

The next phase of restoration for the Charity School Edmonton has begun

The London Historic Buildings Trust wants to hear from the Community about the building's future—and its past

Richard Stones

Heritage buildings are not just bricks and mortar. They are part of the history of their area. The current plan for the Charity School in Edmonton aims not only to restore it for a new use but also to engage with the community in researching and appreciating its history.

The School was very much a local initiative, established by public subscription in 1778.

The names of some of the subscribers are listed on two boards in All Saints Church (one shown right). One of the first trustees, Obadiah Legrew, had a property on the north of Church Street, Edmonton and volunteered to give land for a school. Mr George Stanbridge was the largest benefactor shown, giving £1,030—equivalent to over £130,000 today. The two boards list 24 gifts, totaling £3,657, over £475,000 today.

All this is recorded in the charity's Minute Book, miraculously preserved in Enfield Local Studies' archives. The school was a pioneer of girls' education. The pupils were trained for domestic service, and we can find the names of some of them in the Minute Book, which records their graduation (or, occasionally, expulsion) as well as the school rules.

At the end of the 1800s the fate of the school reflected the changes

brought about by the creation of government sponsored "School Boards". It seemed at first that the Charity School would join the "state system" and indeed a second classroom was built with this in view. But ultimately the Trustees decided against this—because they felt they could not meet both the terms of the charity and the new education laws. The school closed in 1904 and there followed a tug-of-war (recorded in surviving government records in the National Archives) between church and



Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Group picture of the girls at Charity School, circa 1890

state for the charity's buildings and endowment. Eventually the charity was split, with most of the money going to the Board of Education, while the buildings were put into a new charity which had the objective of running a Sunday School. How far the Hall was ever used for a Sunday School is not clear—in essence it became a second church hall for All Saints, and it was let out for a variety of activities including a scout troop and a dance school. Now the plan is for Learning for Life Charity, based in Enfield, (learningforlifefcharity.co.uk) to use the building to provide training and learning opportunities for young people as well as space for community use. So the Charity School will resume its original function and its links with the community.

There must be people still around now who can bring this story to life. People who danced at the dance school? People whose parents or grandparents attended the Sunday School? Even people who are descended from the girls who went to the original school? Whatever your story, London Historic Buildings Trust would like to hear from you. They are also keen to know what aspects of the building's heritage you would like to see celebrated and how it should be used in future. Contact rosie.shaw@londonhistoricbuildings.org.uk.

The Society has been working closely with the London Historic Buildings Trust on the project to restore the School building and bring it back into use. [Our latest efforts are reported under *Society News*, page 3.] It is currently on the Historic England Buildings "at risk" Register but the National Lottery Heritage Fund has approved the restoration scheme up to development stage. This is positive progress and subject to satisfactory final submissions we hope that this exciting scheme will be able to proceed.



The frontispiece from the 1778 Minute Book



Colin Pointer

I have just returned to the Royal British Legion a small wooden cross in remembrance of my mother's elder brother who was killed in the third battle of Ypres in 1917. The simple wording around the central poppy reads *Corporal Sam Gant, Ypres 16th August 1917, aged 20*. This cross, together with many hundred others, will be planted in the Field of Remembrance at Westminster Abbey. Sam lived in Percival Road, Enfield, and joined the Middlesex Regiment at the outbreak of the First World War. His legacy is: three medals and his name engraved on Panel 114 of the Tyne Cot Memorial in Paschendale, Belgium, together with the names of 34,000 others killed in the Ypres Salient between 16th August 1917 and the end of the war in 1918 and all having no known graves. In front of these Panels there are also 11,956 graves, immaculately maintained by the Commonwealth War Graves Commission. "Lest we forget".

Nor should we forget that future generations will hold us, and others, to account if we do not ensure that the proposed current Borough Local Plan is fit for purpose and will provide proper protection for our Green Belt, which must retain its main purpose of limiting the outward spread of urbanisation. The Plan's proposals to date totally ignore its long history and heritage value, in particular the surviving areas of Enfield Chase.

The main housing need in Enfield is many affordable homes, but in the right places. Some support for extensive housing development in these sensitive areas comes from companies which specialise in providing luxury homes. At the other end of the spectrum, the required scale and design for affordable homes are likely to make them unacceptable in these same areas.

Hopefully the next draft of the Enfield Local Plan will contain a more realistic solution to its housing needs.



Society news

AGM

Over sixty members came to Jubilee Hall for our AGM in September, with a further 30 attending on Zoom. Two Trustees, Anna Maria Foster and Sue Grayson-Ford, stepped down from the Committee. The Chairman, Dave Cockle, thanked them both for their work with the Society. We



are very grateful to Anna for taking on the work of Membership Secretary at a difficult time when Joyce James had to resign due to ill health. We are also very grateful for all Sue's input, especially her leadership of the campaign to stop the redevelopment of Palace Gardens. It is pleasing that Sue has said she is willing to be involved in specific projects in the future.

Following the formal business, Martin Paine gave the first of two talks on the history of Enfield Chase. The second talk will have been given by the time this edition reaches members.

New Trustee Avril Nanton

Born in Dominica, Avril came to London in 1965 and lived most of her young life in Islington as well as Hackney and Tottenham. In 1997 she met Robin Walker, author and historian, the man who was to change her life forever. She began attending Robin's Black



History classes and set her on the road to finding out about her personal family history as well as the wider Black community. She is an ex-stand-up comedian, she worked the stage for 6 months, then set up her own comedy club in Tottenham in 1996.

Avril is a qualified Tour Guide and runs her own company Avril's Walks and Talks, a member of the Enfield Caribbean Association and a Trustee of the Jane Duffield Bursary Trust. In 2022 after

joining The Enfield Society she set up a litter-picking group at Albany Park and regularly attends our litter picks.

Palmers Green Festival

On a hot Sunday in early September this popular Festival was revived for the first time after covid. The Society had a plum spot close to one of the main entrances and the stall was very busy from 12noon to 5pm. We sold fourteen memberships and a lot of the new Palmers Green Heritage Walk leaflets.

