



# CIVITAS TOTTENHAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF THE TOTTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

WWW.TOTTENHAMCIVICSOCIETY.ORG.UK

## THE REBIRTH OF LORDSHIP REC

### The story of the community-led regeneration of Tottenham's largest park

This month sees the completion of the £5million regeneration works at the 26-hectare Lordship Recreation Ground, which started in 2010 and was celebrated by a Grand Launch Festival on the 22nd September. This is the result of over a decade of work by many local people who, with the council, put together the Heritage Lottery bid and helped steer the regeneration programme.

The land which is now Lordship Rec once belonged to some large estates with the River Moselle (originally called The Slype) running through it. By the early 20th century when the Tower Gardens Estate was built by the London County Council, there were allotments and a farm named Broadwaters Farm (so called because the land tended to flood) on the open land to the south of Lordship Lane.

Lordship Rec was established by Tottenham Urban District Council in 1932 - 80 years ago - and 10,000 people attended its grand opening four years later. The Tottenham Lido opened in 1937 and the famous model traffic area, thought to be unique in the UK, opened in 1938. There was a dreadful tragedy in the

Second World War when an air raid shelter in the park near Downhills Park Road suffered a direct hit and over forty people died.

The post-war years were the Rec's heyday with sports fields, the model traffic area, the adjacent Lido, the boating lake, the "cascades" and performances at the Shell theatre. On World Cup Final Day in 1966 thousands attended the Haringey Show in the Rec.



In the 1970s the Broadwater Farm Estate (BWF) was built next to the Rec where there had been allotments and in the 1980s the Lido was closed and the site used for housing. Through the 1980s and 1990s the Rec, like other London parks, declined due to lack of staff and cuts in maintenance. The BWF Inquiry Report called for the regeneration of the estate and park and the Broadwater Farm Residents Association campaigned for improvements. The estate was gradually transformed, a new Community Centre was built next to the Rec and sporting events and multicultural festivals were organised. A BMX track was built and some drainage schemes implemented. Broadwater United FC took over management of the enclosed sports pitches. The

Mother & Toddler Group took over the disused hut as a play facility. But public service cuts resulted in withdrawal of staff and maintenance. The Rec suffered from scandalous neglect and fell into serious decline.

Around 2000, inspired by the resident-led transformation of the Broadwater Farm Estate, various community groups in adjacent areas, such as Tower Gardens Residents Network and the (cont...)

Friends of Downhills Park, were set up and started to lobby for local improvements. Their example led to the setting up of the Friends of Lordship Rec for all park users in 2001 and, a year later, the Lordship Rec Users Forum for all stakeholder organisations. Both organisations have met monthly since and many park improvements were achieved over the first decade, including a range of new play and youth facilities, on-site staffing, the Friends' rescuing of the lake and woodland areas, and the creation of the Back 2 Earth Harmony Gardens and community cafe. New user groups (including Back 2 Earth, the Trax cycling club, and the Lordship Wildlife Group) have helped strengthen community empowerment and the development of an inspiring vision for renewal.

Now the historic shell theatre, model traffic area and main entrance have been restored, there's a new bike dirt track and many new meadow areas, a new Eco-Hub passivhaus building with cafe, and to cap it all the River Moselle has been raised to the surface in a magnificent new winding route with three bridges across it, an island and lots of reed beds. Most importantly for the future there is a plan for community and council joint management of the Rec and "micro-management" of its specific facilities. Don't just take my word for it, come and see for yourself at our festival!

All over the borough local residents associations and parks friends groups are standing up for their areas. The regeneration of Broadwater Farm Estate and Lordship Rec demonstrates that local communities can and must organise ourselves to campaign for our needs, and to 'take ownership' and lead the renewal of Haringey's neighbourhoods. At the same time this is only possible if we can access the additional resources needed, and also ensure that public facilities and services are protected and properly funded now and into the future.

For more information or if you want to get involved: [www.lordshiprec.org.uk](http://www.lordshiprec.org.uk)

**Dave Morris, Friends of Lordship Rec**

Editor's Note: Enclosed with this issue of Civitas is a Memories of the Rec form. We would be very grateful if you could complete and return this, or pass it to someone who you think might be interested.

