

# ISLINGTON *news*

*The Journal of the Islington Society incorporating FOIL folio*

## Boris hands Royal Mail £30m. with Mount Pleasant permission



Local residents from Camden and Islington were dismayed but not surprised that the Mayor has granted planning permission to a scheme for the development of most of the Royal Mail site at Mount Pleasant. The permission is worth an estimated £30m. to Royal Mail who will now look to sell on to a developer.

The scheme has been extensively criticised for its lack of social housing: 24%, compared with an Islington average of 46% in permissions granted in 2012/13, and for its poor design. Images of buildings up to 15 storeys high drew hoots of derision when the planning officer described them as conforming to the London vernacular.

Opponents of the scheme questioned whether even the 24% of affordable housing would materialise. It is dependent on finding an RSL (housing association) willing and able to meet the funding requirements of the 163 proposed units. The position is complicated by the need to make the Islington site suitable for development while retaining some Royal Mail activity, of spreading the cost of this over the two sites, Phoenix Place in Camden and Calthorpe Street (Islington), and a perceived lack of connectivity between the two schemes. The provision of 119 car parking spaces was felt to be too high. They would add to traffic and pedestrian conflict at the already notorious junction at the foot of Lloyd Baker Street.

Moreover, the Mount Pleasant Association, formed from residents groups either side of the borough boundary, has obtained funding from the GLA and is within six months of producing an alternative plan which could represent a triumph for the Localism Act of 2011. Ironically, their plan might even increase the density without the height and bulk that even the planning officer recommending the scheme acknowledged

would be done to the listed terraces which border the development site. The officers report berated them for not having submitted a planning application, but given the anticipated timescale of the developer's scheme six months would make little difference. The call-in itself delayed a decision by more than six months.

The fact that the Mayor had called in the scheme, rather than allowing the Boroughs to determine it, and then expressed support for it before the hearing, also drew criticism. When it came to questioning the applicants and the councils, the Mayor struggled to frame the questions and there is little doubt that cross examination by a group of elected members would be more incisive than confining it to one individual.

The planning officer maintained that the harm done to the immediate neighbourhood would be outweighed by the overall benefits of the scheme. She noted that the original offer of 12% affordable housing had been doubled. She considered that the Internal Rate of Return, estimated at 20%, was proportionate.

It would however be a mistake to represent the outcome as Tory pro-development versus Labour opposition. There are Conservative members of the GLA who have a more balanced view, and even the Mayor has more regard for good design than his Deputy to whom much of the planning brief is delegated.

Local residents around City Road basin hardly fared much better with the previous Mayor, who was over-fond of tall buildings. Boris Johnson campaigned on reversing this policy, but has found it difficult to do so.

## *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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**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 Leency, 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

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## CPRE reports on greenfield and brownfield sites

### Removing obstacles to brownfield development

The Government should implement a range of inventive policies to realise the potential of brownfield house building, it has been claimed in a new Housing Foresight Paper published by the Campaign to Protect Rural England in September 2014.

The paper, *Removing obstacles to brownfield development*, examines the obstacles preventing residential development from taking pace on brownfield land, while suggesting a series of policy mechanisms to resolve the issue. While acknowledging that the reasoning behind the development of brownfield sites is complex, CPRE claims the construction sector's over reliance on profit driven, large-scale house builders who are looking to maximise value from each new home sold, while also capitalizing on cost efficiencies to boost profitability is a primary contributing factor. Subsequently, the report suggests that significant ownership and physical obstacles such as site preparation costs and the reliance on developers to pay the high cost of cleansing contaminated land, could be behind recent figures depicting a decline in brownfield development.

To increase the level of housing delivered on brownfield land, CPRE claims that the Government should implement four measures. First, the Government should charge council tax on uncompleted housing on brownfield land for which planning permission has been granted. Second, there should be relief structures offered to developers to aid site remediation (on contaminated sites). The report argues that where a polluter cannot pay for remediation, the Government should incentivise development by offering improved taxation relief structures. Third, the report argues that National Planning Policy should set a sequential approach to land allocation which prioritises brownfield land. Last, the Government should use tax increment financing as a way of funding the delivery of new housing on strategic brownfield sites.