There was a lot of interest in the Society and what we do. Sadly too many people have never heard of us or have any idea of the work that all our volunteers do.

It is getting increasingly difficult to attend shows like this, with fewer volunteers coming forward. We are hoping to attend more in 2024, so if you are motivated to help, please do consider contacting us to find out how you can help.

Andrew Lack

Membership

Our attendance at the Palmers Green Festival helped to replenish some of the numbers that we lost at the end of June when members decided not to renew. At the time of this production we have 1656 members and of these 353 have chosen to receive their newsletter in the paperless form receiving it by e-mail. It would be great if you can tell neighbours or friends about us to ensure we can keep doing the things we do. Renewals are due for 2024 at the start of January next year and this is a gentle reminder to renew. Our website is the best place to do this but direct payment by bank transfer or a cheque sent to Jubilee Hall are also options. If you have set up a Standing Order please ensure the value reflects the membership you require.

New members

The Society warmly welcomes the following new members since our Autumn newsletter:

A Campbell, B Charalambos, T Collins, C Connolly, K Cope, R Davis, H Degirmencioglu, J Donington, A Dunn, M Eccleston, R Flach-Irvine, M Fox, D & S Gornall, A & O Green, C Hobart, N Kiey, H Kukkadi, J Lovegrove, S McGowan, R McKeever, D Medlicott, C Paul, E & S Perry, S Richardson, J Rodgers, B Soomauroo, S Vickers, N E & M Wallis and E Wong.

Alec Tyler

“Silver” award for Station Garden Group

David Reason



Left to Right: Dave Cockle, Mike Cranstone, Claudia Deutschmann and Soo Mei Chin

Enfield Society gardening volunteers at Enfield Chase Station were delighted to receive a "Silver" award in the category Best Public Building, in this year's Enfield in Bloom competition. This was for their colourful container planting on the platforms. The team created a display of pelargoniums, salvias and ivy as illustrated in the photo. Many favourable comments have been received from passengers using the Station.

If you would like to join our friendly gardening team please contact Dave Cockle (details on back page of newsletter).

Dave Cockle

Cleaner neighbourhoods

On Saturday 16th September a group of five volunteers from the Cleaner Neighbourhood Group worked on the Footpath from Dujardin Mews to the Boundary Ditch in Ponders End. Despite being a smaller team than usual they enthusiastically cleared a huge amount of rubbish and dumped items as our picture shows. Passing members of the public were very complimentary about the difference they had made to the area.

Alison Yates/Enfield Society



The September haul included a cleaner. Shame it didn't work. . .

Two more Litter Picks are planned and as always we are very pleased to welcome anyone who may be free to join us.

The first will be on **Saturday 2nd December from 10am–12noon** when we will tackle a section of the Pymmes Brook Trail in Palmers Green. The meeting point is the green triangle on Oakthorpe Road opposite Arnold Gardens N13 5JH (what3words /// good.shins.cook).

Palmers Green Station is nearby or buses 329 or 121 Palmers Green/The Triangle stop. Walk South on Green Lanes, Oakthorpe Road is on the left.

The second will be on **Saturday January 13th 2024 from 10am–12noon** in Edmonton. We will meet at the start of the Footpath on Plevna Road, N9 0BX (what3words /// both.upper.fluid) opposite the Asda Superstore.

Edmonton Green has an Overground Station and a Bus Station. (Routes 102, 144, 149, 191, 192, 259, 279, 349, 491, W8 and W6) walk south on the Hertford Road and take West Mall to its end on Plevna Road.

Participation is at your own risk, please bring gloves and wear stout footwear and let Alison Yates know if you are attending and need equipment. 0781 868 2073.

Alison Yates

Painting auction

Society member Philip Taylor has given The Society an oil painting depicting The New River in the Town Park.



The framed painting measures 16" x 12" (40cm x 30cm). On the back of the picture is the name of the local artist: Mrs M N ("Molly") Bending. The painting will be auctioned to the highest bidder.

The picture will be available to view at the Society's talks at Jubilee Hall meetings in November (20th) and January (15th). Alternatively, you can see a high-res image of the painting on our website at enfieldsociety.org.uk/painting-auction.

Send your bid by e-mail to auction@enfieldsociety.org.uk or by post to Jubilee Hall (address on the back page). Closing date for your bids is **Friday 24th**

January 2024. All money raised goes to the Society.

Andrew Lack

Wildlife viewing window at Gordon Hill Station

Enfield Society members, John Cole and Alison Yates, who run The Friends of Gordon Hill Station, have teamed up with the Bee Friendly Trust. Together they have created a wildlife habitat at the top of the wooded railway cutting. Bird feeders, a bug hotel and an attractive carving of an owl have been placed adjacent to the elevated covered walkway that links the ticket hall to the platforms. In short, there is much to interest passengers passing along the walkway.



A wide range of birds are regular visitors. foxes, muntjak deer and slow worms have also been sighted.

Dave Cockle

Charity School garden

As part of the enabling work for the restoration (see page 1) a design team needed to carry out a ground survey and ensure that the fine Oak tree is protected during the restoration work. The Society was asked to carry out further work to clear the garden area and relocate recycled bricks that are being saved to rebuild a boundary wall.



On a fine October day an enthusiastic group of volunteers carried out this work revealing the full extent of the garden. Once the scheme is completed the garden will be used for growing crops that can be used in the café.

John West

Society talks calendar

All our talks take place at Jubilee Hall. From January 2024 we will be holding our talks both in the evenings and mornings. The programme will alternate each month, with the January 2024 talk in the evening at 8pm and the February talk in the morning at 11am (doors open from 10.30am). This pattern will be continued throughout 2024. *Please check carefully for the correct start time for each talk.*

Monday 20th November, 8pm. *The Capital Ring* by Colin Saunders.

