



EALING CIVIC SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Working to preserve and improve our Borough



50th Year 1967-2017

President: Charles Mynors

www.ealingcivicsociety.org

Member of

**CIVIC
VOICE**

Spring 2017

From Our Chairman

We celebrate our half-century!

This year is an important anniversary for us as it marks 50 years since we were established in October 1967 following a meeting in Ealing Town Hall about an earlier proposal to radically redevelop Ealing town centre.

We have been planning a number of special events to celebrate the occasion, which is also the 50th anniversary of the Civic Amenities Act 1967 which led to the creation of conservation areas. More information is in the panel below. We also include on Page 4 selections from our archive.

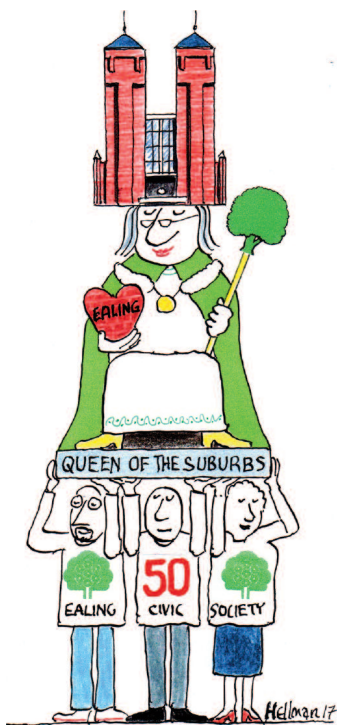
Ealing Cinema Site (Ealing Filmworks)

We have met St George, the new owners of the site, to discuss their plans for the development. As earlier reported, they indicated that they would be seeking changes to the consented scheme, resulting in less commercial floor space and more residential units, including affordable homes. They said that there would be some increase in heights of the blocks behind the retained cinema facade but the overall development would look similar to the consented scheme. The Mattock Lane retail element would be omitted and replaced by residential. St George

plan to hold a public exhibition in March prior to submission of a planning application to modify the existing consent.

Picturehouse have repeated their commitment to provide the cinema screens (although only after reviewing the plans which could result in changes in the number of screens) but St George have indicated that these will not be open until 2019 – a full 10 years after the former Empire cinema was prematurely demolished (except for the facade) in its 75th anniversary year.

St George are expected to take over the whole of the site from April although negotiations have been continuing with some of the site owners over the price of acquisition. A regrettable loss brought by the scheme would be the YMCA building but we hope that it will be possible to salvage the important foundation stones which include early inscriptions by the famous artist and sculptor Eric Gill. The intention is that these will be on permanent loan to the Ditchling Museum of Art + Craft in Sussex. More information about the Filmworks development may be found at www.ealingfilmworks.com.



Cartoon: Louis Hellman

Coming Events

11 April AGM: Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall, at 7.30 p.m. Speaker Jennifer Shipside talking on Ealing Common

23 May John Delafons Lecture: Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall, at 7.30 p.m. Speaker: Pitzhanger Manor Trust Director, Georgina Naylor

17 June Civic Day: Central Ealing Walk conducted by Dafydd Wyn Phillips, Blue Badge Guide

9 November Annual Award Ceremony: Haven Green Baptist Church Hall at 7.30 p.m. Presented by Steve Pound MP.

9-42 The Broadway, W5

A commercial property research organisation reported earlier this year that Benson Elliot, the current owners of 9-42 The Broadway, are poised to sell their development site, currently subject to a planning inquiry which will take place from 9-26 May, to British Land in a deal worth in excess of £50 million. Benson Elliot bought the original Arcadia site in 2012 for around £40 million and redeveloped the former Arcadia shopping centre before selling it to a Canadian real estate company for around £37.4 million. None of the parties was prepared to comment at the time of writing but we understand that heads of terms of an agreement have been agreed. The implications of the impending sale upon the timetable of the public inquiry remain unclear but we are assuming that it will go ahead.

We are working closely with Save Ealing's Centre (SEC) to prepare their case, having engaged a barrister to assist us. In the meantime, SEC continue to seek funds for the barrister and expert heritage and design witnesses. We are grateful to those of you who have already donated. However, more funds are needed and we ask you to donate as much as you can and encourage your friends and neighbours to do the same.