The CPRE's Housing Foresight Series intends to provide evidence-based research papers that support innovative policy solutions to critical housing issues. Over the next two years, CPRE will be publishing eight research papers as part of the Housing Foresight Series. The previous paper, *Increasing Diversity in the House Building Sector*,

looked at the dominance of volume house builders, while a paper on *Brownfield Development* is expected to be published in December 2014.

### National Planning Policy Framework failing to protect greenfield sites

The Campaign to Protect Rural England has warned that pressure on local planning authorities to meet five year supply requirements under the National Planning Policy Framework, combined with a shortfall of Local Plans adopted by Local Planning Authorities, has meant that a large number of greenfield sites are being earmarked for housing development over more locally-supported sustainable sites.

The report, *Targeting the Countryside*, published by Parsons Brinckerhoff on behalf of CPRE, investigates how the NPPF's housing policies are being interpreted in local plans, and also in decisions by Planning Inspectors and the Secretary of State. As Local Authorities need to have a five year plan in place under the NPPF, the report found that if private developers fail to deliver enough homes, local authorities are often being forced to meet the shortfall by allocating more greenfield sites. Furthermore, since the NPPF has been implemented, only 17.6% of authorities have had a local plan approved by government. Without a plan in place, under the NPPF a Government Inspector can currently overturn a decision to reject housing on a greenfield site. CPRE claims that this loophole is proving to be catastrophic for the countryside, with planning inspectors overturning the decisions of local councils in 72 per cent of cases where there was no defined land supply, which has resulted in 26,840 houses being built on greenfield in the past two years.

To resolve this, CPRE is calling on the Government to amend paragraph 49 of the NPPF so there is no longer an automatic presumption in favour of granting planning permission where the local authority is unable to demonstrate a five year land supply. The report also suggests that paragraph 14 of the NPPF should be amended so that meeting housing demand does not have greater weight than environmental and social sustainability in plan making and decision taking.

## The saving of Smithfield Market

*Key aims of the Islington Society are to preserve the historic fabric of the Borough and to maintain the quality of life. The refusal of planning permission by the Inspector of the recent public enquiry into the future of Smithfield Market well illustrates these aims.*



### Background

Smithfield has a long and colourful history as an open-air market stretching back to medieval times. In the 1860s a series of market buildings on a two storey scale were built, designed in an exuberant French/Italian Renaissance style. The City of London owns the freehold.

The Smithfield Conservation Area dates back nearly 50 years, bordered to the north and to the west by the Conservation Areas of Charterhouse Square and of Hatton Garden. The Smithfield General Market is especially valued for its vaulted roof of iron and laminated timber trusses and has been described as part of one of the finest surviving examples of market buildings in Europe.

Smithfield has been largely vacant since 1999. The buildings though structurally sound have suffered deterioration since then as the result of low levels of maintenance.

### Development Schemes Smithfield

In 2007 Thornfield Properties applied for planning permission to demolish Smithfield Market buildings and to erect a single block for offices and retail use. Their application was refused as harmful "to the appearance and character of the Smithfield Conservation Area".

In 2013 Henderson Global Investors applied for planning permission for the "partial demolition of existing buildings to provide office and retail uses". The plans were for two office blocks of 5 and 7 storeys respectively. In their application Henderson maintained in presenting the case for its scheme that Smithfield was no longer required as a wholesale market and that;

- the proposal was for alteration and conversion and not for wholesale demolition of the existing buildings;
- approval would help to meet demand for office space and secure the long term future of the site;
- the significant public benefits of the development would greatly outweigh any possible harm to the Conservation Area.

### Public Inquiry

The application by Henderson Global was called in: "because the proposal concerns matters that are of substantial regional and national controversy". The Inquiry's terms of reference included attention to the desirability of preserving or enhancing the character or appearance of Conservation Areas.

The main organisations which opposed the scheme were SAVE Britain's Heritage and the



Victorian Society. Alec Forshaw appeared as one of their expert witnesses. Among key points were:

- two large new office blocks would overwhelm the area;
- the scheme would substantially damage the Smithfield Conservation Area as well as adjoining listed buildings and street views.