London is blessed with literally hundreds of trails for walkers, but one of the best known, longest and surprisingly green is the 78-mile Capital Ring, which encircles the metropolis about halfway to the boundary. Along the way, it passes many places of historical and cultural significance. Though not passing through Enfield Borough, it is easily reached at places like Finsbury Park, Stoke Newington and Hackney Wick. As the author of its best-selling guidebook, and having been its route manager for several years, Colin is well qualified to speak about its route and attractions.

Monday 15th January 2024, 8pm. *The Story of Enfield's Telephones before smartphones* by John Liffen.



Grade II Listed phone boxes in Little Park Gardens, Enfield

The Telephone was introduced into Enfield in 1899 using an exchange in a small room at the side of a pub. Take up was initially slow but by the 1920's large new exchanges were needed and were eventually automated. Now, however, the mobile phone and social media have almost supplanted the "landline" and new uses may need to be found for Enfield's existing telephone exchanges. The talk will include recent photos taken by the author with images drawn from BT archives, Enfield Local Studies & Archive and The Science Museum Group. *Joint meeting with the Edmonton Hundred Historical Society.*

Tuesday 6th February, 11am.

Disastrous Valentine's Days by Doreen Tayler.

As we approach the romantic festival Doreen's talk will remind us that not every February 14th had love as it's aim. Think "The Valentines Day Massacre" and you will get a flavour of this talk.



"Scarface" Al Capone is shown here at the Chicago Detective bureau following his arrest on a vagrancy charge as Public Enemy No. 1 in February 1931

Lavender Hill Chapel

Alison Yates

On Sunday 17th September the disused Non-Conformist Chapel in Lavender Hill Cemetery opened its doors to welcome curious visitors as part of the London Open House week. This Neo-Gothic Chapel was designed by Thomas J Hill and built in 1870, opening for funerals in 1872. The gates to the Cemetery featured in almost every episode of the British Sitcom *On the Buses* as the terminus of Stan and Jack's bus route.

The Chapel has been on the Heritage at Risk list for many years. During that time it was mainly used as a storage place for Lavender Hill Cemetery. Prior to opening for the Open House event, the staff removed many previously unwanted items including a bath! Twenty-nine enthusiastic and interested people braved a showery and windy day to don safety helmets and have a look around the inside of this delightful small Chapel.

Its many well-preserved features include the original gas lighting, ceramic floor and carved stone angels.



Visit to the Old Bakery, Winchmore Hill

We are delighted to offer members the opportunity to visit "The Old Bakery" at 212 Hoppers Road, Winchmore Hill. The visit will take place on **Friday 1st December**. There will be two tours, one at 10.30am and one at 11.50am, both being restricted to six people.

The Old Bakery is a former 17th Century farmhouse and 19th Century Bake House. It is Grade II listed and converted into a private house with a separate stable block now providing separate accommodation. We are most grateful to the Anstee family for allowing us to visit their home.

Booking is essential and free to members, but limited to two places per application. To book a place please e-mail visits@enfieldsociety.org.uk, including your name(s) and state

which tour you wish, or if you are flexible and can do either.

You can also apply by post to *The Enfield Society, Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield EN2 0AJ*. Please include a phone number, tour time and SAE.

Applications must be received by Monday 27th November. Due to the limited numbers, names will be drawn from a hat and you will be notified prior to the 1st December.



Our favourite trees

John West

Williams Wood Pines: Andrew Lack



In our Autumn Newsletter we referred to the King's list of his favourite trees and asked members if they had a favourite tree in Enfield. Trees generate strong emotions as the controversy over the loss of the Sycamore Gap tree on Hadrian's Wall demonstrates. Many of you responded highlighting the range of native and ornamental trees across the Borough. The fine cedar trees at Forty Hall and Library Green and the Black Mulberry trees by Market Square and outside the Civic Centre were highlighted by several people.

There are many Oak trees in our parks and open spaces, one member drew attention to an Oak tree at Forty Hall that brought back memories of the late Queen and the day that she died. From an acorn of that tree, the member has grown a new tree. Trees obviously generate memories as another member identified a beautiful Indian Bean Tree (Southern Catalpa) between Gentleman's Row and New River where she used to sit with her late mother. Two young



Maidenhair trees (Ginkgo Biloba) on Bury Street West, an Indian (Himalayan) Horse Chestnut in Chapel Street and a Handkerchief Tree on Gentleman's Row outside the Registry Office (centre) were all listed. The wonderful Japanese Flowering Cherry trees with their pink blossom on Bincote Road, Morton Way and Little Park Gardens were mentioned by many. The majestic pine trees in Williams Wood provide wonderful, dappled light on a sunny day.

It is interesting that both native British trees and non-native ornamental trees were both listed. Thank you to everyone who contributed. The Society supports tree planting and the need for regular tree maintenance and often raises ideas and concerns with the Council. We also have a tree nursery and make saplings available to Friends of Parks Groups and other community groups to ensure the Enfield remains a green and leafy borough.

[Handkerchief tree, photo by Angela Baillie]

Cherry Tree, Little Park Gardens: Ian Reynolds



Oak, Trent Park: Ian Reynolds

Protecting our pubs

Philip Ridley and John West

The recent national publicity about the illegal demolition of the *Crooked House* in South Staffordshire reminded us of similar incidents in Enfield including the demolition of the Maze Inn (formerly the Rising Sun) in Southgate and the Pymmes Park Tavern in Edmonton. In all these cases where pubs are demolished or a change of use occurs without any planning approval, developers flout planning rules. Enforcement action is needed.

A similar situation exists with *The Picture Palace* in Ponders End. This building on the Local Heritage List is owned by Enfield Council. Once a thriving community hub, no planning permission has been granted to change the use of the site from a pub to a restaurant. Contrary to the requirements of Pubs Protection Policy legislation the Council has determined that the new use is lawful.



The Picture Palace in happier times

The Society has been working with the Campaign for Real Ale (camra) to try and protect local pubs. A formal complaint made by the local camra branch has not been upheld, with the Council stating that its ownership has no bearing on planning or enforcement functions.

