

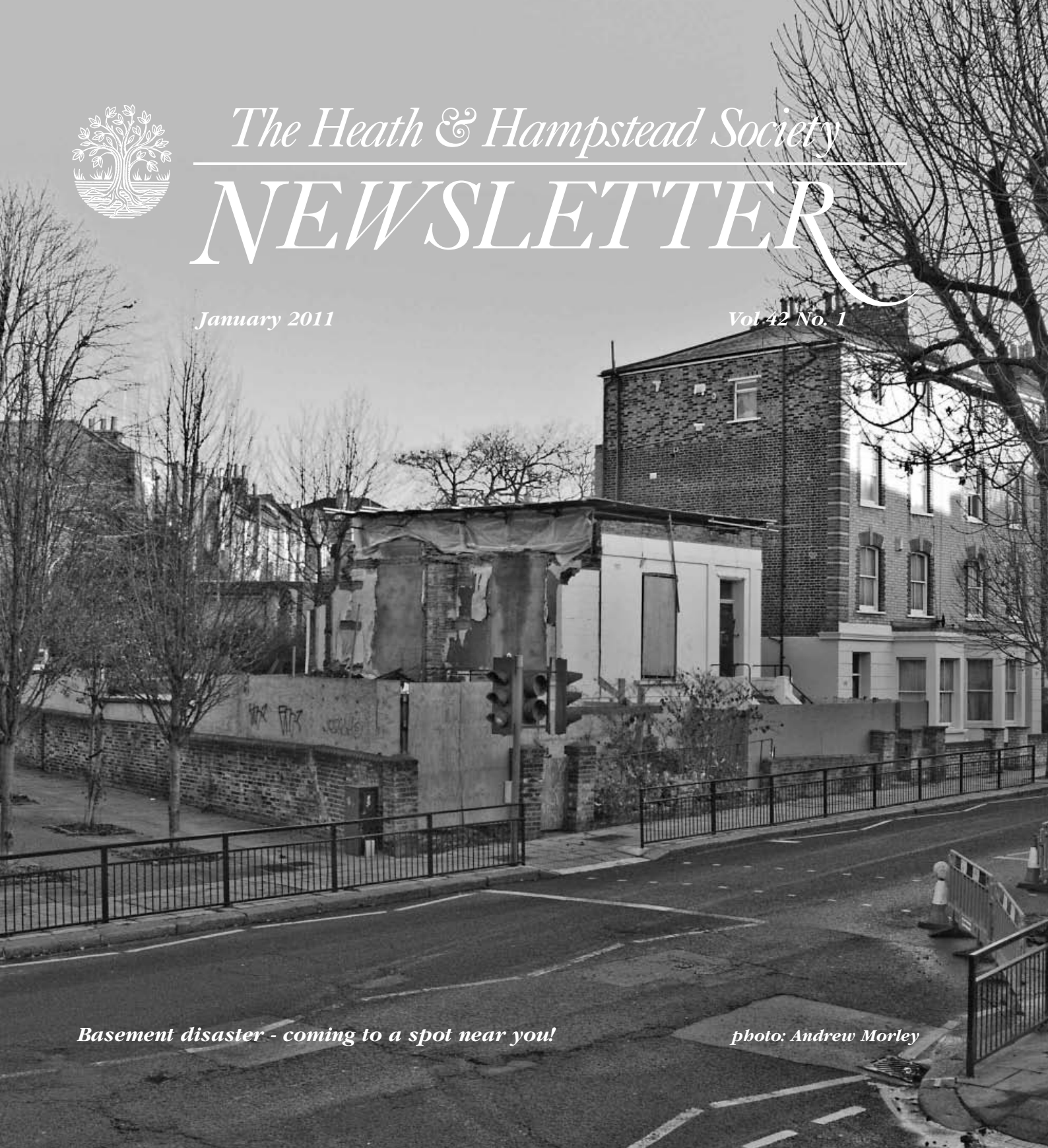


The Heath & Hampstead Society

NEWSLETTER

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Basement disaster - coming to a spot near you!

photo: Andrew Morley

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Coming to a Basement near you!

Our front page picture demonstrates all too starkly the possible consequences of basement development, and why we are so concerned.

Its location in the Camden Town area takes us outside the difficult geology of Hampstead and into the supposedly reliable London Clay formation of NW1. It shows the most dramatic example yet of what can go wrong anywhere in Camden, if the proper technical investigations are not carried out by properly qualified experts, both geotechnical and structural, before being rigorously checked by the planning authority. Two semi-detached properties (that were similar to the ones on the right of the picture) have been unintentionally and quite rapidly converted into half a property.

Litigation is in progress, so we cannot be too explicit, but we understand that the then new owner bought the leasehold of the now missing half from Camden, and simply began excavation with his own building operation. The two families in the neighbouring flats soon felt the effects. We have seen a photo taken from a first floor bedroom showing the house on the opposite side of the road through one of the cracks! The two families displaced by the collapse have been rehoused pending a legal resolution.

It is just one more demonstration of why the Society is concentrating a great deal of its resources to address the problem of multiple applications for basement development locally. In the following article Chairman Tony Hillier looks in detail at the scale of the problems and progress so far.



The Basement Campaign: has it been worth it?

by Tony Hillier

Increasing reports of damage to properties from various basement excavations have clearly shown that action was required. We have made gratifying progress so far, and we are not through yet.

