



IHBC London Newsletter

Winter 2015



A Note from the Chair

As many of you will be aware, our longstanding Branch Chairman David McDonald formally ascended to the dizzy heights of IHBC President in September. I stood down as Secretary and took on the role of Chair on an interim basis until the next Branch AGM, and am very pleased to report that David will continue as an Ex Officio member of the Committee and to Chair the annual Branch Day Conference.

I hope you all enjoy reading this festive Newsletter and that those of you who were not able to attend the *Setting the Scene* Conference on 8 October at the Royal College of Physicians will appreciate the canter through the presentations, as a taster for the longer article that will appear in Context in the New Year.

It was also really good to see so many of you on 3 December at the recently listed interwar Royal Oak pub in Bethnal Green for our Branch Christmas drinks event and we look forward to seeing many more of you in 2016!

Finally, I assure you I wasn't trying to upstage David McDonald by appearing on the front of Context recently!

Sheila Stones
London Branch Chair

New Twitter Account and Email Address

IHBC London has a new Twitter account! For the latest heritage news and updates on branch activities, follow us at:



@IHBC London



We also have a new email address: IHBClondon@gmail.com

Add us to your address book, and check your spam box to avoid missing us!



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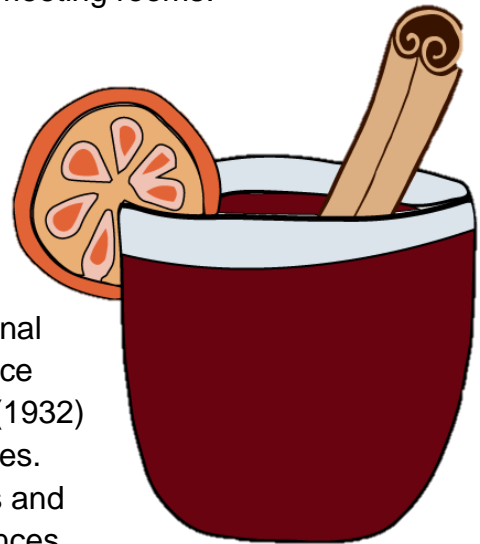
Historic England Lists Best Inter-War Pubs

In the summer Historic England announced a tranche of new listings of inter-war pubs around the country, following a national survey of this building type. Over half of these newly listed pubs are in and around London, most of them built by Truman's Brewery in the 1930s. These listings followed hot on the heels of the very sad news of the demolition of the Carlton Tavern in Kilburn,

Westminster in April of this year - a fine and well preserved 1920s pub razed to the ground by an overseas property developer before it could be listed.

Historic England described the inter-war pubs that were all listed Grade II as 'much loved local landmarks whose design was shaped by the "improved pub" movement that gathered momentum after the end of the First World War with the aim of attracting a more respectable clientèle, appealing to families and women with much higher quality bar environments, pub restaurants, gardens and community meeting rooms.

The facades of the pubs listed encompass a wide variety of architectural styles ranging from the popular 'Tudorbethan' - half-timbered *Merrie Olde England* style such as *The Station* in Epsom (1935), imposing neo-Georgian brick and stone such as *The Golden Heart* on Commercial Street in Spitalfields (1936), and hybrid styles such as *The Royal Oak* on Columbia Road in Bethnal Green (1923) with its Jacobean shaped-gables and faïence pub frontage, and *The Rose & Crown*, Stoke Newington (1932) which has both classical and streamlined moderne features. Inside, the interior design is just as eclectic with cosy arts and crafts or Elizabethan-style fittings or more art deco influences.



They also vary considerable in size from a modest local scale such as *The Stag's Head*, Hoxton (1936) to the monumental four storey six to eight bay *Bedford Hotel* in Balham by Arthur Blomfield of c1931 which includes three bars, a ballroom, off-licence and function rooms, one of which is now a popular theatre and comedy club.



HE have continued to list further pubs since the summer including the neo-Tudor style *Queen's Head* in Hounslow (1931) and the much earlier *Royal Vauxhall Tavern* in Lambeth, the first building to be listed for its historic and cultural interest as a LGBT venue as well as for its architectural significance.