Despite the venue boasting architectural features from its days as a cinema, and much-loved murals of Laurel & Hardy, Charlie Chaplin and Harold Lloyd, it remains unclear what will become of the venue's interior, and whether it will be affected by the potential need to demolish a side extension for which retrospective planning is currently being considered following its unauthorised construction.

There are similar problems across the Borough, the vacant *Boundary House* also in Ponders End is being extended without planning permission, *The White Hart* is dilapidated with no statutory notice being served to improve the derelict state of the site and the Pymmes Park Tavern that has been empty for many years has recently been demolished without any planning permission. The Council has the power to serve an enforcement notice requiring the developer to re-build the property.

Whitewebbs, Whitewebbs Road, Enfield

Stephen Gilbert

A house on the north side of Whitewebbs Lane, variously known in the 16th century as White Webbes, Whitewebes and Whitewebbs, which meant weaver of white cloth, together with a conduit house, was granted by Elizabeth I in 1570 to Dr Robert Huick. The present Grade II listed 17th century Conduit House, built on 16th century foundations, is now in need of restoration. It may have housed a pump chamber or head of a well providing water for the house.

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Conduit House in 1873

In 1605 Whitewebbs was used as a safe house by the Gunpowder Plot conspirators. In 1653 it was occupied by Dr Bockenhall and later by Daniel Garnault. It was demolished in 1790.

The estate was purchased in 1787 by Dr Abraham Wilkinson, it having earlier been owned by Eliab Breton of Forty Hall (see Newsletter 227, Autumn 2022). The present Whitewebbs was built south of Whitewebbs Road in 1791. The estate comprised 134 acres and was later increased by 250 acres of which 100 acres were woodland. There was also a lake with a rustic brick footbridge. Dr Wilkinson was an enthusiastic supporter of agricultural improvement. In 1796 he reported to the Board of Agriculture that he had added chalk and lime from Cheshunt Common to his land, resulting in "the superior vigour and the more florid appearance of the wheat". He was following a four-year rotation of wheat, beans, wheat and fallow.

About 1870 Whitewebbs was extensively altered and enlarged by Henry Cox Wilkinson J.P. (grandson of Abraham). The remodelling was carried out to designs by Charles Stuart Robinson giving the exterior the appearance of a French chateau. New wings were constructed on to the north and south ends of the house.

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



West entrance front of Whitewebbs as it appeared in 1873

Stephen Gilbert/Enfield Society



East garden front of locally listed Whitewebbs with bays, balustraded balconies and wings added about 1870

Stephen Gilbert/Enfield Society



South wing of Whitewebbs

The interior, with its oak panelling and fireplace surrounds, was decorated by Italian artists. The rooms for family use included outer and inner halls with classical detailing, dining room, morning room, library, study, drawing room, Japan room, a massive ballroom and a fine carved oak staircase leading to red and green dressing rooms and bedrooms. The valuable and extensive contents which included paintings, vases and furniture, were described in detail by Edward Ford in his 1873 History of Enfield. Following Henry Wilkinson's death in 1887 the principal art treasures were sold at auction by Christie's in 1888.

Enfield Local Studies & Archive



Grade II listed North Lodge (above in 1980) in Whitewebbs Road was at the north entrance to the estate. It is a Victorian cottage

orné with a high-pitched roof with fish scale tiles, decorated bargeboards and gable ends. It is faced with stucco. The North and South Lodges were condemned as unsafe about 1960, but were saved from demolition in 1971 after a campaign by the Enfield Preservation Society (now the Enfield Society). They were restored by Enfield Borough Council in 1974. The work on North Lodge cost £10,000. However, it is now one of Historic England's Listed Buildings at risk of deterioration and the 20th century extension is in ruins. The Council is in communication with the lodge's new owners on how to proceed with essential repairs.

Enfield Society



This shows the current state of North Lodge

Ian Reynolds/Enfield Society



Grade II listed South Lodge (above), off Clay Hill, was at the south entrance to the estate. It is a Victorian cottage orné with elaborate barge boards on the gables and porch. It has patterned tiles and battlemented chimneys.

After the death of Henry Wilkinson's widow, Whitwebbs was acquired in 1900 by Lady Valerie Susie Meux of Theobalds in Cheshunt. She was the widow of Sir Henry Meux who had met her when she was a hostess at the Casino de Venice. During her ownership Whitwebbs was let to tenants, including Frank L Gardener between 1902 and 1906. After Lady Meux died in 1910 most of her possessions were sold and the illustrated catalogue produced showed their splendour.

In 1911 the estate of Whitwebbs was bought by Sir Frederick Orr-Lewis, a wealthy Canadian businessman. He bought new furniture from Marples to fill the nearly forty rooms of the house, which was surrounded by forty acres of parkland and gardens. One Sunday afternoon, shortly before the First World War, Lady Orr-Lewis was holding a house party, where various young ladies

were daringly displaying the latest revealing dress fashions. They were too volubly admired by drunks using the footpath across the estate from the King and Tinker inn. Following this incident Sir Frederick Orr-Lewis, who had friends among the local magistrates, arranged for the path to be diverted to Mile and a Quarter Alley. This caused resentment among the local people. Cars entering and leaving Whitwebbs were stoned, trees were vandalised and one of Sir Frederick's servants was badly beaten by a hostile crowd who protested against the Orr-Lewises as being rich and foreign. Demonstrations continued until the outbreak of the First World War in 1914.

In May 1915 Sir Frederick, returning from a business trip to the USA, was one of the survivors of the sinking of the Cunard liner *RMS Lusitania* by a torpedo from a German submarine. However his health never fully recovered from his immersion in the Irish Sea and he remained an invalid until his death in 1921 at the age of 55.