## WEST GREEN NEWS

The removal of the small gyratory system at West Green has rerouted traffic from the area in front of Downhills Park and the Wisdom School and opened up a green area which was previously inaccessible. It has had minimal effect on traffic. The scheme was delivered in partnership with Sustrans who provided £115,000 towards the cost.

## KAOS SINGING CHOIR

The children's choir that sang the National Anthem at the Olympics Opening Ceremony was the Kaos Singing Choir (for deaf and hearing children) from Haringey. If you haven't yet had a chance to hear them do a full performance make sure you do. They are inspirational, entertaining and joyous. To find out more about them go to: <http://www.thekaos.org/>

## PARK ART - SCAFFOLD LION AT BRUCE CASTLE

Well done to Bruce Castle Museum for mounting a striking public art display this summer. Few can have missed Ben Long's giant lion made from scaffolding poles on the front lawn. The Council website says, 'This monumental artwork references not only the traditional sculptural archetype of the regal lion commonly found in the grounds of stately homes, and also the heraldic emblem of Robert the Bruce (whose family owned a third of the manor of Tottenham), but serves to highlight the role that work and labour play in the development of any serious artistic or creative pursuit. The lion is the eighth in an ongoing series of "Scaffolding Sculptures", which the artist started back in 2004. Over this period the series has evolved through various forms including a dog, stag and horse.'



# Hidden Gems of St. Ann's Conservation Area

St. Ann's conservation area is one of Tottenham's smaller and less well known conservation areas. Until recently Tottenham Civic Society tended to overlook it but then in 2009 we had a visit to the wonderful Grade II\* listed church and the following year we visited the Sheikh Nazim Sufi Centre. Last year we organised a tour of the entire conservation area, mainly because we wanted to find out what impact any developments on the St. Ann's Hospital site would have.

The conservation area runs along St. Ann's Road but includes the whole of Chestnuts Park and part of Avenue Road. Because of the park, the trees in the hospital grounds, and the large institutional and religious properties there is a sense of spaciousness and greenery. In fact St. Ann's Hospital is at the southern end of an almost continuous 'green corridor' which runs through Lordship Rec, Downhills Park and Chestnuts Park.

The most important building is St. Ann's Church designed by T.T.Bury, a pupil of Pugin, and dating from 1861. It was part of a group with school and model cottages, all paid for by Fowler Newsam, a wealthy City merchant (see Civitas Tottenham, Winter 2009).

The most unusual building is the former St. Mary's Priory, a late nineteenth century convent. Since 1991 it has been a Sufi Moslem religious, educational and social centre and in spite of the usual Moslem prohibition of graven images, they have kept the statue of the Virgin Mary and Christian crosses on the frontage of the building. On our visit we asked about this and were told that as Sufi Moslems they are tolerant of other religions. In the grounds behind the centre there are nice gardens with chickens

roaming around. When we visited a few elderly nuns from the convent still lived in some nearby homes.

Impressive municipal buildings include Chestnuts Primary School (formerly Woodlands Park Primary School), a handsome building erected by Tottenham School Board in 1897-99. The school buildings and the former caretaker's house are considered to make a positive contribution to the area. Cissbury Road Library, just outside the conservation area, was built in 1931 and is also very attractive. It has a well designed new extension hall at the back. There is a locally listed late nineteenth century police station on the corner of Hermitage Road.

Like many Haringey parks, Chestnuts Park has an active Friends group and has seen various improvements in recent years. It has been awarded a Green Flag since 2008. The quirky skeleton horse sculpture by Ann Carrington was erected in 2005.

There are some negatives. The 2007 conservation area appraisal ([http://www.haringey.gov.uk/st\\_ann\\_s\\_conservation\\_character\\_appraisal](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/st_ann_s_conservation_character_appraisal)) says that the Chestnuts Park community centre 'has no architectural merit' and the red pavilion buildings have an "adverse impact' on the area. The

Suffolk Road Estate, built in 1971, is described as 'visually unattractive' and the Turners Court housing development and the Laurels health centre (funded by the New Deal for Communities) are also described as making a 'negative contribution.'