HE are currently undertaking a study of post-war pubs of the 1940s, 50s and 60s and are encouraging local authority conservation officers and heritage groups to submit favourite

pubs from this era to be added to their shortlist (together with any outstanding inter-war pubs that may have been overlooked as part of this earlier study). Either contact HE Designation direct or Edmund Bird, heritage advisor to the Greater London Authority at edmund.bird@london.gov.uk .

Edmund Bird
GLA Heritage Advisor

IHBC London Day Conference

Setting the Scene: Identifying and Conserving Historic Landscapes

On 8th October, IHBC London held the annual day conference at the Royal College of Physicians. In his Keynote Address, **Richard Flenley of Land Use Consultants** (Retd.) gave a potted chronology of the recognition and protection of historic landscapes; highlighting the foundation of the National Trust (1895) and the Institute of Landscape Architects (now Landscape Institute, 1929), as well as the Garden History Society (now The Gardens Trust, 1965) as important milestones in landscape conservation. Of course, the initiation of a Register of Historic Parks and Gardens of Special Historic Interest in 1983 was mentioned, as well as the impact of the Great Storm of 1987 in catalysing the re-evaluation and research of historic landscapes.



David Lambert, Director of the Parks Agency, compared the some 400,000 listed buildings which have been designated to only 1,600 registered parks and gardens, and identified the range of historic landscapes still awaiting identification. Under-represented landscape types include post-war sites such as business parks, universities and new towns (there are only 14 on the register), whilst

grave yards and church yards, which make a considerable contribution to local culture and history, are also lacking designation. Finally, urban parks, allotments and leisure landscapes have also been overlooked thus far. David Lambert emphasised the need for high levels of public involvement in the evaluation of parks and gardens for designation; where the recognition of local associations and cultural memories are important to reinforce and present historic significance.

Picking up on the mention of graveyards, **Ian Dungavell, Chief Executive of the Friends of Highgate Cemetery Trust**, used the private Victorian cemeteries around London to highlight the issue of increasing decay and deterioration of cemeteries and graveyards around the country as a result of diminishing use, dwindling sources of funding, and increasing vandalism. Cemeteries and graveyards are of heritage significance as designed

landscapes, but also for their ecology; the architectural value in memorials and gravestones; historic associations with those buried in them; social connections as a focal point for local cultural memory; and as a place of leisure and reflection. Yet, when compared to the attention and upkeep paid to local parks, Ian Dungavell stressed the comparative decline and neglect of local grave yards and cemeteries. He highlighted that a number of burial grounds have been converted to public parks; but also reflected on how appropriate leisure activities are in places of burial. The public value the open space; but is something lost when a cemetery is changed to a park? Dungavel concluded that the best way to preserve cemeteries is through use. With use comes a new sense of value (and respect for the grave visitors), improved condition and reduction in vandalism.



London is a 'city of gardens', which have a collective power in insulating houses from the surrounding urban world, providing security, privacy and enclosure. **Todd-Longstaffe Gowan, President of the London Historic Parks and Gardens Trust**, spoke on the significance of urban gardens, threats to their character, and opportunities for their conservation. Gardens have always been a key part of an urban property's desirability, and are always mentioned in the sales particulars, often with a flourish. In the uniformity of a Georgian terrace, the gardens are used for personal

expression, leisure, ornament and idiosyncrasy. But the pressure on town gardens is enormous, and always has been. Given a bit of open space, people have always been tempted to build on it - single storey rear extensions are nothing new!

Mike Harlow, Legal Director for Historic England, discussed the impact of solar and wind farms on the setting of historic landscapes and assets. He highlighted the challenge between the obvious 'benefit' of renewable energy, and the desirability (and often the statutory duty) to preserve the significance of heritage assets. How do we reconcile the need for renewable energy with the protection of the historic environment? The impact on setting of a heritage asset, and the contribution made by setting to overall significance, need to be identified. If harm to significance is alleged - whether substantial or less-than-substantial - it should be given the same weight and consideration as both will have an adverse impact. The final balance of public benefit versus harm needs to be made. Undoubtedly there are public benefits, but this needs clear evidence and justification. If conflict cannot be avoided, the final analysis should be: weighted heritage harm vs public benefits of renewable energy.