It is very easy to donate money through the SEC web site (www.saveealingscentre.com), either by PayPal or by credit card; cheques are also accepted.

Neighbourhood Plan public examination

The Central Ealing Neighbourhood Plan was subject to public examination by an external Examiner on 16 February when representatives from the Neighbourhood Forum, Council and other interested parties were represented. This is the next stage of the process before the plan is subject to a referendum of both residents and businesses later this year. The Examiner's report is expected in April just before the public inquiry on 9-42 The Broadway. If the plan is approved, its contents would be an important material consideration in the inquiry even though it will not have been subject to referendum by that time. The West Ealing Centre neighbourhood plan will be subject to formal consultation soon prior to public examination, probably later this year.

52-58 Uxbridge Road



The planning committee granted permission in January for a new 17,000 sq ft office block to be built at 52-58 Uxbridge Road (on the corner of St Leonard's Road opposite the fire station). The design is controversial since it includes a bulky 9-storey block immediately adjacent to the locally listed fire station and also fails to include an open area of boulevard in front of the building like most of the other new buildings in the vicinity (and as specified in the Local Plan). Instead, there would be an open colonnade with limited planting which we did not consider met the intention of the Plan.

Robert Gurd

Aeronaut pub fire

The Aeronaut Pub, Acton High Street, was severely damaged in a fire early on New Year's Day.

The pub, dating from the 1920s, which is locally listed and therefore a heritage asset, has had a number of name changes and been through several ownerships in recent years.

The cause of the fire is currently unknown but a New Year's party was being held at the time. Everyone was safely evacuated from the building. The owners have indicated that they intend to rebuild the pub. All heritage assets in the Borough, including listed and locally listed buildings or structures may now be viewed on an interactive website published by Ealing Council at <http://bit.ly/2m2NVuu>

My name is Paul King. I've recently volunteered my services to the Ealing Civic Society. I moved to Ealing in June 2016, and live just off Haven Green. I'm in the



first year of a BSc in Property and Planning at the University of Westminster.

I'm most interested and passionate about planning and sustainability, and ensuring that the built environment is beneficial to society as a whole, whilst preserving elements and

buildings of historic importance

I will be sitting in on the Planning review meetings, contributing if possible. I will also be looking to help in publicity. I look forward to meeting many of you at events or meetings in the future.

Civic Society Awards 2016

We had a full house for the 2016 Annual Awards on 8 November. Eight schemes had been shortlisted for the Awards for excellent new design in the Borough, and although no project was considered quite good enough for the main award, William Perkin High School was Highly Commended. This new school in Greenford was praised for its striking use of space and materials. Keir Smith, Associate Head Teacher, who received the Highly Commended award from Rupa Huq MP, told us that the beautiful building really made a difference to how the students behave. This was in stark contrast to



the event last year in which a speaker maintained that a corrugated iron hut was sufficient for a good school! Five more new buildings and refurbishments were in the Commended category: 6 Gloucester Road W5, Charlotte's W5, Ealing Green Church restoration, St Benedict's School Sixth Form Centre and the University of West London's new campus at St Mary's Road.

We were taken through the good and less good points of the shortlisted entries by one of the judges, local architect John Hummerston. The other architect-judges who made the tour of the entries on October 14 last year were Franklyn Nevard and Gavin Leonard.

The judges assessed the eight shortlisted schemes against four criteria: design; fitness for purpose; contribution to the landscape/townscape; and other factors (energy efficiency, good pedestrian access, anti pollution measures and re-use of materials).

Especially valuable was that the winners took the opportunity to tell us in some detail about the motivations for each project and how they have settled in to use. The CofE William Perkin School, for example throws its doors open to outside organisations and makes its facilities available to other schools. Ealing Green Church is very much open as a drop-in for the lonely and the poor.

After presenting the certificates to the winners and taking the photo-call, our guest speaker, Rupa Huq MP, was asked to say a few words. Rupa reminded us that she was born in Queen Charlotte's, Hammersmith,

attended Montpelier School and Notting Hill and Ealing High School before moving on to Cambridge, the University of East London and Strasbourg. Her talk ranged over her support for the conservation areas in the borough including extension of the town centre conservation area to include the Craven Road/Avenue



areas. She was asked to support the Society's call to the Council to update the conservation area documents in Ealing some of which were as many as 10 years out of date.