In 1931 Sir Frederick's son Sir Duncan Orr-Lewis sold the estate to Middlesex County Council (MCC) for £23,000. MCC retained the house and adjoining grounds as a home for elderly men. After the closure of the home, the house was empty for some years before being sold to Whitbread for conversion into a public house and restaurant.

The remaining park and woodland, comprising 232 acres, were leased by MCC to Enfield Urban District Council for 999 years. 132 acres of park and woodland were opened to the public. The remaining 100 acres, in the north-east part of the park, were converted into an eighteen-hole municipal golf course, which opened in 1932. The former stable block of Whitwebbs became the golf club house (see illustration on page 10).

In 2020 Enfield Borough Council closed the golf course and has agreed to grant a lease, subject to planning permission, to allow Tottenham Hotspur Football Club to use part of the golf course to create a women's and girls' training academy. The Council has said that the lease will require Tottenham Hotspur to restore and maintain the remaining part of the golf course as open parkland.

A detailed bibliography used for the preparation of this article is included in the online version.



Enfield Society News

Members will know that we have been trying to find someone to take over producing the quarterly newsletter all year. Sadly we have not been able to find anyone. The Committee has therefore decided to engage the services of an external professional designer to put together the newsletters.

Copy for each edition will be sourced by an editorial group composed of four Trustees from the Committee.

This is a significant change to the way newsletters have been produced over recent years and we will do our best to ensure any bumps are quickly smoothed out.

Copy deadlines have been adjusted next year to allow for the changes to the production process. This means that members should receive the next newsletter towards the end of February.

In the meantime if you know of a retiring Graphic Designer eager to contribute to the work of The Society, you'll know where to send him or her!

Charterhouse visit

Carole Todd

the Charterhouse

A group of Enfield Society members took a special tour of the London Charterhouse on Tuesday 26th September. Every Tuesday and Saturday one of the Brothers who are inhabitants of the almshouse give a tour around the buildings and some of the most important rooms of the Charterhouse. Our brother was Laurie Graham, who took us through the history of the Charterhouse from being a Plague burial ground and Carthusian Monastery in the 14th century to its place as an almshouse for the over 60's in 21st century London. More information about the Charterhouse can be found at the thecharterhouse.org.

Laurie is a member of the history girls blog and you can read more about her at the-history-girls.blogspot.com

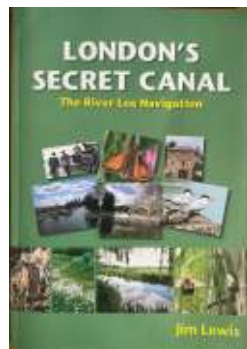


Carole Todd

Book review

Alison Parker

Jim Lewis's latest book takes us on a journey along the River Lee Navigation from its beginnings at Hertford to the Thames at Bow, linking with the River Lea and the New River on its journey southwards. Along the way he reveals intriguing facts about its history and environment, and the area's importance to industry and technology.



The second half of the book shines a light on the Lee Valley Regional Park, focussing on the varied string of wildlife habitats along its 26-mile length.

This is an engrossing and informative read for anyone with an interest in history, waterways or the environment, and rightly highlights this under-appreciated and often overlooked asset we have on our doorstep. Even if you think you know the area (myself included), you will learn more from this book, which features plenty of colour photos and maps, making it an ideal companion for a day out.

Available from our online store price £12.00. Published by Redshank Books, 70 pages.



During COVID our popular Society-led walks had to be cancelled. To provide an opportunity for members to explore the Borough's footpath network, we published a series of self-guided walks devised by Stuart Mills.

A total of six walks were published between Autumn 2020 and Winter 2022. These have now been turned into handy two-page leaflets and are available to download from our website.

The problem with walk descriptions is that they get out-of-date and currently the New River Path north of the M25 is closed for the construction of a new combined cycle-way and footpath. In the Summer of 2021 Stuart devised an 8-mile circular walk from Forty Hall, using this path (photograph above). Now the footpath along the New River is closed, so

the walk as described is no longer available.

We would love to hear from members who would like to walk our described routes again, perhaps taking new photos and noting changes where they have taken place. We can then update our leaflets and ensure they are fit-for-purpose. If you'd like to see the walks, go to enfieldsociety.org.uk/walking-in-enfield and if you can help, e-mail us at info@enfieldsociety.org.uk



Andrew Lack

Talks from other Societies and Groups

Enfield Archaeological Society

Talks take place at Jubilee Hall at 7.30pm (doors open from 7pm). Open to non-members for a fee of £1.50 each payable at the door.

Friday 8th December, 7.30pm. *The Petroglyph survey* by Anna Nicola. Anna joined WSP as the built heritage co-lead for the central and south of England in 2021 and is responsible for business development, project management, training staff, and providing monitoring and assurance on built heritage outputs.

Throughout her career she has worked on an expansive range of buildings and standing structure types, including 10th-century crypts, medieval ecclesiastical colleges, vernacular domestic architecture and industrial structures and landscapes, and has led the built heritage on major infrastructure projects such as HS2 and Tideway.

Friday 9th February, 7.30pm. *The Southsea Coastal Defence Scheme: future proofing against sea level rise* by Holly Rodgers. Portsmouth is the only island city within the UK. The sea defences have reached the end of their active life span so in order to future proof against sea level rise over the next 100 years, island-wide geotechnical (and archaeological) works have been carried out to raise and improve the sea defences.

Historical Association (North London Branch)

Talks take place at Jubilee Hall at 8pm. Non-members are welcome to attend for a fee of £2 each, payable at the door.

Tuesday 12th December. *Who wants to be a Trillionaire? Causes and Consequences of the Weimar Hyperinflation* by Dr Christopher Dillon (King's College, London).

Tuesday 9th January. *Feeding Civilians and Saving the Family: Consumption, Charity and the State in Belgium and Britain during the First World War* by Chloe Pieters (University College, London).

Tuesday 13th February. *Sentinels of the Sea: the Amazing History of Lighthouses* by Mark Lewis.