Drew Bennellick, Head of Landscape and Natural Heritage UK for the HLF, described some of the HLF's success stories in funding for the restoration and enhancement of parks and green spaces. However, he also highlighted that since 1994, £6.6bn awarded to 38,500 projects. Of that, just a fraction, £776m, has gone towards public parks; including: the Temperate House at Kew, Brompton Cemetery and the Alexandra Estate park. Drew Bennellick described current threats to parks, citing the urbanisation of town commons; cuts to local authority budgets; the impact of permitted development and Article 4 directions, and

the underuse of conservation management plans. He strongly encouraged renewed commitment from local authorities, partners and communities in getting local parks back to a good condition, and pressed the need for more applications to the 'Parks for People' programme, to ensure that the HLF continues to invest in this area of funding.

Roo Angell and Bob Bagley, Co-founders of Sayes Court Garden Community Interest Company, gave an afternoon talk on the long-running project to recover and reveal Sayes Court – the 17th century home of John Evelyn, one of the founders of the Royal Society. Evelyn laid out the garden in 1652, and a public recreation ground was later laid out on the site of the garden by Evelyn's descendant, W J Evelyn. W J Evelyn engaged with the Open Spaces Movement and Octavia Hill to secure the long term protection of Sayes Court. In 1884, Robert Hunter, co-founder of the National Trust, advised Octavia Hill on saving Sayes Court and the property is seen as "the acorn from which the National Trust grew". Today the principal portion of the park lies under concrete within Convoys Wharf. The masterplan seeks to reinforce the historical and present significance of Sayes Court park and gardens,



and two acres of open space have been agreed for the creation of a new garden and an adjoining educational facility over the archaeology of Sayes Court Manor.

The penultimate talk of the day was delivered by **Dominic Cole, Landscape Architect and Chairman of the Garden History Society**, who described the impending impact of the HS2 railway scheme on historical landscapes across the country. Dominic highlighted concern for the apparent lack of a co-ordinated

approach to impact, co-ordination or communication with stakeholders, or identification of mitigation opportunities. He criticised that HS2 aren't considering the wider impact, but are blinkered to the trackside despite there being ways that the new line could be "accepted into the landscape and environment."

The final talk of the day came from **Johanna Gibbons of J&L Landscape Architects**, who focussed on the management and maintenance of the Barbican. Designed by architects Chamberlain, Powell and Bon, and influenced by Le Corbusier, the Barbican was the result of a vision for the segregation of pedestrians and vehicles. The complex incorporates cellular courtyards, towers, sculptures and an integrated and powerful geometry and spatial character. Johanna highlighted the difficulty in applying listed building procedure to such a large complex, much of which is privately owned, and the impact of this on ongoing maintenance. She looked to the 'Barbican Estate Listed Building Management Guidelines' to serve as a model, looking at the whole estate.

Many thanks to all of the speakers for a really interesting and successful day. See you all next year!

Jenny Tonkins

London Branch Newsletter Editor

Donald Insall Associates – Town Halls and their Challenges

Victorian and Edwardian town halls are often the most notable civic buildings in many towns and cities. Frequently listed for their special architectural and historical interest, these landmark buildings are however, often inefficient and over-sized for current needs. As councils are faced with increasing budget cuts it is more critical than ever that their building stock is viable; but they also need to ensure that the consolidation or sale and reuse of such buildings secures their long term conservation.

Donald Insall Associates are currently providing heritage advice on the adaptation and reuse of many town halls around the country including the Grade II* City Hall in Bristol (designed in the 1930's by architect E. Vincent Harris), Weston super-Mare and Midsomer Norton town halls and several town halls in London including Lambeth and Camden Town Hall. Our advisory works on the latter two buildings moreover, exemplifies the many differing conservation challenges that this work brings; ranging from making a proper, informed assessment of the significance of later extensions to the complexity of introducing modern service requirements into ornate interiors.