Philippa Dolphin, Tony Williams, Josephine Barry-Hicks

Eric Ravilious talk

ECS members are invited to Acton History Group's event on Wednesday 8 March when a talk on Eric Ravilious, artist, designer and illustrator, will be given by Andy Friend who has extensively studied his life and work. Andy Friend will also talk about a forthcoming exhibition on Ravilious at the Towner Gallery, Eastbourne. The venue for the talk will be St Mary's Church, The Mount W3 9NW (close to Morrisons) from 7:30 PM.

An Ealing Civic Society plaque to Ravilious was unveiled by members of the family at the end of last year and it has recently been erected above his birthplace at 96 Churchfield Road, W3.

From our Treasurer

If you pay your subscription by cash or cheque, it helps if you pay as early in the year as possible. This will save you from receiving reminders from the Treasurer. The amount due for the year is £12.00.

You may make the payment by **online bank transfer**. Our bank account details are

Ealing Civic Society

Lloyds Bank

Sort Code 30 92 82

Account Number 02420491

Please use your surname as the reference for the payment. Or you may send your cheque made payable to Ealing Civic Society to:

Mrs Josette Bishop

Treasurer, Ealing Civic Society

8 Castlebar Hill

Ealing W5 1TD

email: josettebishop@btinternet.com

Members who pay by **standing order** pay £2.00 less, i.e. £10.00 and are not worried by reminders. Please download the form from our website if you would prefer to set up a standing order and post the completed and signed form to Josette.

Good news from Gunnersbury

If you have visited Gunnersbury Park recently you will find the landscape and many of the 22 listed buildings in a state of transformation. After decades of gradual decline, Heritage Lottery Funding plus considerable sums from Ealing and Hounslow Councils and a range of other sources are being used to rescue the Park, its buildings and museum. This massive project will not be complete until 2026.

There are three stages involved in the Gunnersbury 2026 project. Work is well underway on Phase 1 which is focussing on the heritage core. The large mansion, the Temple and the Orangery are shrouded in scaffolding and plastic, the Round Pond has been drained and is



being restored, and the Horseshoe Lake is also being restored. The old café next to the Round Pond has been knocked down and a new one is being constructed in the same location. Building should be completed in the



summer and it is due to open in the spring of 2018. All the Phase 1 works are due for completion by the end of this year and the museum is due to reopen in 2018.

Phase 2 involves finding partners to restore the 1802 small mansion, which is now in a very sad state of repair, and the stable blocks. Some basic work was done on the east and west stable blocks in 2015 to prevent their further collapse. The search for development partners is currently underway, and announcements can be expected following Council meetings in May.

Sports facilities in the park are the subject of Phase 3. One of the largest sports sites in London is now under construction, and is expected to provide facilities for both Ealing and Hounslow. They will comprise a new sports hub plus outdoor pitches. New tennis courts will open this summer. The main construction work will finish at the end of 2018 and the entire site should open

in early 2019.

There are many tough issues still to be resolved: how to generate sufficient income to maintain the park and



buildings, leasing of buildings and renting facilities, events and fund raising; access and parking; security; light pollution and the provision of routes through the park. There was a public update on progress by the project team in January. A further update open to the public will take place on Thursday 30th March 2017. The evening will run from 18:30 to 20:00 and will be held at the Old Actonians Sports Facilities. More information can be found on the Friends of Gunnersbury website www.gunnersburyfriends.org (including the latest public update) and Visit Gunnersbury www.visitgunnersbury.org.

Philippa Dolphin

Planning Issues

145 High Street, Acton

This Victorian property is currently in keeping with the character of the surrounding Acton Town Conservation Area so we objected to the proposed wholesale replacement of glazing with single pane aluminium windows. The application was granted with conditions to ensure that the materials used harmonise with the surroundings. However, the proposed windows in the application were accepted.