St Ann's Hospital began life as the North East London Fever Hospital in 1892. As Cherry and Pevsner (The Buildings of England: London 4: North) say it has been 'much rebuilt and extended since, all low-rise', in fact walking through its grounds is a bit like walking through a hundred years of the British health service. This has a certain charm but many of the (cont...)



buildings are no longer up to modern standards.

The frontage of the hospital on St Ann's Road is very attractive with a tall stock brick wall with red brick dressings and a number of Victorian buildings that can be glimpsed over the wall (including locally listed Orchard House and Mayfield House). Outside the conservation area but of considerable interest is the Victorian water tower (pictured) on the western side of the site. There are tree protection orders on 12 individual trees and on the stretch of woodland along the railway line to the south.

Barnet, Enfield and Haringey Mental Health Trust are currently consulting on 'The New St Ann's' (<http://www.beh-mht.nhs.uk/new-st-anns.htm>). The proposals involve keeping all the existing health services but selling off over half of the 29 acre site for development to fund the rebuilding of some of the NHS buildings. The wall and the various buildings that are locally listed or make a positive contribution to the conservation area are to be retained, as is the water tower. It is expected that an outline planning application will be submitted to the council in the autumn.

Joyce Rosser

Editor's Note - Joyce asked local NHS managers about the low relief sculptures on the outside of the water tower and was told that they were done by 'a local artist'. Does anyone have more information?

## Haringey's Conservation Officer Retires

Mortimer MacSweeney, Haringey's Principal Conservation Officer, has retired. There are no plans to replace him at present. SAVE Britain's Heritage, the national charity with which we have close links, is concerned about the number of conservation officers who are being lost around the country. We are assured by Haringey Council that there will be no loss of quality in the service that is provided as regards heritage and conservation planning within the borough. We would like to thank Mortimer for all that he has achieved over the past several years and wish him well for the future.

## "Where there is Tottenham Hale there is nothing"

'And at first I was inclined to say: 'Where there is Tottenham Hale, there is nothing.' It seems a void chaos of building, without limit, without meaning, without centre, lacking circumference. But by degrees its waste elements resolve themselves into some kind of a picture. I see coils of black smoke issuing sluggishly from tall factory chimneys, I see clouds of white steam rising from the yard of some works. There is no glimpse of open country, no prospect of high lands before me. There is a big, new-looking factory in red and yellow brick that was burnt out a year ago and still stands all broken and wretched. There are roads in all directions which I cannot think lead to anything desirable, even if they lead anywhere at all, which I am inclined to doubt. There are sheds and workshops everywhere, and fried fish seems the favourite delicacy, and its stench contends with the reek of some nameless refuse crackling and reeking and smoking in a Gehenna\* fenced with corrugated iron, which retains traces of camouflage painting. A grim place enough, and if it reminds me of anything it is of the outskirts and back parts of an industrial town in Lancashire.'

From *Tottenham Hale* by Arthur Machen (essayist and novelist), 1920

Sent in by Bob Rust

\*Gehenna: hell, place of burning, torment and misery - the name of a valley outside ancient Jerusalem.

Tottenham Hale from the early years of the twentieth century was a major industrial centre. Nearly all the factories have long since gone, to be replaced by blocks of flats in vibrant colours, and the retail outlets of national chains. Aside from the 'roads leading in all directions', the landscape that Arthur Machen describes has been utterly transformed.

On a more positive note, we should mention local conservation group, the Friends of Tottenham Marshes, who do excellent work to improve the environment and biodiversity in this area. Visit their website at [www.tottenhammarshes.org/](http://www.tottenhammarshes.org/) to find out more, including their regular programme of events.

## Planning Applications

**HGY/2012/1590** 'Listed building consent for conversion of basement area to 1 x one bed flat including creation of front lightwell with two new rear entrance door and windows'.

816-818 High Road is a listed building (actually one house not two) on the corner of Northumberland Park built around 1740. A 19<sup>th</sup> C 'bungalow shop' is in front of the southern half of 816-818 (now a tattooist shop with garish frontage). The three-storey building is apparently "supported accommodation". The basement area is storage.