The Inspector refused planning permission for Henderson Global on the grounds that:

- the scheme was not consistent with Government policies for good design and to preserve historic environment;
- it would seriously affect the character and appearance of the Smithfield Conservation Area;
- Smithfield market halls as heritage assets

were an irreplaceable resource and

- the scheme's "public benefits" were not a convincing justification for its extremely harmful effects.

#### What Next

Henderson Global has the right to challenge the Inspector's decision in the Courts but so far have not done so.

Ideas emerged during the Inquiry for a regeneration plan to bring Smithfield back into public use as soon as possible. The various heritage groups involved agreed on the need for an imaginative approach for Smithfield to become a thriving and lively area while economically viable. Examples cited include developments at Covent Garden, Camden Lock, Spitalfields and the Borough Market. Their success has been built on leisure activities, markets, live music, and theatrical performance attracting the public not only during the week but also at weekends. In contrast, office sites are dead at the weekend as can be observed in parts of the City of London.

In conclusion the Smithfield Public Inquiry represented a major victory for conservation. The challenge now is to produce a viable and deliverable scheme for the area.

## Get Britain Building 2020 Delivery Plan: new report published

*A new report which calls on the next UK Government to adopt a series of measures to support the UK construction industry, has included a call to reduce VAT on housing renovation and repair from 20% to 5%.*

The report, *Get Britain Building: 2020 Delivery Plan* - published by a coalition of leading construction bodies on 9th September 2014, calls on the next UK Government to put in place the skills, capacity and infrastructure to deliver large numbers of new and improved homes. This includes providing hundreds of thousands of young people who will follow vocational employment routes, at a time when the average age of a construction worker in the UK is 51 years old.

Published by Get Britain Building, a group consisting of the Federation of Master Builders, the Modern Masonry Alliance, Homes Builders Federation and the Builders Merchants Federation, the report calls upon the next UK government to place the delivery of new and improved housing, non-domestic buildings and infrastructure at the heart of their long-term plans. The report also calls

upon the Government to increase capital spending over the five year period to 2020, to ensure that more schools, hospitals, roads and railways are built.

Using a recent Experian research paper commissioned by the Cut the VAT Coalition (an alliance of 60 charities of which The Heritage Alliance is a member), the report calls on the UK Government to reduce VAT on housing renovation and repair work from 20% to 5%, which it claims will stimulate the wider economy by £15 billion over the next five years to 2020, while reducing carbon emissions by 240,000 tonnes of CO<sub>2</sub>.

For more information visit the Get Britain Building website. The report, alongside the Heritage Alliance Manifesto, the Power of Heritage, and the Historic Houses Association policy statement, Heritage Means Business, are also available on the Heritage Alliance website Permitted development.

## Haematologist commemorated in Alwyne Road

A green plaque to commemorate Dr. Gordon Signy was unveiled at a well attended ceremony in Alwyne Road in late summer sunshine on October 2nd. A moving speech from his son Mark, who followed Dr. Signy into the medical profession, enlightened all present about what it was like to be brought up in Canonbury in the post war period before gentrification. Mr Signy also reflected on the primitive nature of pathology in the early years of his father's practice, and on the development of the sub-specialties of pathology we have to-day. In the early years, pathologists often knew what was wrong but there was no means of cure. Now of course the forensic pathologist knows everything twenty-four

hours too late.

As well as founding the study of haematology, developing the investigation and successful treatment of blood diseases, Gordon Signy had an illustrious amateur sporting career. Deprived of the opportunity to compete in an Olympiad by World War II, he nonetheless captained the British fencing team at the Tokyo Olympics and again in Atlanta in 1968.

The last seventeen years of his life were spent with his wife and two sons at 23, Alwyne Road. The present owners and direct successors in title invited the assembled group to tea and cake afterwards.

## Mary Powell



Long standing Society members will be sorry to learn that Mary Powell (Christened Maria) has died at the age of 90.