Camden Town Hall Annex

Located on a prominent site opposite the Grade I -listed St Pancras Station and Chambers, this was an unusual case in that the building in question was a redundant 1970's 'Brutalist' extension to the main Edwardian Grade II-listed town hall. Completed in 1977 to designs by Camden Borough Architects' Department, headed by A. Rigby and S.A.G. Cook, the design of the extension recalls the 'Pop Art' age of Centre Point and it is one of many buildings featuring precast concrete panels that were constructed in the late 1960s and early 70s. Given its quite recent date of construction and the fact that public and, indeed, professional, opinion about significance of such structures is very much in flux, the annex's heritage status remains somewhat open to interpretation. However, with little activity at street level, dirty fumed-stained elevations, and dull brown glass – the underused building certainly detracted from the vibrant and rich character of the conservation area.



The building was sold by the council in 2014 and the challenge facing the new owners and design team was how to unlock the architectural qualities of the building through a bold transformation into a hotel. The scheme developed by ORMS Architects centred on replacing the existing plant room at roof level with a sculptural three-storey extension in glass and bronze-finish panels which emphasised the vertical proportions of the building whilst articulating and softening its silhouette in the skyline.

The success of the scheme lay in the confidence of the design team that the alterations proposed would not only enhance the Brutalist building but also create a landmark worthy of its spectacular listed 19th-century neighbours and enhance the character of the conservation area. The scheme was supported by English Heritage, who welcomed the reuse of the annex on the grounds of its 'considerable design merit', and permission was granted in April 2015.

Lambeth Town Hall

The challenge at Lambeth Town Hall in south London was to adapt an existing building to contemporary needs. The Grade II –listed town hall is an outstanding example of an Edwardian civic building in a 'Baroque' style with high-quality sculptural ornament and interior decoration. Designed by Septimus Warwick and Austen Hall in 1905, additions to



the building were carried out in 1936 by the same architects but in a simpler, stripped neo-classical style. With its 134-foot tower on a prominent site at the intersection of several of Brixton's major roads, Lambeth Town Hall is an important feature of the borough's townscape and an iconic feature of the neighbourhood. The building, moreover, also holds an important position in the history of government as several nationally-prominent politicians, began their

careers there. For these reasons, Lambeth Council made an early decision to dispose of other, less significant, buildings in order to fund improvements to the town hall itself.

The design team worked closely with the client and statutory authorities to develop a scheme that maintained and enhanced the significance of the building whilst providing badly-needed new visitor orientation and reception facilities. This involved demolishing a myriad of poor-quality extensions to reveal the original form of the building and thereby allow the creation of a dramatic four-storey atrium in the former lightwell in the centre of the block and a landscaped external square to the rear.

Although the Town Hall's prominent roadside location contributes much to Brixton's townscape, it also creates numerous problems with regard to noise and environmental pollution in the interior of the building: the fixed air vents and opening window lights that originally provided ventilation are no longer adequate for contemporary use. As well as new architectural interventions the proposals, therefore, also allowed for the upgrade of the existing services to provide some conditioning of incoming air together with thermal and acoustic insulation throughout. Creating a sensitive scheme for the installation of new services within the concrete-floored structure proved a difficult challenge, however,

necessitating many design workshops with the team and manufacturers. As well as these major issues of new service provision, a lighter conservation note was the retention of one of the World-War II Anderson shelters in the basement of the building and its conversion to a characterful tea and coffee point for the town hall staff! The scheme received planning permission and listed building consent in autumn 2015 and is now being further developed.

Other schemes for the re-use and conversion of town halls are still in early stages but, like the proposals described above, all are based on a rigorous process of historical research and assessment in order to allow the most imaginative and appropriate solutions to be devised.

‘Every Place May Be Truly More Itself!’