Fuglers Estates Ltd (the owners) have commissioned Steve Gould, LBH conservation officer 1989-99, to produce a report on the 'Historic Building Appraisal and Conservation Assessment of Development Potential' so that they can convert the northern part of the basement into a one bedroom flat (in fact they originally wanted a two bedroom flat but must have realised or been told that they wouldn't get planning permission for that).

They have also commissioned reports from structural engineers. The second report says that in order to increase the height of the basement area without compromising the existing structure they may have to sink piles, introduce a reinforced concrete slab which would cantilever under the existing walls, etc.

Steve Gould has produced a fascinating 33 page report seeking to prove that the building originally had a lightwell and basement windows. He describes other 18<sup>th</sup> C High Road buildings, which have lightwells and basement windows (eg 810-812, 792, etc.).

His report is all well and good and let us assume that he is right and that 816-818 did once have lightwell and basement windows. But in no way does this mean that this tiny area should be converted into a one bedroom flat.

The other 18<sup>th</sup> C buildings with lightwells that he refers to (810-812, 792, etc.) have front garden areas and so are not directly on the pavement as 816-818 is. The living room will be at the back of the building where there would appear to be even less light than reaches the bedroom at the front.

Interestingly this is one of the buildings that is included in Spurs development heritage commitments - 'Spurs to survey to set out repair and restoration works needed together with timetable for carrying out work. Carry out works within five years.'

**HGY/2012/1799** Listed building consent for conversion of former public toilets into minicab office.

Having made enquiries of the Council, it turns out that this application is a private one. At present the building is still owned by the Council. It has had some refurbishment work done this summer, but there is much that still needs to be done to return this handsome little building on Bruce Grove to its former glory. A mini cab office may not be the right solution.

## The William Morris Gallery

On 2 August 2012, the William Morris Gallery, in nearby Waltham Forest, reopened after a £5m refurbishment. We recommend a visit.

Morris has vast influence as a craftsman, designer, novelist, poet, socialist and activist. He was a revolutionary thinker whose philosophy is still hugely relevant to contemporary society, and whose legacy is still a part of it. Here are some of his choice aphorisms:

*"I do not want art for a few any more than education for a few, or freedom for a few."*

*"The past is not dead, it is living in us, and will be alive in the future which we are now helping to make."*

*"I love art, and I love history, but it is living art and living history that I love."*

Address: William Morris Gallery, Forest Road, London, E17 4PP. Opening times 10am - 5pm Wednesday - Sunday. Entry is FREE.

The Gallery is a 15-minute walk from either Walthamstow Central or Blackhorse Road tube stations on the Victoria Line. It is also served by the 97, 215, 34, 357 buses from Walthamstow Central or the 123 from Blackhorse Road.

You can get a taste of what is on offer at the gallery's website at: [www.wmgallery.org.uk](http://www.wmgallery.org.uk)

# SAVE WARDS CORNER!

Wards Corner Coalition (WCC) are contesting the legality of the planning permission given to the developer Grainger for the Wards Corner site at Seven Sisters on June 2012.

This permission allows Grainger to demolish an iconic building and will render the Seven Sisters Market unviable. It also evicts all the local businesses and residents with very little compensation. This shows a shocking disregard for the people of Tottenham and our much loved buildings. WCC has instructed Bindman's solicitors to request a Judicial Review against the council on several points. This has now been sent to the council and WCC is waiting for their response.

This is an expensive process, so the WCC need to raise funds to cover the cost of this. WCC is appealing for help from all those who believe that this is an important cause. All amounts however big or small will help. WCC have won a judicial review before, and with it, set a legal precedent, but they only succeeded because so many people donated so generously.

The following methods of donation can be used:

1. Cheques made out to the Wards Corner Community Coalition can be sent to Candy Amsden or Roy Jose at 14 Nelson Rd. London N15 4LE.
2. Bank Transfer to WCC CO-OP account: Bank account number: 65333725 00 Sort Code: 089299
3. Online: Please check WCC website [www.wardscornercommunity.org.uk](http://www.wardscornercommunity.org.uk) - currently WCC is

exploring the best online methods of donating.

Tottenham Civic Society has been a supporter of WCC since the word go. This year SAVE Britain's Heritage, the national conservation charity, has also lent its support with a press campaign, meetings and advice.