Mary was born into an Italian family and spent her life in Islington. She experienced at close hand the devastation of World War II bombings in the Borough. In 1947 she married Jack Powell and Jack Powell's stores became a feature of the community on St. Peter's Street. Jack had been a boxer and for many years both he and Mary were involved with the London ex-boxers association. Jack though hailed from Yorkshire and was at one time a member of Yorkshire County Cricket Club. He died in 1992.

The shop provided a conduit for local concerns long before Mary became involved in politics. The catalyst for this was a planning

application abutting the Stores, which arose in August when no councillor could be contacted. Mary joined the SDP and was elected to take one of their places in 1986. In 1990 she was one of the last fourteen people in the country re-elected under the SDP party label, and subsequently she represented the Liberal Democrats until 2006. Her daughter-in-law, Carol Powell, was also a member of the Liberal Democrat group for the last four years.

Like many of the SDP councillors, her background was of support for the Labour Party but unlike some of the others, she never saw opposition to the Labour council or government as an end in itself. As a member of the Licensing Committee and the Development Control Committee, she scrupulously followed the rules about setting aside party preferences and considering applications solely on their merits. She refused to be bullied by the political heavy-weights of the day.

Once the Liberal Democrats took control of the council in December 1999, Mary was an obvious choice for Mayor and she served with distinction in this office the following year.

Her high profile in the local community, and her willingness to pursue constituents' concerns, ensured a high personal vote at elections not only for herself but for her co-councillors. They may have under-estimated her influence: when she stood down in 2006 the swing back to Labour in St. Peter's Ward outweighed the swing everywhere else and left the council with "No overall control".

She is survived by three sons and seven grandchildren.

## Council forces restriction on office conversions to flats

Key employment areas in Islington will be protected from residential conversions after the town hall reached a compromise with the Government.

Zones around King's Cross, Upper Street, Holloway Road, Finsbury Park, Hornsey Road and Archway will be exempt from the controversial changes to planning law brought in last May, which allowed offices to become flats without planning permission.

It comes after a drawn out battle between the council and the former Planning Minister Nick Boles which saw the ruling upheld in the High Court in December and a failed "Article 4 Direction" which would have made Islington exempt from the policy.

But after discussions with new Planning Minister Brandon Lewis, a new Article 4 that covers the most important and intense clusters of businesses and charities in the borough was agreed.

Cllr James Murray, Islington Council's executive member for housing and development, said: "The Government's initial decision to block us was wrong, and we were right to challenge it.

"I'm pleased that we have been able to have a constructive dialogue in recent weeks and reach an agreement which protects the most important clusters businesses and charities in the borough.

"We have said from day one that the Government's office-to-flats policy is having a detrimental effect on Islington and, in fact, right

across London.

"The extremely high value of flats in Islington meant that small businesses and charities were being evicted - and so today's agreement is important as it means we will be able to protect many of them."

In the 16 months since the law came in 71 office buildings in Islington have obtained "prior approval" for conversion to residential since the law changed, with 11 further applications submitted.

Around half of the above floorspace was occupied, which in some cases has led to small businesses and charities being evicted. One of these is particularly close to home.

Commercial landlords continue to empty their premises of thriving small to medium business (SME's) in the hope of converting to more lucrative residential uses. Developments that already have permission - such as plans for the Archway Tower in Junction Road which will turn the 16-storey office block in to 118 new flats - will not be effected by the exemption.

Of the homes created in these spaces, the council estimates that two out of every three is a one-bedroom unit or a bedsit. No affordable housing has been created - despite the potential to deliver around 350 affordable homes.

Parts of the borough in the Central Activities Zone, such as Finsbury, were already exempt from the new law.

## Bill Manley pub crawl reaches 80

The first pub crawl without Harley took place on June 20th this year. Thoughts turned to how we should celebrate Harley's role in encouraging the crawl, which has been undertaken for more than twenty years, while continuing to remember its founder, Bill Manley.

The number of pubs visited, if we are allowed to count twice those establishments that have had a change of name or several in the intervening period, has now reached 80. This year we began at the Master Gunner, a Young's House close to Finsbury Square and the Artillery company which led to its name. It has been the Master Gunner all through the history of the Pub crawl, and it is surprising that a Youngs establishment should not have been visited earlier.

