

ISLINGTON *news*

The Journal of the Islington Society incorporating FOIL folio

Consultation opens on CrossRail2

The alignment of the proposed Hackney-Chelsea line was safeguarded when Cecil Parkinson was Transport Minister and Margaret Thatcher Prime Minister. Festina lente.

Need for Hackney-Chelsea line

The need for three new Underground lines was established in the 1980s. They were east-west Crossrail, the Jubilee line extension and the Hackney-Chelsea line. Of these the last named had the best cost:benefit ratio. The Jubilee line was completed in 2000, pushed to the front in the mistaken belief that it would be funded by a private sector developer. CrossRail is being built now, pushed ahead (although 15 years behind schedule) in recognition of the fact that the area through which it runs would become increasingly expensive to build. It has.

The Hackney-Chelsea line was required to reduce severe overcrowding on the Victoria and Central lines. The aspiration at the time was for no more than one person standing for every seated passenger.

Need for CrossRail 2

There is no longer any mention of this aspiration. Sir Peter Hendy talks about building CrossRail2 to maintain the degree of crush crowding at its current level. He sees the provision of a HS2 terminus at Euston as an overwhelming argument for CrossRail2, even though the safeguarded route does not go there. In doing so he risks undermining the case for CrossRail2 if HS2 does not happen. There is growing evidence that the sums do not add up, although that has never stopped governments from proceeding with daft schemes or blocking those which are desperately needed. Too many people in TfL measure success in terms of the amount of money they can win out of government, even when a smaller sum invested in something like electrification of the Barking-Gospel Oak line would bring more net benefit to London.

London Forum report

The business led campaign group London First has given its weight to CrossRail2 and recently commissioned and published a report advocating two options. Neither includes King's Cross and

neither includes a station at Essex Road. Anyone responding to TfL's consultation from an Islington perspective needs to look beyond the options being put forward and to ask what benefits we would now be seeing had the original scheme been completed in 2013 as was once contemplated.

King's Cross

There are several tube and subsurface lines at King's Cross, and the Victoria line upgrade has increased the frequency of trains to a maximum of thirty three per hour. Nonetheless, King's Cross St. Pancras continues to attract more footfall than recent improvements can meet. The Railway Lands development, while proceeding more slowly than envisaged before the recession, is happening and inevitably brings demand for yet more capacity. Current work in progress will improve circulation space, but making the area more attractive will simply attract more visitors.

Essex Road

Essex Road and Walworth Road have the highest density of bus passengers of any street in London. Essex Road station does not take the majority of these passengers where they want to go, and is poorly served with an infrequent service. An interchange with a West End route would have the double benefit of enlivening the existing service and providing a much needed high frequency service into the West End for a densely populated part of Islington and West Hackney which currently has no tube service. The Angel, which is included in the London First plans instead, has a case for expansion but it already provides a link to King's Cross and Euston with good interchange to the Victoria line.

Consultation period

Transport for London has opened a consultation on the two London First options, a Regional service or a Metro style service as originally proposed. It runs until August 2nd and can be found at www.tfl.gov.uk/crossrail2.

Islington Society News

John Milner

John Milner became a Committee member of the Islington Society under Marion Harvey's chairmanship over 20 years ago and continued until

recently. It is with sadness that we report John's death in February at the age of 81.

John won a scholarship to read Physics at Oxford and completed his PhD there. Amongst his interests as a student and throughout a long life figured driving antiquated vintage cars.

In 1960 he joined the Physics Department of City University and taught there for over 50 years, supervising PhD students until shortly before his death. He served with distinction as City's pro-vice Chancellor for many years. The tributes from colleagues and students highlight his wisdom, his wit and the encouragement he gave to others. This was particularly true of the many professional relationships he forged with scientists from behind the Iron Curtain, travelling regularly to Eastern Europe.

John married Karen in the late 1950s. Together they set up home in Islington and were active members of the local community, helping to establish the Canal Boat Club and the Islington Adventure Playground. Sadly Karen died in 1962. On behalf of members we sent condolences to his sons Giles and Quentin

Islington Society A.G.M

We apologise that it was necessary to postpone the A.G.M from May to Wednesday, October 9th. It will be followed by a speaker from Greenpeace.

We are considering issuing the Islington News electronically to anyone who wants it. The latest issue in .pdf format and all the available back-copies of the Islington News are on our web-site, which is still in development – see

www.islingtonssociety.org.uk. Please let us know if you are interested in this, indicating whether you would still want to receive a paper copy if you were to receive it by e-mail.