WCC wishes that a compromise could be reached to avoid all these legal processes, but despite appeals to Grainger and the Council to meet and arrive at a satisfactory solution, none has been forthcoming so far. Though this is a local fight, it does have implications nationwide for all those threatened with eviction and homelessness.

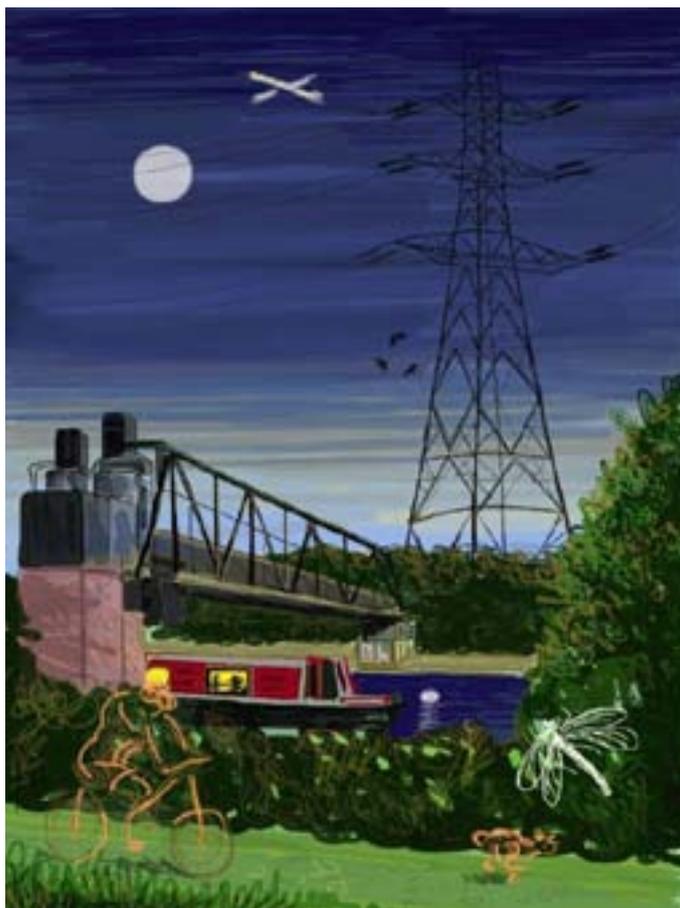
In the centre of this page is a new painting, Tottenham Marshes by Night, by local artist and WCC campaigner, Candy Amsden. She has done a number of new paintings which will be sold to raise funds for the campaign to save Wards Corner. If you would like to own one of these unique works of art, please contact Candy at [candyamsden@btinternet.com](mailto:candyamsden@btinternet.com) or at the postal address opposite.

On Saturday 17 November, there will be a fundraising event at

Tottenham Chances (on the High Road) until the wee small hours. We hope to see you there.

## BRUCE GROVE STATION

Good news - thanks to council enforcement action the unsightly unplanned market in the station forecourt has now mostly been removed - something that TCS has been calling for for years. Sadly some of the ornamental rowan trees on the site appear to be very sick after years of being deprived of rainwater. We hope that any that are lost are quickly replaced.



## RAILWAY WALKS

Local historian Alan Swain writes:

'You may be interested to know that several weeks ago I received an enquiry from a man who was planning to prepare a 'Railway Walks' website similar to the BBC series presented by Julia Bradbury. The man's name is Peter Kessler and he had been born in Tottenham and had once lived near to Turnpike Lane. He was planning to prepare a walk 'From Seven Sisters to Palace Gates along the route of the disused railway line and was seeking some old photographs and historical information.

I know that the TCS recently organised a walk from Palace Gates to Seven Sisters that I presume would have followed an almost identical route only in reverse to the route that Peter Kessler describes.

Peter informs me that he now completed his website feature including many new photographs that he has taken along the route which complement some of the older pictures. I am sure that many people from Tottenham, who have been resident both past and present, will be able to visualise the route he refers to and will take great pleasure in recalling many of the old vantage points of the former railway line that once occurred along the route.