We alternated between old favourites and new venues. So our second port of call was the Artillery Arms, a Fullers house, and then back to City Road for a first ever visit to the Angel. We crossed Old Street roundabout to another old favourite: I am sure that Bill would be delighted to see how Ye Olde Fountain overflows with amber nectar in the hands of the same family that ran it during his lifetime.

The Three Crowns was reopened after many years, and fully justified straying to the Hackney side of City Road. The crawl was completed at the Wenlock Arms, also an honorary Islington pub which has survived the threat of development and is thriving under new ownership, albeit without the meeting room above.

## Harley Sherlock 1926-1984

*Further tributes have been contributed by our members.*

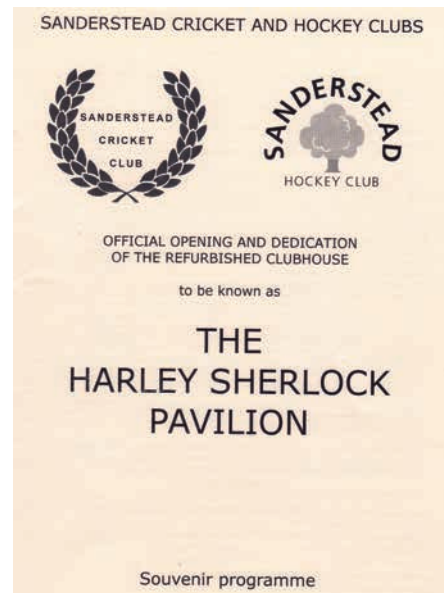
Harley's excellent obituary of himself published in the Summer 2014 issue of *Islington News* (so characteristically practical of him to write it!) deserves supplementing by others who knew and could appreciate him from the outside. When I first got to know him on joining the *Islington Society* probably in 1990 he had already been a member for thirty years (having been a founder) - so I am witness to less than the second half of his contribution, and can offer only very limited comments.

When I was still a very new member of the *Society* (and altogether new to such societies) I remember his warm promotion of me as a committee member when all he can have known of me was some articles published in the architectural press not necessarily promoting a viewpoint parallel to his own. I was impressed by the well-attended *Society* committee meetings and the Council's Conservation Advisory Committee meetings on which the *Society* was represented, and by the deft and tactful way in which he either chaired or contributed to them - full of suggestions of letters he would write to put the *Society's* views (i.e. his own) to his wide range of acquaintance in influential positions. His view was always the common sense and humane one, but put with great force. In person this was aided by his powerful frame and remarkable nasal profile. *Society* meetings were always followed by a visit to a nearby hostelry where his capacity for warm companionship could really flourish. I never saw but can imagine that cricketing in his native Sanderstead, with which he continued most of his life, gave opportunities for the same.

Neither did I ever work with him so cannot comment from a professional point of view but I was flattered by the way he asked me to think about the Archway roundabout and then tried to promote the ideas I put forward with the then owners of Archway tower and surrounding properties. I did my best - at his instigation - to try to get listed at national level (is it locally listed?) the housing he had promoted and designed at Southwood Avenue in Highgate, the first effort of Andrews Sherlock and Partners, but sadly was unsuccessful. He had noticed how the changes to the original windows and the filling in of double-height spaces were gradually eroding the quality of the humane development of houses around a triangular communal central green and had hoped to stop it before it was all gone. The

other project of which he seemed to be proudest was the conversion of most of the early nineteenth century houses round Claremont Square into social housing - focused again of course on a central green space, albeit one filled with a covered reservoir. Claremont Square provided him with a model of how the city could be - low rise, with a green outlook, but dense so as to keep communal services running and not to overrun the greenbelt - a cause to which he was dedicated as President of the London branch of the Campaign to Protect Rural England.