We would like more members' e-mail addresses, but we will not cease to produce hard copy as long as members want it.

Islington Society: What we do

- we support conservation planning work to preserve the borough's historic fabric and individual buildings of distinction
- we campaign for a high standard of design in new buildings
- we encourage best practice through awards for good architecture in new or refurbished buildings
- we organise a varied programme of events including talks, walks and site visits
- we campaign for better public transport and for priority for people travelling on foot or by bike
- we produce publications that celebrate Islington's history and its social and cultural diversity
- we publish neighbourhood walking trails to foster exploration awareness and pride of place
- we build links between residents officials and councillors
- we publish a regular newsletter
- we send advisers to Council groups dealing with

development, the environment and transport

- we are represented on the London Forum of Civic & Amenity Societies, which takes up cross-borough issues and is a member of Civic Voice

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Annual Dinner, 2013

Matt Segal writes:

Frederick's restaurant was established by Lou Segal in 1969 and is situated at the heart of Islington's Camden Passage. We are delighted to be hosting the 2013 Islington Society Dinner on Tuesday October 29th. We have always had a reputation for innovation in the restaurant scene; from banquette seating in 1969, to the addition of the conservatory overlooking the garden in 1979. We are now delighted to announce the opening of The Club Room in June 2013.

The Club Room will be a contemporary space with its own bar and private terrace with a stunning view of the local area. It is fully-equipped audio-visually and will be an excellent space for a variety of different functions; from book launches to birthdays and of course weddings.

Our chef has created a broad, contemporary menu, which is largely sourced from local farmers and suppliers, many of whom we have worked with since the outset. Our food is complimented by a substantial wine list which is renowned for value as well as its balance between Old & New World wines. Each bin is sampled by our sommeliers before making it to the list, via the cellars beneath the restaurant.

Frederick's has been run personally by the Segal family for three generations hence our attention to detail as well as the homeliness of our feel. We pride ourselves on superb food, excellent service, and a cracking atmosphere; perhaps this explains why our customers have been coming to us for over four decades.

FH



Visit to Goldsmith's Centre & Kurt Geiger Building

The 2012 Conservation & Design award winner was revisited by a small but select group from the Society on March 12th.



The Centre's Director, Peter Taylor, himself a practitioner of the goldsmith's craft, greeted us warmly. He gave us an excellent presentation about the Centre's facilities and then took us on a conducted tour of the site. Amongst many points we learned:

- The Goldsmiths' Company, one of the Twelve Great Livery Companies of the City of London, created the Centre in Britton Street, Clerkenwell to support apprenticeships, provide workshop space, conference facilities and a venue for exhibitions.
- A Grade II-listed Victorian Board School on the site was restored at a cost of £17.5 million and opened in April 2012. The high standard of the restoration included cladding in York stone, quality bronze, double-glazing and renewable energy supplied by photovoltaic cells. (pictured left)
- Apprentices receive training and continuing education in their own studios while experienced craftspeople benefit from leased purpose-built workshops. Spacious conference rooms provide a setting for seminars and exhibitions for the general public.

Kurt Geiger Building, Britton Street
We then crossed the road to admire the striking red façade of the Kurt Geiger Building and were taken on a tour of the premises. The site is open plan with great expanses of glass, which give a pleasing light and airy feel to the floor space. Those at work were absorbed in designing new shoes of intriguing shapes and around each floor we admired display cabinets full of elegant finished footwear.

Overall the visits proved most informative and enjoyable.

Society publications [available from the Society at 35, Britannia Row, London, N.1 or from local bookshops]

Twentieth Century Buildings in Islington, by Alec Forshaw, £14.99, photographs by Richard Leeney, ISBN 0-9541490-0-9

The Story of Day Flats in and around Islington, by Andrew Bosi, photographs from C.F. Day Limited and Oliver Craxton, £5, ISBN 0-9541490-1-7

An architect in Islington, by Harley Sherlock, £14.99, ISBN 9-78-0-9541490-2-4

Books from our President and Vice-Presidents

Suicide of the West, by Richard Koch & Chris Smith, £14.99 and available on Amazon, ISBN 0-8264 9023-9.