Society guided walks

Stuart Mills

Walks are open to all members. Please wear suitable footwear. Travel details are correct at copy date, but with engineering works and strikes, please check with transport operators close to the date. If walks need to be altered or cancelled, and when possible, notification will be issued via John West's walkers e-mail list. Please e-mail j.west@enfieldsociety.org.uk if you wish to be added.

Wednesday 22nd November (note change of date). Clerkenwell. **Meet 10.45** outside main entrance to the Elizabeth Line at Farringdon Station (access via multiple lines).

Ian's walk of about 2½ hours includes social, political and religious history of medieval London and the relationship with Clerkenwell's monastic quarter. The change of date is for a visit to St. John's Gate and museum. Leader: Ian McGovern, contact 07815 658 328.

Thursday 30th November. Docklands and River Thames. **Meet 10.40** at Wapping Station (TfL Overground trains from Highbury & Islington).

About 5¼ mile linear walk exploring this unique area with a mix of river scenes, old docks and interesting architecture. Shorter options, including from the lunch stop near West India Quay Station. Bring lunch or food available. Leader: Ian Reynolds, contact 07523 855 809.

Saturday 9th December. Four Stations. **Meet 10.25** Cuffley Station (10.17 train from Enfield Chase).

Six and a half mile linear walk through countryside, open spaces and a golf course. Option to end at the lunch stop in Crews Hill. Bring lunch or food available. After lunch, walk passes Gordon Hill Station to finish near Enfield Chase Station. Leader: Mike Cranstone, contact 07597 122 554.

Saturday 16th December. Christmas in St. Albans (our planned visit in 2022 was cancelled due to snow). **Meet 10.30** at St. Albans City Station; Thameslink trains at 09.48 or 10.06 from St. Pancras International Station (platform B), or by 84 bus at 09.38 from Potters Bar Station (check on Intalink).

About 3½ mile walk with attractive architecture and heritage scenes ending near the Cathedral and City centre for lunch. Then options including the Cathedral's "Carols on the Hour" (last at 16.00 hours), a Christmas market and the

Town Hall museum, gallery and historic county court/cells. 84 and buses to the station depart from near the Town Hall. Leader: Stuart Mills.

Thursday 28th December. Christmas Scenes. **Meet 10.45** at Green Park Station near the exit into Green Park (Victoria, Piccadilly and Jubilee Lines).

A varied mix of historic and Christmas scenes. Many shorter options. Bring lunch or food available. Finishes at a station. Leader: Stuart Mills.

Saturday 6th January. Westminster and Whitehall. **Meet 10.45** at Westminster Station (District, Circle and Jubilee Lines).

About 2½ hour (3 mile) walk discovering aspects of National Government and Religion against the backcloth of The Thames, Shorter options. Leader: Nigel King, contact 07973 747 454.

Thursday 11th January. Unexpected South London. **Meet 10.45** at the entrance to Tesco's supermarket in the Old Kent Road, SE1, which is a short bus ride from the New Kent Road exit at Elephant & Castle Station, using buses 53, 63, 168, 172 or 363. Access Elephant & Castle Station by either Northern Line from Moorgate, Bakerloo Line from Oxford Circus or Thameslink from St. Pancras International.

Seven mile linear walk via Southwark open spaces, Camberwell Green Conservation Area and leafy Dulwich, ending by 15.30 at West Dulwich Station. Shorter options, including from the lunch stop. Bring lunch or food available. Leader: John West, contact 07904 193 098.

Tuesday 16th January. Bringing the past alive! **Meet 10.45** at Highbury & Islington Station.

Ian's linear walk of about 2½ hours includes a tour of the Upper Street area, architecture and social history of Islington, ending at Islington Green. Shorter options. Leader: Ian McGovern, contact 07815 658 328.

Saturday 20th January. Enfield's Countryside. **Meet 10.15** at the bus stop on The Ridgeway immediately outside the entrance to Chase Farm Hospital (313, W8 and W9 buses).

About 4¼ mile linear walk following the London Loop track to Hadley Road and then through Trent Park to end at Cockfosters Station. Leader: Mike Cranstone, contact 07597 122 554.

Tuesday 30th January. Northern Heights. **Meet 10.15** outside the main Seven Sisters Road entrance into Finsbury Park mainline station and next to the main bus station (do not go to the Wells Terrace bus station). The 09.31 train from Enfield Chase is scheduled to arrive at 09.50. It may be advisable to use toilets on mainline platforms 3/4 (male only) or on platforms 7/8, as those in the nearby park are often closed.

In the morning a pleasantly green 3 mile linear walk following the disused railway line (now a nature reserve) to a lunch stop in Highgate Village and option to end. Bring lunch or food available. Then about 3 miles via woods, open spaces and lesser known parts of Alexandra Park to finish at Alexandra Palace Station. Leader: Mick Spinks.

Saturday 10th February. South Bank, Battersea and River Thames. **Meet 10.30** near the ticket barriers/foyer area of Vauxhall underground station (Victoria line).

Six to seven mile linear walk exploring the redeveloped South Bank from Vauxhall and the new US Embassy through to Battersea Power Station for a lunch stop and option to end. Then riverside parks and open spaces, finishing at Putney Bridge Station. Bring lunch or food available. Leader: John West, contact 07904 193 098.

Tuesday 20th February. Hertford's Countryside. **Meet 10.15** at entrance foyer to Hertford North Station (09.47 train from Enfield Chase).

The full route of up to 6 to 7 miles for today's figure-of-eight walk includes open country, woods, river scenes and, hopefully, swathes of snowdrops. However, the route may be altered according to prevailing weather conditions. Option to end at lunch stop. Bring lunch or food available. Leader: Stuart Mills.

Thursday 29th February. Waterways and Olympic Park. **Meet 10.45** at Limehouse DLR Station (about 25 mins from Highbury & Islington, changing at Shadwell onto DLR, or about 6 mins on DLR from Bank Station). Meet at exit nearest to Limehouse Basin.