He designed in his young days his own home in Alwyne Villas, Canonbury, an area where he had first arrived as part of what he described as a 'commune' of students from the Architectural Association in Canonbury Park North. Built on a very tight budget to woo his prospective wife, with just two storeys and a large garden, it was not a model for the dense city (as he readily admitted), but with its intimate approach through a 'gate in a wall' and a tight courtyard leading to a spacious interior and a wide garden view, it showed how constrained urban space could be manipulated to great effect. It was both modest and admirable, as was his design as a whole. It was good that he could receive the *Society* there as the finale of its Canonbury Tour in 2012. His final decline in health was fortunately brief, though it is sad how often those final images remain in one's mind. But Harley in his long heyday was a striking figure, influential on the whole character of present day Islington, a great raconteur, and a heart-warming person to know. JD





## Of transport, beer and cricket

I was fortunate enough to share with Harley an enthusiasm for three of the greatest pleasures in life. I first came to know Harley through transport and the related issue of planning. I used to attend meetings of the planning committee in the 1980s as a member of the Labour Party group of members that represented the party to councillors. Often I was able to join the members, including Harley, at the post committee review of proceedings, which always took place at the *Compton Arms* even though in those days most post-council meetings of this kind were held at the *Four Sisters*. Harley, along with Cllr. Mike Devenney and others were very clear that the beer was much superior in the Compton, although Harley would not have been concerned as one or two elected members by the fact that the landlord of the Sisters was a Tottenham Hotspur supporter.

Later I joined the Planning Committee and chaired the Transport Committee as increasingly transport issues were seen to be key to the suitability or otherwise of so many development proposals. Public transport was the only option for getting around if we were to fill a crowded city with ever more of the things that were wanted or needed, and of course it is essential for the journey home after a full appreciation of good beer.

Some of my cricket watching had to be curtailed during the time I was on the council - it was not then possible to see every Yorkshire match, or to visit the other counties when Yorkshire were not playing. It was later that I was able to spend time with Harley at a cricket ground, ranging from Sanderstead in Surrey to Lord's where Harley was a member of the 1200 club and a regular visitor to the Bowlers Bar and the Lord's Tavern. Good beer is rarely far from a cricket ground these days, although the ECB priority for short-term income has curtailed the availability of local ale at both these watering holes. Harley has had far more influence at Sanderstead, where local ale is always available.

In his book, *Villagers Five Shillings*, Harley recounts that one of the attractions of cricket in the immediate post war period was that every club had its own local beer. Harley lived just long enough to see the wheel turn full circle. A change in the tax regime in 2008 led to an unexpected but welcome proliferation of microbreweries, all producing beer that puts mass produced real ales in the shade once reserved for Courage and Watneys.

Needless to say, Harley's preference was for

Real cricket, played in whites with the taking of wickets of greater import than the curtailment of runs and where an honourable draw could be secured if victory were out of reach. His good taste in beer and cricket was of course reflected in his architecture as well - and he always preferred a crew operated routemaster, abhorring the ridiculous bendy-bus that is so rapacious of the land for which demand is limitless. AB

## A TEENAGER AT WAR

### HARLEY SHERLOCK



### Memories of Harley Sherlock

Harley was a neighbour and friend. We moved to 7 Alwyne Place in 1976 and first met him in the Canonbury Tavern. His imposing height immediately caught the eye. Over the years, we valued his friendship as a man who enjoyed life and told great stories with gentle humour. Harley avoided politics in the pub despite describing himself in one of his books as "rather moderate left-wingery". As a CAMRA member, enjoying well-brewed beers while talking with friends was one of his lifelong pleasures. A memorable occasion for Harley was the Queen's Jubilee in 1977 with the opportunity to enjoy street parties with neighbours and friends.

Harley also came over as a family man, devoted to his wife Folly and to their three children. Folly once told us that her full name was

"Fionnuala" without explaining how it had arrived at the shorter version. One fond memory is their love of the pond at the bottom of the garden and of the ducks nesting there each year. Folly somehow managed to lead an annual outing of ducklings down Alwyne Place along to the safety of the New River.

A major local issue in those years was the Basil Spence partnership's project to demolish the terraces and houses of the Alwynes and to replace them instead by flats. Opposition to the project was led by Professor Barrie Scott ably supported by Harley, two giants of the community. As has often been described, this became known as the "Battle of the Alwynes" and led to abandonment of the project. The Canonbury Society later placed a bench on Canonbury Place in tribute to Barrie.