Exchange Plaza 52-58 Uxbridge Road, Ealing

Our main concern was that the application to provide a six- to ten-storey office building would not fit the boulevard concept along the Uxbridge Road, envisaged under the local neighbourhood development plan. We had also expressed concerns about the building's overall scale and massing. At the time of writing, the draft decision notice is waiting legal agreement

144-156 Uxbridge Road, Hanwell

We objected to this application to erect a 5-6 storey building for 40 residential units. The proposal is for overdevelopment with the height and bulk out of keeping with the neighbouring Hanwell Clock Tower Conservation Area.

Jo Winters

Looking back at Ealing in 1967. Part I

In 2007 as part of the build up for our 40th anniversary programme we asked Paul Fitzmaurice to look back at what Ealing was like when the Society began. We are reprinting his article here since it is as relevant now as in 2007.

He covered so much then that we are presenting his article in two parts. The second will follow in our special Summer edition.

Looking back to 1967, many parallels can be drawn with 2007. Ealing - like much of London - was experiencing a building boom, with an increasing number of proposed developments. Nowhere was this more apparent than in the centre of Ealing itself. Along the Uxbridge Road west of New Broadway, the large Victorian villas had begun to be replaced in the early 1960s by a series of office blocks, referred to at the time as 'Ealing's Golden Gateway'.

The original villas along the Uxbridge Road had been built as homes for the more affluent of Ealing's middle classes in the mid-19th century, but most had already been converted to business use after the first world war. They were perhaps of no great merit architecturally and of course not really suited to commercial use. To use the parlance of the times they were 'Victorian monstrosities' which had to be swept away. Today only the building occupied by Prince Evans at No. 77* remains as a reminder of what the road once looked like.

In 1967 two of the largest blocks in the town centre were completed. One of these, the 15-storey GPO building on the corner of Craven Road (called Westel House*), was designed by Richard Seifert who had been responsible for the notorious Centre Point tower in the West End (to which the Ealing block bears a resemblance). Meanwhile, over Ealing Broadway mainline station, the 10-storey Villiers House had been built for occupation by the BBC. This led to the closure of the separate District Line entrance to the station - a decision which still blights the Haven Green area today.

This building boom wasn't confined to commercial developments. In the Castlebar area, many houses built on the higher ground for typically prosperous large Victorian families began to make way for modern blocks and the ubiquitous 'town houses'. All the houses in what had been Ealing's first planned development by Henry de Bruno Austin in Kent Gardens were demolished to make way for the estate round Templewood, built by Haymills. One of Ealing's largest

houses, the Grange, was razed and its extensive grounds between Castlebar Hill and St. Stephens Road were



redeveloped by Wates, although the attractive ornamental lake was retained.

Unlike much of the public housing of the period, many of these developments are considered of good design. But there was concern about how easily they fitted into the late Victorian/Edwardian style of housing infrastructure that characterises Ealing. By 1967 complaints to the local papers were being regularly made by residents about the wanton and unnecessary destruction of good quality housing.

New development proposals came with increasing rapidity and the claims became ever more grandiose, such as: 'Ealing Poised on the Brink of the Moon Age to become London's Number One Borough' and 'the Ealing of the Future will have a Touch of Paris'. To alleviate traffic congestion along the Uxbridge Road various ideas were being mooted to provide relief roads. Some of the more modest housing in the area between the Broadway and the Grove was being demolished in anticipation of this but it was not until 1968 that the detailed official plans became known and the prolonged debate as to the future of the Broadway centre was to begin. *(To be continued)*

**both now demolished*

Paul Fitzmaurice

From the Archive: March 1998 newsletter Message from the Acting Chairman Robert Gurd

...there have been a number of major planning applications on which we have needed to comment, including those from Ealing Film Studios and the Guinness Brewery site [Park Royal]. We remain open-minded about the studios: whilst regretting the loss of traditional film making on the site, we recognise that the arrival of the National Film and Television School would be a major asset to Ealing and assist in providing a new tourist attraction if the proposed museum of the film industry materialises. On the other hand, we would not like to see all the buildings disappear since the studios were the first purpose-built sound stages in Britain. There are also issues of access, traffic generation, and parking to be resolved satisfactorily. Similar issues arise out of the proposed Guinness development in Park Royal as well as the loss of open land. The Society has asked for the Guinness Brewery buildings (designed with assistance of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott) to be considered for spot-listing because we do not believe that sufficient effort has been made to re-use them as part of the proposed redevelopment plans.'