[http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/RailwayWalks/Britain/SevenSisters\\_PalaceGates/SevenSisters\\_PalaceGates01.html](http://www.historyfiles.co.uk/RailwayWalks/Britain/SevenSisters_PalaceGates/SevenSisters_PalaceGates01.html)

He is now preparing a similar walk from Finsbury Park to Alexandra Palace via Hornsey which will also be added to the 'History Files' website. There is a further walk planned from Lower Edmonton station to Angel Road.

It occurred to me that this information may be of interest to TCS members and perhaps may even warrant a few lines in the next edition. You may wish to add this link to your list of interesting websites so that people enquiring about the history of Tottenham's railways can also enjoy!

I have also informed Bruce Castle Museum of Peter Kessler's work, as no doubt it would be of local historical interest.'

## Film: London - the Modern Babylon

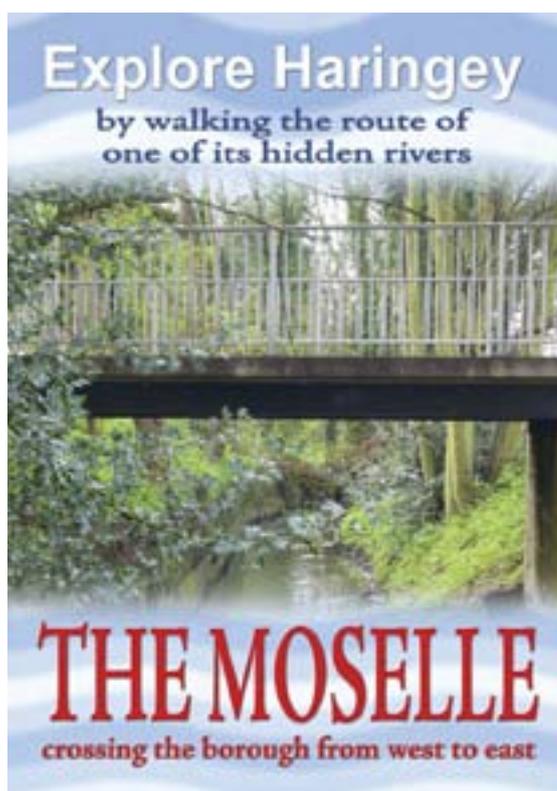
Wednesday 31st October, 7.30pm

A documentary by Julien Temple about London's epic journey through 100 years of cultural upheaval. Doors open at 7pm for refreshment. Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 [www.haringey.gov.uk/brucecastlemuseum](http://www.haringey.gov.uk/brucecastlemuseum)

The TCS programme of events has finished for this year. We had two recent successful events - a tour of Tottenham Green Conservation Area on 23rd September and a tour of Broadwater Farm Estate on 29 September. In addition we had a stall at the wonderful Lordship Rec Launch Festival. If you haven't been along to see the transformation of the Rec make sure you do.

## Moselle river guide

This walk guide has been published by Haringey Friends of Park Forum. It describes the seven-mile walk from Queen's Wood in Highgate to the River Lea in Tottenham. The front cover shows the river in Tottenham Cemetery. Copies of the guide are being distributed free through local libraries and community groups. The guide can also be accessed online ([www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk](http://www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk)).



## JOIN US!

I/we would like to join the Tottenham Civic Society (TCS). Annual membership will provide four copies of our quarterly newsletter, Civitas, attend meetings and events, and support our campaigns to promote high quality, heritage-led regeneration in Tottenham.

I/we enclose a cheque for the following amount:

£5 unwaged

£10 individuals

£7.50 per person - two or more people in the same household

£15 for organisations with under 100 members

£20 for organisations with over 100 members

Name.....

Organisation.....

Address.....

.....

Tel.....

Email.....

Do you want to join the TCS Yahoogroup?

Yes                      No

Would you prefer to receive your copy of Civitas by

Post                      Email

Please make cheques payable to Tottenham Civic Society and post to: TCS, 61 Durban Road, Tottenham, London N17 8ED.

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### TCS email network:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/TottenhamCS/>

To join this network, you need to follow the registration process and your membership will be confirmed by the group moderator. It's a great way to find out what's going on locally.

TCS is affiliated to Civic Voice, the new national charity that represents local civic and amenity societies. Visit their website at:

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/>

We are also affiliated to the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies - visit their website at:

<http://www.londonforum.org.uk/>