A History of Islington, by Mary Cosh, published by Historical Publications at £18.95, ISBN 0-948667-974

53 Cross Street - the biography of an historic house by Mary Cosh & Martin King, photographs by Pauline Lord, published by the Islington Archaeology & History Society

Future of London's Airports

Speakers Daniel Moylan and John Stewart provoked a lively discussion at the London Forum Open meeting held on Monday March 11th.

The attendance, of around 40 people, was good, especially considering the bad weather. Michael Bach introduced the speakers, saying that no protagonist of the expansion of Heathrow had been available.

Mr Stewart, the Chair of HACAN ClearSkies, spoke first. He analysed the options.

A. A third runway at Heathrow was advocated by Heathrow itself (BAA & BA), which had until recently been supported by London first and by the London Chamber of Commerce. The argument was that Britain needed a hub airport, because interchange passengers made more flights to more destinations viable, and that made London attractive to business and tourism. The need for more third world destinations was made very vociferously. But the noise impact of Heathrow was enormous - 28% of the people in Europe who were affected by flight-path noise were in London. A third runway would mean a total of one million people in London would be affected. Business now was beginning to understand the political realities, and accept that there would not be a third runway at Heathrow

B. Gatwick (a separate company from Heathrow) argued that London could be a two-hub city, as Amsterdam could not, since London had a much higher proportion of terminating passengers, both business and tourists. These could see all London airports as equally suitable as a destination. London is a major "business" city, which rivals are not.

C. There could be a new airport in the Thames estuary, or a major expansion of Stansted, now very largely a preserve of budget airlines.

Mr Stewart went on to observe that a better, not a bigger, Heathrow was needed, and that there should be a modal shift for short-haul flights from air to rail. This would release the slots needed for wider long-haul services. He said that there was a 'deep green' opinion that opposed any airport expansion, but some environmentalist groups conceded that there could be one new runway somewhere in the UK. The Climate Change Committee said that a 26% increase in flights in the UK by 2026 could be compatible with CO₂ reduction targets. His view is that BA (Willie Walsh) are now planning on basis of "No HR3". By 2018 HR3 would not even be considered as

possible.

Mr Moylan, who had political responsibility under the Mayor for his idea of a new airport for London, said that there would be a six-runway hub airport; the question was whether it would be in Schipol (where many conferences involving people from around the globe were now held) or in Britain. Shipping had gone to Rotterdam when the London docks declined because the Dutch acted and Britain did not. A third runway at Heathrow would be so cut off from the existing airport as to be in practical terms a separate entity. Gatwick manipulated the figures in pursuance of their own interests; two hub airports for London would be a bad mistake and Heathrow was a better option than Gatwick; 60% of the passengers on some airlines were transferring, and that sustained their viability; Amsterdam and Frankfurt were building up their transfer passengers. Clapham Junction was a good analogue; it was very much a transfer station, increasing passengers' choice, and made the railway system south of the Thames much more efficient. London was not, however like Dubai, where virtually all passengers were transferring. There were 24,000 commercial jet aeroplanes in the entire world, and aviation did not make a significant contribution to climate change. The great importance of airfreight was wrongly underestimated - 30% of freight by value went by air.

Mr Moylan said that we needed a proper airport, with four runways and space to grow, able to serve flights all days, without large numbers of people living near it. That airport should be to the east of London; it could be in the Thames estuary or at Stansted. An east location would bring great benefits in terms of business, education etc. to that sector of greater London. Studies of all the options under clear criteria were needed, but could not by themselves give the answer.

In discussion various points were made:- Heathrow could be closed (or left as a very small airport, like London City,) which would free up a massive area for development.

Mr Stewart pointed out that 76,000 jobs at Heathrow would be at risk by this. The overwhelming need to combat global warming made reducing air travel imperative. Mr Moylan said that if climate change trumped everything - connectivity

etc. - then London would suffer. He accepted that absolute ('clean green') opposition to airport expansion was a defensible stance; it was not his or the Mayor's. Mr Stewart said that the targets for CO2 reduction might be too stringent, and those who spoke only about climate change assumed too much.

Mr Ball drew attention to the way in which the Maplin project had collapsed on a change of Government; Mr Moylan said that the need was to have let contracts which could not be reneged on.

Tim Carswell said that when he flew to China it had to be via Helsinki, since direct flights were fully booked. Mr Moylan said that there was great potential for flights to China and India, besides the forthcoming new runway at Schiphol, Dubai and Istanbul were London's rivals. Mr Stewart said that the 'emerging markets' would not peak for some time. Long-haul flights must be given priority over short-haul ones.