About 5 to 6 mile linear walk via waterways into the Olympic Park which has received significant "greening" over the last 10 years. Shorter option. Bring lunch or food available. Leader: Peter Mackey, contact 07506 334 019.

Council/Society meeting report

Richard Stones

In October a Society team had one of our regular meetings with Council Officers, on this occasion with Brett Leahy (BL) (Director of Planning and Growth), Karen Page (newly appointed Director of Planning and Building Control) and David Taylor (Head of Traffic and Transportation).

Local Plan timetable. Pre-publication of the updated Plan would take place on 11th December 2023, twelve weeks before the presentation of the Plan to the full Council. This was not a further public consultation; the purpose of publishing the Plan was to enable councillors to digest and engage with their residents before the Council Meeting. The published Plan would be available on the Council website.

The expected timetable for the next stage (Regulation 19) was the end of 2024/ beginning of 2025, but it was possible that this might be accelerated as the Inspectorate was not very busy, because very few councils were proceeding with local plans given the uncertainties about Government intentions on planning reform and housing targets.

Housing delivery. We told the Council that we were aware of a significant number of housing schemes around the Borough that are currently on hold. We asked if the Council was monitoring these schemes and ensuring that if there were obstacles these were mitigated as far as possible. There seemed little point in making Green Belt land available when developers are failing to proceed with schemes that have planning approval. BL responded that various factors were holding up developments. There were general concerns about the economy and inflation. High interest rates affected developers' own borrowings and the affordability of mortgages.

There was also uncertainty about Government policy on various issues, notably on the requirement for a second staircase in buildings of a certain height. Housing Associations were reluctant to take up the "affordable" element in schemes for fear of potential liability in this respect. There was also the fact that shortage of industrial land might make it more attractive for developers to use sites—eg Colosseum Retail Park—for industrial development. BL acknowledged our concern that these delays would encourage developers to take the easier option of developing greenfield sites. He noted that all the land allocations in the draft Local Plan had been tested for economic viability.

Whitewebbs: Lease to Spurs. We asked about progress on the agreement for lease and a planning application: we were anxious that Spurs' obligations should be clarified and in the public domain as soon

as possible. BL said that things were taking longer than had been hoped. He was not involved with the lease and so could not comment on that aspect. As regards planning, there had been high level conversations with Spurs about the Council's expectations—this was a development of Green Belt open space and it was necessary to show that there were "special circumstances" which justified the harm to this openness. Spurs needed to respond on this. The Council had commissioned an outside consultant to assist with this analysis.

Andrew Lack/Enfield Society



Whitewebbs golf course former clubhouse

Local Heritage List. We enquired about the publication of the revised list, which had been compiled by the Society in partnership with the Council, involving nearly forty volunteers. We were told that authorisation was required at a senior level to conduct the necessary consultation of the owners of properties which had been added to the list. It was hoped to do the consultation, which would take 8 weeks, this year, and to seek final sign-off of the List before the end of the March 2024.

Wetlands on Chase Green. We asked whether the Council was proposing to proceed with the project. We were told (subsequent to the meeting) that it had been paused not cancelled.

Park cafés. We also raised our concerns about the closure of the cafés in Trent Park, The Town Park and at Whitewebbs. We asked if a temporary solution could be found such as 'pop-up cafés' pending the re-tendering of the contracts.

And finally we asked about the deteriorating condition of pavements; the failure of the Council's contractor to remove redundant railings from a work site in Ponders End and inadequate lighting on steps linking leading from Lea Valley Road flyover to Alma Road. (In the last case it was sobering that the Council said it did not have the £4,000 needed to instal a new light.) On the other hand we commended the Council for their speed in dealing with a recent unauthorised closure of a footpath.

Planning

John West

It has been a quiet period in terms of planning applications. There have been no significant major applications, and we believe that developers are holding back due to the economic situation and waiting for Enfield to publish its updated Local Plan.

Andrew Lack/Enfield Society



Anglo Aquatic, Strayfield Road

The Council has granted outline planning approval to the construction of 58 affordable homes, 5 live-work units and refurbishment of an existing office building at the Anglo Aquatic Plant, Strayfield Road, Clay Hill, EN2. Society objected to this application on the grounds that it is Green Belt land. Curiously the GLA who have previously defended the protection of the Green Belt areas raised no significant objection considering that the land is already developed.

We remain concerned that major residential developments that already have planning approval appear to be on hold. Developments at Colosseum Retail Park, Southgate Office Village, the former Travis Perkins site in Winchmore Hill and others appear to have halted. In some cases, developers have decided to sell the sites rather than develop them due to rising construction costs and concerns over the financial viability of the approved schemes. With all political parties talking about the need to build more homes we believe that developers are pushing for the release of Green Belt land where development costs are lower. We await the publication of Enfield's Local Plan with interest. The Society will be making the case that these brownfield sites and others should always be developed before any Green Belt land be released for construction.

Andrew Lack/Enfield Society



Travis Perkins, Winchmore Hill

Festival of Industry

Val Munday and Stephen Gilbert

The Festival of Industry is 'a blockbuster cultural and capacity building programme celebrating Enfield's industrial heritage and spotlighting its contemporary creative industries', which officially opened on 21st July at Dugdale Arts Centre (DAC) and which will run until 31st March 2024.

The programme launched with an exhibition by the Museum of Enfield called 'Industrial Evolution: Past, Present and Future' which runs until 10th December. The opening has been followed by a borough-wide programme of art commissions, performances and museum events, participatory creative workshops, open studios, meet the maker events and temporary public artworks. Festival of Industry is delivered with 20 partners from the Create Enfield network and is supported by Arts Council's *Place Partnership Initiative*.

As the information about the exhibition points out, the main exhibition at the DAC explores just some of the industries to have flourished in the Borough. Among the industries mentioned are brickmaking, tanning, crape making, flour milling, market gardening, toy making and the manufacture of various electrical products, together with the supply of electricity and gas. Present day industries are also detailed.