Kate Green and Victoria Perry
Associates, Donald Insall Associates

Donald Insall Associates
Chartered Architects and Historic Building Consultants

London Branch Visit to Pitzhanger Manor, Ealing

On 8th September 2015 22 branch members enjoyed a late summer evening visiting Pitzhanger Manor, courtesy of our colleagues at L B Ealing. This Grade I listed building was the country home of Sir John Soane, one of the leading architects at the turn of the C18th / C19th, (now renowned for the Bank of England). The site already contained an important house when Soane acquired it. Although the core house was demolished, a wing added in 1798 by George Dance the younger, another key architect of the C18th, still exists.



The new villa with landscape (now Walpole Park) was built in the early years of the C19th and the Soane family moved in during 1804, when the house became the venue for entertaining famous figures and clients. Soane sold the house shortly after and a subsequent owner added a north wing in 1844. The site was bought by Ealing UDC at the turn of the century, who converted the house to a library and the grounds to a public park. Further extensions were added in the late 1930's by Charles Jones, borough surveyor. The library moved out in 1958 and the house became a public attraction and art gallery.



Pitzhanger Manor is now about to undergo a £10m regeneration scheme, supported by the HLF with match funding from L B Ealing, who own the site. The park, which itself contains a number of listed structures, has already been splendidly restored with the help of a HLF grant. The current proposals envisage the removal of the Victorian infill between the Soane house and the C20th gallery, to expose the flank of the villa. The later porch addition on the George Dance wing will also be removed. The C20th gallery building will be retained.

This contrasts with the 'conserve as found' approach, leaving elements of different historic periods to tell the story of the evolution of the building. However, the proposals have been developed following a thorough study of the villa and completion of a Conservation Management

Plan and are based on an understanding of the significance of each element of the house. Members who attended the visit to Turners house in Twickenham last year will recall a similar situation with the scheme there.

A new building will be provided alongside the villa for event space, including a tea room. Accessibility will be improved by the provision of a lift. The lost conservatory at the rear of the villa will be reinstated. Paint analysis has provided crucial evidence to enable the interiors to be restored to Soane's colour scheme, including a vibrant blood red stair hall to replace the current grey walls. Soane's use of the house as a hub for entertaining provides a rich seam from which the story of the house can be presented and interpreted.

In terms of governance, a new Trust has been established to run the venue and secure a funding stream. The freeholder (Ealing Council) will lease the buildings to the Trust and remain responsible for the maintenance of the buildings, through a service level agreement. Work is due to start on site at the turn of the year and we were privileged to be able to see the house in its pre restoration condition. We will keep in touch with this project as it develops and hope to be able to visit again to see this new chapter of Pitzhanger Manor emerge.

Christine White
London Branch Events Co-ordinator

E V E N T S

EARN CPD POINTS

A joint event by the London branch of IHBC and the ClfA London Group

For the Record: How research, recording and chance discoveries can enrich our understanding of London's past

The Gallery, 77 Cowcross Street, London, EC1M 6EL

on

Thursday, 21 January 2016

The planning system is principally about securing high quality new development. An important by-product, however, are the archaeological excavations and building recording exercises which are often secured by condition. Over the years, the results of these have added very significantly to our understanding of the development of London and its buildings; the developments themselves have also been both influenced and improved by the discoveries. This joint seminar will discuss how this new information should be best stored, accessed and used.

Speakers include: Robert Hradsky (ABA), Paul Drury (Drury McPherson Partnership), Stuart Cakebread (Historic England-GLAAS), Charlotte Matthews (pre Construct Archaeology) and Andrew Saint (Survey of London).

TIME – 2-5pm

COST £10 for members (IHBC/ClfA/ClfA London Group) & £15 for non-members

(please book using the Eventbrite link below)

TRAIN STATIONS – Farringdon (Circle, Metropolitan and Ham & City underground and National Rail)

TO RESERVE A PLACE – <https://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/for-the-record-how-research-recording-and-chance-discoveries-can-enrich-our-understanding-of-tickets-19859165298>

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Have a merry Christmas!