Mr Walker (Alan Baxter's) said that an estuary airport was needed; the problem was the impossibility of making decisions in the UK. Mr Moylan said that the present Government had shown that it was able to take brave decisions; the problem was the priority it gave to subjects; the Mayor had brought the new airport issue much higher on the agenda.

David Irwin (Putney Society) asked Mr Moylan what he saw as the difficulties with the idea of an estuary airport. Mr Moylan said that they were powerful local objections, and the need to recreate wildlife habitats, which had been done successfully, but never on this scale.

John Rowcliffe (Wimbledon Society) cautioned against assuming that the third runway at

Heathrow was dead, reminded the meeting that the Roskill Commission in 1970 had not even considered Stansted, and said that the difficulty with an estuary airport would be the access routes, which would affect for more people than the airport itself did. The need was to build a consensus. Mr Moylan thought the Heathrow third runway was far from dead; the airways industry complex knew what it wanted, and historically had eventually got it. Stansted was currently a flop, used only by low-cost airlines. Mr Stewart thought it would be very hard now to get political agreement to the third runway; the Sir Howard Davies report seemed likely to produce a menu of options.

Nick Jeffrey (Catford) said that his students thought the estuary was the obvious solution, and just wondered why it was not happening. Mr Moylan said that it would cost some £5 or 6 billion a year. The Government should provide the money and recoup it by selling the airport as a going concern.

Alan Piper (Brixton Society) stressed the importance of surface access. Mr Moylan said that a spur from the High Speed line from Ebbsfleet could mean access from central London in little over twenty minutes; there could also be a spur to London Bridge and Waterloo, with stops which would provide for airport workers; and there could be road and rail access across the estuary to Essex.

Bill Linskey (Brixton Society) asked whether flying would increase as much as was being projected since meetings and discussions could now be conducted electronically. Mr Stewart thought Mr Linskey might be right, but Mr Moylan thought real personal contact was and would remain very important.

Is London in danger of suffering from a housing bubble, fuelled by overseas investment in property?"

What is the use of London Plan housing targets for London Boroughs in terms of the requirement to meet the needs of Londoners for housing, when a large proportion of the additional housing in some areas is for investment or "second homes" that are left empty for most of the year. If people from whatever country buy or rent housing because they work here is quite different from those who just park their money here and leave homes empty.

If the most important housing sites are taken over by developments aimed at the overseas

investment market, these sites should not count towards meeting the Borough's housing target - this would soon result in Boroughs redesigning their planning policies to meet the need for primary residences - places where people live. It is not based on nationality but on the need for a place to live.

Kensington and Chelsea's current planning policy where two-thirds of the housing target is for market housing, of which 80% should be for large units (3, 4 or more bedrooms) has played directly into the overseas investment market and most of

these flats will remain empty. Now they propose to change their policy to one where no more than 25% of the floorspace in any scheme could be in the form of units of 350 sqm (3767 sq. feet) or more. How many flats of over 3,767 sq. feet have you seen? Can you even visualise such a large unit? But they could

all be 3750 sq. feet and be policy compliant!

It is time that London's housing target is defined as meeting the need for primary residences - which is huge - rather than meet the world-wide demand for investment property, which is not housing but just a "monument".

Transport News Round-up

Barking/ Gospel Oak electrification

A further opportunity for the government to bow to common sense and authorise funding for the electrification of the line from Barking to Gospel Oak, which serves Upper Holloway and Crouch Hill in Islington will arise later this month. The User Group for the line has been maintaining the public profile of this issue and has all party support with the active involvement of Jeremy Corbyn, M.P., of Boris Johnson, local Assembly member Jennette Arnold and erstwhile chair of the GLA Transport committee Caroline Pigeon. Some relatively small but important improvements to the line are going ahead. The entrance at South Tottenham is being remodelled to include gated entry. It is permissible for Oystercard users to change from the Overground at that station to the Victoria line at Seven Sisters without incurring a second single fare.

A pedestrian link is at last being forged between Walthamstow Central and the less well known Walthamstow station on the Barking/Gospel Oak, at Queens Road. It can only be officially opened when Oystercard readers are installed and unfortunately progress on that front has been, well, pedestrian.