The museum has done a good job with the displays—despite the lack of space and display-cases—with artefacts associated with the many industries that existed and still exist in the London Borough of Enfield and which the museum has in its collection. It is always a dilemma with museum exhibitions to decide the height for display panels and objects to cater for children, people in wheelchairs and adults. Some people will find the items are displayed at quite a low height, meaning you have to stoop to look at the artefacts, but this is probably due to the lack of adequate cases. This is sad when the original museum in the Dugdale had purpose-built floor to ceiling cases.

Enfield Council



Exhibition at the Dugdale Arts Centre

A nice touch was the samples that could be handled and smells to be identified and also colour labels to highlight interesting points about the industries.

The exhibition panels look at brickmaking which flourished due to the clay in the Borough; tanning and Wrights flour mill in Ponders End, which is one of the few industries to have survived since 1867 to the present day.

Market gardening flourished in the borough and this together with electrical industries rightly warranted dedicated individual panels highlighting the many innovations made by MK electric; Thorn EMI Ferguson; Ediswan and Belling. The Royal Small Arms

Factory also gets its own panel about the development of the Lee Enfield rifle, STEN and BREN machine guns. Toys manufactured in the Borough include Matchbox toys made by Lesney and Spears who made Scrabble and many other games are also featured. The Power panel describes the work of Brimsdown power station and the Tottenham and Edmonton Gas, Light and Coke Company.

Industry Today and *The Future of Industry* have their own panels and displays showing industries in the Borough continue to innovate.

The main exhibition is based at the DAC, but there is also an outdoor touring exhibition and satellite displays in hub libraries, where some objects can be seen together with the exhibition panels. The outdoor touring exhibition is currently at Enfield Island Village till the 6th November and will move to Albany Park from 6th November to 4th December.

Andrew Lack/Enfield Society



Some of the Edmonton Green Library exhibits

The museum industry displays can be seen at Edmonton Green Library, Palmers Green Library and Ordnance Unity Library; Palmers Green includes Lone Star toys and the Metal Box Company, Edmonton Green has a mixture of industrial objects and Ordnance Unity includes items on loan from the RSA Trust highlighting the Royal Small Arms Factory Apprenticeship Programme. A total of about 245 museum objects are displayed at the various exhibitions. It's great that elements of the main museum exhibition at the DAC can be seen in other parts of the Borough making it more convenient for those who live there and for those who might not easily be able to get to Enfield Town.

Dr Jim Lewis will speak about Sir Jules Thorn The Man and His Empire—Thorn, EMI and Ferguson on 22 November at the Dugdale Arts Centre. On Saturday 25 November from 11am to 1pm a member of the Museum Team will be at the Dugdale Arts Centre to talk about the exhibition and to answer questions. There will be a spotlight talk about a particular aspect of the collection.

Although many of the events in conjunction with the festival have taken place there are code ninja interactive workshops at The Museum of Enfield up until 9th December. These coding and STEM workshops are suitable for 7–13 year olds.

It's an important part of a museums programme to organise workshops and events in conjunction with exhibitions and in the past, these have been very successful at encouraging young people's interest and knowledge.

The Enfield Society has contributed to the festival by organising two guided walks in Ponders End and Brimsdown.

For further information and programme updates about the Festival of Industry go to: dugdaleartscentre.co.uk/whats-on/festival-of-industry

Society Directory

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Vice Presidents: Janet McQueen, Matthew Saunders MBE, Alan Skilton, Leonard Will


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Trees: John West

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The Enfield Society is a registered charity in England & Wales No. 276451 and limited company No. 312134.

Printed by Premier Print, London E4
ISSN 2042-1419 (print edition)
ISSN 2042-1427 (web edition)

St Albans South signal box

Stuart Mills

Andrew Rycraft



On a day that ultimately became the warmest of this year, a small group of 10 members joined me for a heritage themed walk in St. Albans. Initially, we visited St. Albans South signal box which is Grade II listed and maintained by a group of railway enthusiasts. It is a charity and open to the public at various times. Maintaining the rail theme, we walked along the track bed of St. Albans' first railway to pass disused watercress beds, the River Ver and the ruins of Sopwell Nunnery.

We entered Verulam Park, seeing the Roman remains of "London Gate" and walling. We had intended to view the Roman mosaic but, unfortunately, this was closed on that weekend.

After a lunch break we walked through picturesque St. Michael's Village, saw one of the oldest river fords in Hertfordshire and a puddingstone before entering Kingsbury Barn. Very rarely open to the public, the barn was built in 1374 by the Abbey and has been privately repaired and is now Grade II* listed. Along lovely Fishpool Street we returned to the City centre and the Grade II listed Georgian county court.

About the Signal Box

[Ah, yes, the interesting bit—Ed.] The signal box was the second at this location, opened in 1892 to replace the original 1877 structure which had only contained sixteen levers. The larger box was required in connection with the quadrupling of the Midland main line. Originally, the second set of lines were for goods traffic only, but these were upgraded to passenger status in 1895 (from the south) and 1906 (northwards).

The box is of standard Midland Railway design, being in the same architectural style as Bolsover, used by the Midland Railway between 1884 and 1900. Later boxes, such as Upper Portland Sidings, had end windows to the same height as those in the front wall, but most, like West Hampstead, had larger panes of glass and fewer dividing bars.

A peek inside the box reveals a Midland Railway lever frame (with "tumbler" interlocking) of 44 levers. This was installed in 1906 to replace the original one, but the increased size of the interlocking tray (behind the levers) caused it to fit up close against the window panes, giving rise to all sorts of problems for maintenance and alterations. [Text courtesy of signalbox.org]

Join The Enfield Society

Become a member of the Society from as little as £5 per person. Members receive quarterly newsletters and can participate in walks, talks and other activities. Non-members are welcome to come along to talks for a charge of £1 before deciding whether to join. Why not give membership as a gift? You can join or renew membership via our website enfieldsociety.org.uk/join, or scan the QR code.