The NFTS acquired the site but pulled out after a few years prior to the studios being bought by the current owners and partly redeveloped but several of the key buildings including the principal sound stages and the White House facing Ealing Green were listed Grade II. Attempts to list the Guinness brewery failed and the whole site was demolished in 2007 for redevelopment. RG)

Annual General Meeting 2017

The 2017 AGM will be held in the Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall 7.30 pm, **Tuesday 11th April 2017**

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Report for 2016
3. Adoption of the Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report for 2016
5. Adoption of the Treasurer's Report
6. Appointment of Auditors
7. Election of Officers:
8. Election of other committee members

The following current committee members have indicated a willingness to stand for a further year:

Corinne Templer (Vice President), Jenny Gadsby (Membership), Tony Miller, Paul Fitzmaurice, Maggie Gold, Philippa Dolphin (Web manager),

William Hardman, Josephine Barry-Hicks (Minutes), Jo Winters (Secretary), Josette Bishop (Treasurer).

In accordance with the constitution, further nominations for election to the committee may be made by members of the Society. They must be submitted in writing to the Secretary (Jo Winters, 28 Ranelagh Road, Ealing W5 5RJ) at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting, supported by a seconder who is also a member of the Society. The consent of the nominee must first have been obtained. If the nominations exceed the number of vacancies, a ballot shall take place.

9. Motions and any other business submitted to the Chairman in writing prior to the meeting*.

10. Talk by Jennifer Shipside on Ealing Common.

* See panel below

Proposed Constitution change

It is proposed to introduce a limited period of tenure for members of the committee in order to help refresh membership in future and to act as a reassurance to potential members of the committee that membership would not mean an indefinite period of service. A period of 3/5# years has been suggested, which could be renewed for a further similar period; members would only be able to stand again after a break of one year. This would mean that paragraph 6 of the constitution would have the following words added after the sentence "All Officers and Members ... Annual General Meeting": "Officers and Members shall retire after serving 3/5# years and can be nominated for a further 3/5# year period, but after serving 6/10# consecutive years must retire for at least one year." #The exact period to be discussed at the AGM

The full constitution can be seen on our website at <http://bit.ly/2mi2wEN>.

2016/17 Executive Committee

Robert Gurd (Chairman) 60 Beaufort Rd W5 3EA (8998 4417)

Ann Chapman (Vice Chair) 15 Lammas Park Gardens, W5 5JD (8567 7955)

Corinne Templer (Hon. Vice President) 28 The Grove W5 5LH (8567 5353)

Josette Bishop (Treasurer) 8 Castlebar Hill W5 1TD

Michael Tiley 30 Devonshire Road, W5 4TP (8840 7447)

Paul Fitzmaurice 18 Elers Road W13 9QD (8567 3024)

Margaret Gold 24 Lyncroft Gardens W13 9PU (8567 6158)

Tony Miller 6 Winscombe Crescent W5 1AZ (8997 6042)

Philippa Dolphin (Web Manager)

Jonathan Norris (8993 0230)

William Hardman 247 Pope's Lane W5 4AH (07730 592956)

Jenny Gadsby (Membership) Flat 2, 8 Florence Road W5 (8567 3074)

Jo Winters (Secretary) 28 Ranelagh Road W5 5RJ (8579 1885)

National Trust Offer to Members

As the Civic Society is a member of Civic Voice, our members are entitled to one free National Trust pass. **To receive a National Trust pass for a single visit in 2017** you will need to send a SAE to Civic Voice with a note of who you are, what society you are from and how many passes you would like: one pass per single membership and two for joint/family membership.

The request should be posted to: Civic Voice, 60 Duke Street, Liverpool, Merseyside, L1 5AA

Tony Williams (Newsletter Editor) 2 Nicholas Gardens, W5 5HY (8567 6941)

Contributors: Robert Gurd, Philippa Dolphin, Paul Fitzmaurice, Jo Winters, Josette Bishop, Josephine Barry-Hicks, Tony Williams.

Photos: Rupa Huq, Keir Smith (TD); The Grange (PF); William Perkin School (WH); Gunnersbury (various) (PD);

Anniversary cartoon: Louis Hellman

Printed by Pollyprint www.pollyprint.co.uk