Although intensely absorbed in urban matters, Harley was very much an outdoors man and particularly enjoyed his links with Sanderstead, his place of birth, where his family had given land for the Sanderstead Cricket Club. Harley for years made regular visits to cut the outfield, trim the trees bordering the pitch and keep the grounds in order. We went to several cricket matches there and also had the privilege of being invited to Harley's 80th birthday celebrations at the Club in a huge marquee. Sanderstead Cricket Club became with Harley as its President a lively centre of social activities as well as a Sports club.

Harley took a keen interest in community issues and chaired many committees involved in the quality of life, conservation and urban housing. As a Committee member of the Islington Society, I served under Harley during his terms as Chairman and President. During his chairmanship the Society's activities were enlivened by an Annual Dinner for members, continued each year since. He always listened to everybody and gave members a chance to put their views. This did at times lead to

rather long Committee meetings, invariably followed however by a reviving stop at a pub on the way home. In representing the Society he showed a capacity to get on with almost anyone despite differing opinions. I never knew him lose his temper nor heard that he had ever done so.

Harley's work as an Architect was of course central both to his personal and community life. He spoke much about architectural standards, urban housing, planning and transport and developed his ideas in several books, notably "Cities are good for us" and "An Architect in Islington". One pithy account of his early years includes this: "Builders tended to drive Jaguars whereas most of us architects rode bicycles". Amongst his strongly expressed opinions were that "streets are proper places for living rather than mere thoroughfares", that "architecture was about community not just houses" and that we needed to create the "modern equivalent of our Georgian streets and squares". Harley wrote in one of his books: "For everyday living, give me city life with its vitality and convenience, with all the basic necessities of life within a five-minute walk - local shops, pubs, and bus routes". He was proud to have been a co-opted member of Islington Council's Planning Committee for twenty years.

Harley sadly left us earlier this year but would surely have approved Sarah Jane's words at his funeral that Harley wanted his life to be celebrated with a big party - held fittingly at Sanderstead.

FH

**We are planning to hold a cricket match close to Harley's first anniversary, in which Sanderstead Second XI will host an Islington Society Invitation XI. Details will be finalised once league fixtures are published, in time for the next Newsletter.**

## Transport News Round-up

### Thameslink returns

Trains on what most of us always have called Thameslink are now officially Thameslink trains again. The First Capital Connect legend on the side of carriages was erased several weeks before the handover, which is the result of the reshaping of the network that will be brought about by "Thameslink 2000", the scheme which will link local services which currently terminate at King's Cross into the Snow Hill tunnel and on to destinations south of the river.

First Capital Connect has also disappeared from trains on the East Coast main line and through Drayton Park and Essex Road to Moorgate. All of these services are now run by a consortium led by GoVia, which has been running the Southern service.

Transport for London is taking responsibility for some of the West Anglia services out of Liverpool Street, so the West Anglia Great Northern conglomeration is no more. London Overground is assuming interim responsibility for it. TfL will only have the services within Greater London, however. There should have been no impact on passengers, but because Thameslink was in competition with Southern on the Brighton line, offering slower services at lower prices, once they are run by the same company there will be just one fare, which seems unlikely will be the lower of the two.

### Cycling super highway

Transport for London is consulting on the proposed North-South Cycle Superhighway. Comments are sought by October 19th. The scheme would mean substantial changes to the road layout, including a largely segregated two-way cycle track along most of the proposed route between Elephant & Castle and Farringdon station. There should also be a new 'Quietway' back-street cycle route north of Farringdon station to King's Cross, but this will be consulted on at a later date.

The proposals are designed to improve safety for cyclists. Space for the new Superhighway would be created by reallocating road space from other traffic and changing the operation of some junctions, including banning some turns for

motorists.

