opportunity to visit the reed bed being established on Slopers Pond Farm, a working farm on Enfield's Green Belt run by Robert and Elaine Hayward.

The reed bed has been built as part of the farm's Higher Level Stewardship Scheme with Natural England.

This is an exciting new project, as natural reed beds have suffered widespread loss over the last century due to drainage, agricultural changes as well as abandonment. The establishment of this new system is encouraging a wealth of wildlife to colonise the area, including birds and various invertebrate species.

In addition to the reed bed, the stewardship scheme encouraged the farm to create 24 metres natural grassland floristically enhanced field margins, as well as trim their hedges 1 year in 4, in order to create large wildlife areas. The farm is also in the process of converting to organic farming, thereby avoiding the use of pesticides and artificial fertiliser. The Haywards believe that all these changes have had a positive impact, increasing wildlife species on the farm. They are in the process of cataloguing the species, which will be an interesting record.

The aim of our visit to the farm is to see the new reed beds, understand more about the process and impact, as well as the work being carried out to improve the farm. If the weather plays ball, we will also be able to have a picnic.

Please note this visit will involve walking across uneven open farmland. As a result it is **not** suitable for anyone with difficulty walking.

The visit is open to all, but you must register in advance, with the number of people included, preferably by e-mail to: info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk (with subject: Reed Bed Visit) or you can call me on: 074153 16818.

Finally, the farm has a purpose built classroom, so Robert and Elaine Hayward would be pleased to hear from any teachers or school Governors to arrange school visits.

THE FUTURE OF THE NEWSLETTER

We will need to change the way the newsletter is produced in future, so that the work is shared among a team of volunteers. If you think you may be able to help with this, either in preparing or distributing it, please let Jane Maggs know on 8882 4253.

NOTICE OF SOUTHGATE DISTRICT CIVIC TRUST ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Saturday 28th April 2016 at 2.30 pm
Walker Lower Hall, Christ Church Parish Centre
7 The Green, Southgate, N14 7EG

Further details of the AGM, agenda and details of the afternoon will be given in the next Newsletter.



Southgate District Civic Trust

Membership Renewal

I/we would like to renew membership of Southgate District Civic Trust:

Your subscription for the year 2018-2019 is due on **1st April**. The subscription remains at £15 per household for this year.

Name _____

Address _____

Email address: _____

Tel No: _____ Date: _____

I enclose my 2018/19 Subscription: £ 15.00

I also enclose a donation of: £ _____

Total: £ _____

We rely on our members for all our activities.

Can you help with:

Administration work	Conservation work	Newsletter delivery
Publications	Publicity	Social events

Would you like to be involved in the activities of our groups:

Conservation & town planning	Local history	
Publications	Publicity	Civic Week

How to pay:

1. **Cheque** made out to **Southgate District Civic Trust**, sent by post with your form to the membership Secretary at the address below.
2. **BACs** to **Southgate District Civic Trust**
Account: 28328603 & Sort: 09 01 55
Reference: YOUR SURNAME & INITIAL

Confirmation with this electronic form to be sent by e-mail to
info@southgatedistrictcivictrust.org.uk.

3. **Standing order** payable on the 1st April each year using the account and reference details for BACs payments. Confirmation details by e-mail.

If any of your details have changed during the year, please let us know, so we can keep in touch.

We will naturally be pleased to receive any additional donation to the Trust that you may care to give. Many thanks for your continuing support.