Contactless pay on buses

The system for payment using a contactless debit card was introduced on buses in December 2012. The fare is the same as with Oyster if you make no more than three journeys in any one day. There have been reports of these cards being debited unintentionally, and in as much as TfL have made refunds they have acknowledged the problem. The lack of a receipt (Contactless pay in shops or pubs includes a receipt) makes it difficult to check on payments: bank statements give no clue as to the date of the journey, let alone the bus route. TfL though has data on the relative levels of use and routes 38, 55, 73 and 149 are all near the top of the

league. There is some suggestion that this makes these routes prime candidates for the New Bus for London.

New Bus for London

Route 24 will be exclusively operated by these buses from June 22nd and it will be interesting to see how quickly passengers adapt. The experimental use of a few buses on route 38 has not resulted in many passengers boarding by the centre or rear door, because usually this option will not be available on the first bus that turns up. The Mayor's promise that these buses will cost no more than other hybrid buses has been shown not to be met, and they are being purchased by TfL not the operators because there is no scope for cascading them down to the provinces when future contracts in London stipulate newer buses. The Mayor is now claiming that their better performance in terms of fuel use over standard hybrids pays for the higher cost. What he has not mentioned is the higher maintenance costs of repairing any damage to the bus "skirt", arising from its iconic appearance. The standard panels of the iconic routemaster could quickly and cost effectively be replaced in the event of accidental damage.

Irritatingly, the Mayor also talks up the popularity of conductors, while his opponents talk down the extra cost. Irritating, because the NBfL does NOT have a conductor, it has a guard. Conductors took or checked fares, and went upstairs.

Later Sunday trains

We are pleased to report that, to quote an advertising campaign of twenty years ago, the last train runs later than you think. (Someone asked, why pick on the last train?). Sunday evening services on the Overground North London line, which previously ceased between Stratford and Gospel Oak at 10 p.m., now run an hour longer. AB

From the Society

Current officers and What We Do appears on page 2

Future Society events

The Society gives reminders by e-mail of meetings about a week before they are held. Please let the Secretary have your e-mail address if you are not on the existing mailing list. Events take place at 7.30, Town Hall, unless stated otherwise.

June 11th: Kenny Wilks, Head of North London Waste Management.

June 28th: Annual pub crawl starts Pig & Butcher, Theberton St. 6 p.m. and should include the Glassworks, the Craft Beer Company, the Hundred Crows Rising & the Lexington, all new names on the list of Islington pubs visited.

July 16th: Church crawl: Upper Street and Duncan Terrace.

September 18th: New River special: joint meeting with Islington Archaeology & History Society and the Canonbury Society, at the later time of 8 p.m. This meeting marks the 400th anniversary of the completion of Hugh Myddelton's project to bring drinking water to London.

October 9th: rescheduled A.G.M. (see page two)

October 29th: Annual dinner, Frederick's, £25. The Annual Dinner 2013 for members and guests will be in Frederick's Restaurant, Camden Passage at 7.0 for 7.30 p.m.. Members will be sent application forms with the October 2013 Newsletter.

November 12th : visit to St. John's Gate museum. This is one day later than the provisional date given last time, and will commence in the early evening. More details in the October newsletter.

Our monthly Meet the Officers meetings continue at the Marquess Tavern, Canonbury St., on the first Tuesday each month at 9.0 pm on Tuesdays 4th June, 2nd July, 6th August and 3rd September 2013.

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Other Events in or around Islington:

Archaeology & History Society (8.0 p.m. Islington Town Hall)

Non-IA&HS members welcome, donation invited. Further information in the website.

19th June "People and Planning in Islington from the 1960s to 1980s". Speaker David Ellis

18th September: New River special, see above.

London Forum of Civic & Amenity Societies

Meetings at 77, Cowcross Street, commencing 6.30 p.m.

July 2nd: Rail issues.

**Islington Museum & Local History Centre
245, St. John Street.**

Until 23rd August Museum Exhibition "From Hollywood to Highbury. Islington goes to the Movies".

**Estorick Collection of Modern Italian Art, 39a
Canonbury Square**

Until 8th September "Georgio Casali Photographer. Architecture, Design and Art in Italy".

The Cally Market

Every Saturday from 9 a.m. to 5 p.m., located along the Caledonian Road south of the Overground station to Bridgeman Road.

Almeida Theatre,

Almeida Street, N.1 0207 359 4404
Monday-Saturday 7.30 p.m., Saturday matinée 2.30 p.m.

Until 6th July 2013 "Chimerica" by Lucy Kirkwood. World Premiere.

9th July - 9th August 2013 Almeida Festival with a programme of new shows and dance.

***The copy date for our next newsletter is
1st October, 2013.***