### New Bus for London

The stream of press releases about the New Bus for London, or New Routemaster as the vehicles on routes 8 and 38 are described, has dried and so has the rate of arrival of new buses. It now seems unlikely that any other routes will have guards. Only three-quarters of the back door opens when in opo mode and this leaves a narrow gap between the grab handle and one side. I understand there will be a further design modification on later deliveries. At the present rate of progress the first tranche of 600 will not be delivered before the Mayoral elections of 2016. It is unclear when a decision has to be made as to the option to purchase another 400.

Further modifications have been made to enable the buses to conform to a new "Euro VI" air quality standard. It is likely that the earlier buses will be making the trip across to Northern Ireland for similar changes at some time in the future. The Mayor has set 2020 as a deadline by which improved air quality standards must be met in London.

The arrival of buses on the 38 was delayed by about a month as the decision to have some black ones "for the (Association Football) World Cup" was taken late in the day. They continue to run in rather sombre colour even though the World Cup is long over. One bus has been painted blue which most observers find less visually intrusive.

### Proposed diversion of 205 and N205 buses

For the last eighteen months, the 205 and N205 has been diverted at Old Street to avoid CrossRail works around Moorgate and Liverpool Street. The diversionary route takes it to Shoreditch and then along Bishopsgate to rejoin its original route to Aldgate and beyond.

TfL now wishes to make the diversion permanent. The 21, 43 and 141 continue to provide services to Moorgate, but Eldon Street would lose its main route to Aldgate. The 135 provides an existing route from Old Street and Shoreditch to Aldgate. Consultation runs until early November.

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.

The Annual General Meeting has been postponed and will now be held in December.

The copy date for our next newsletter is February 5th 2015.

**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 web site.

Wednesday 19th November 2014 "Language, Myth and the World out there" by Philip Barker.

Wednesday 17th December 2014 "The Prefab Museum and the Excalibur Estate" by Elizabeth Blanche.

**London Forum of Civic & Amenity Societies**

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

Tuesday October 14th : A.G.M.

Tuesday November 25th: Town centres

Thursday January 29th 2015 & Monday March 23rd: topic to be announced

**Islington Museum & Local History Centre**

245, St. John Street. tel. 7-527 2837

Exhibitions: Friday 17th October - Tuesday 18th November 2014 "Living Africa: Through the Eyes of Children".

Friday 5th December 2014 - Thursday 26th February 2015 "East to West: Chinese Life in London since 1900".

Closed Wednesday and Sunday.

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

Opening hours Wed. to Sat. 11 a.m.- 6 p.m., Sunday 12 noon-5 p.m.

24th September - 21st December 2014 "Ostia Antica: Ancient Ruins, Modern Art".

**Almeida Theatre,**

Almeida Street, N.1 0207 359 4404

Monday-Saturday 7.30 p.m., Saturday matinée 2.30 p.m.

5th December 2014 - 14th February 2015 "The Merchant of Venice", relocated to Las Vegas, by William Shakespeare.

**Hope Theatre,**

207 Upper Street, N.1 0207 478 0160

15th September-18th October

First showing of Joe Orton's first play, *Fred & Madge*

**Islington University of the Third Age (U3A)**

Thursday Meetings at 10.30 am, The Resource Centre, 356 Holloway Road.

Monthly talks:

23rd October 2014 Speaker Margaret Hodge, MP Barking

27th November 2014 Speaker Roberta Cremoncini, Director Estorick

For details and membership [www.IslingtonU3A.org](http://www.IslingtonU3A.org)

**Across London**

11th October: Post War Churches in London- an extensive exploration by coach of some of London's most important church architecture of the past seventy years. The Twentieth Century Society

16th October - War Memorials - their history and meaning. Churches Conservation Trust 2014 Annual Lecture. Charterhouse, Sutton Hospital, Charterhouse Square, London, EC1M 6AN

23rd October: Living on the River. Architecture for All Programme: The future of the River Thames. Old Royal Naval College Greenwich

7th November: Museums beyond the web Museums Computer Group's annual conference. Natural History Museum, London.

21st November: Building by the River. Architecture for All Programme: The future of the River Thames. Old Royal Naval College Greenwich

4th December: The Heritage Alliance's Heritage Day, at the Glaziers Hall, London Bridge SE1 9DD.