Obstacles we all faced in 2006

The position is best explained by checking how many of the obstacles we all faced in 2006, as a recent starting point, have been removed or got round. During this period the economics of house prices, building costs, the costs of buying and selling and moving have made the basement option appear attractive to householders trying to increase living space.

New Planning Policies

There was very little protection for neighbours written into the Camden Unitary Development Plan. The new Local Development Framework (LDF) on the other hand contains some tightly written policies, which we helped draft and which since November 2010 give neighbours an excellent chance of making sure that the right questions are asked and answered by developers, and that the issue of neighbour damage must be assessed before giving planning approval.

The earlier national policies, written in the 1990s, are not as tightly drafted, and although we used them successfully in some cases before November 2010, it has been open to lawyers, planners and planning inspectors to decide (wrongly in our view) that they do not apply to local geological conditions. These will now play only a secondary role locally.

Applying and Interpreting Planning Policies

Policy wording is not of course enough; Camden's new policies need to be applied and interpreted properly on each site for each application. Here again good progress is being made, but it remains more of a mini mountain

we are still climbing than simply a hurdle we have already jumped. During the campaign we have encountered a number of problems with the working assumptions held by many of the professionals who rightly regard themselves as experts in the general area of property development (as for example architects, surveyors, planners, builders, planning inspectors, planning lawyers).

First, many have been reluctant to shift from their traditional stance that the issue of damage prevention is not one for the planners at all, but should be left to the jurisdiction of Building Regulations. This is wrong, because Building Regulations only address the actual building and not its impact on neighbours. It is also unhelpful, because the powers once held by the tough and independent District Surveyor were removed in the eighties and can now be contracted out privately by the applicant to his own adviser.

Secondly, there is a widespread assumption that building basements will always cause damage and the neighbours can and should protect themselves through private Party Wall dispute settlement after it has occurred. It is true that the Party Wall Act must always be used to settle these types of dispute. However, since November 2010 Camden has the powers under their new LDF policies to require developers to show at the planning decision stage how the level of predicted structural damage can be minimised, and, if this is still unacceptable, to deny approval.

Thirdly, and this is the root cause of the problem, the knowhow to make these judgements is rather obscure and very technical. It is therefore an important part of our strategy to try to improve on the current situation, which is a lottery for applicants and objectors alike. All too often, totally inadequate geotechnical or

hydrological reports are put forward from organisations, which appear to be qualified, supporting potentially dangerous applications. Our immediate task is to persuade Camden that such matters should be in the hands of only those with adequate technical knowledge. It requires a combination of Chartered Geologists, Chartered Civil and Chartered Structural Engineers with appropriate postgraduate qualifications (for example in the case of the geologists covering ground and/or groundwater conditions). The challenge for Camden is therefore how to import this specialist knowhow into the practical arena of the local authority planning decision-making process in ways that are fair and not excessively burdensome on either objectors or Camden itself.

Basement Impact Assessment

We continue to work closely with the local planning authority to progress this crucial step as well. Camden also published in November 2010 an important guidance, written by Arup with input from ourselves, for subterranean development based on a detailed survey of local geological, hydro-geological and hydrological conditions. This proposes a four step Basement Impact Assessment (BIA). It comprises “Screening” to check whether there are ground stability or ground water issues which warrant detailed study; “Scoping” to design an appropriate BIA; “Site Investigation and Study” to establish technically the baseline conditions; and “Impact Assessment” to determine what impact the basement will have on the baseline conditions and any mitigating measures. Camden then audits this and decides whether the predicted impact is acceptable. This is an excellent and, we believe, unique approach deserving national recognition.

At the time of writing we are working with Camden to help ensure that this highly technical and detailed paper is effectively summarised in the Planning Guidance Notes which Camden is due to introduce shortly. Camden is not able to have on its staff the necessary specialists, but must rely on the information presented by the developer and, where appropriate, presented in opposition by the neighbours or local amenity societies. We are therefore concerned that Camden insists that only those with the proper professional qualifications are entitled to undertake or critique this type of work.

What is also excellent is that Camden has made provision for the developer to be required to meet the costs of a third party review, if two opposing technical reports are presented to it.

Camden has also agreed to offer training programmes to relevant officers and Councillors to help them deal with these technical reports.

The Importance of this Approach

We believe that this whole approach is fair and has benefits for all parties involved. For our members who wish to develop basements, it enables them to minimise their exposure to liabilities under the Party Wall Act, to minimise delays and controversy by complying with Camden’s policies and to establish a framework within which they can act as good neighbours. For our members who face a next door application, it gives them a reasonable chance of having a professional analysis of the risks they face done at the developer’s expense, which they can still challenge at their own expense; this also provides a strong factual basis on which an appeal or a judicial review can be judged. For Camden, it sets out a framework, which reduces the need for in-house expertise and at the same time ensures

that they can reduce to the minimum the time otherwise wasted on arguments between the parties and themselves on highly technical matters, which are nevertheless essential to making a proper determination.

Article 4 Direction

Local authorities have the power to introduce special regulations limiting the rights given to householders to develop certain parts of their dwellings without seeking planning permission. There is an anomaly in the law, although the lawyers dispute exactly how to interpret it, which does allow some basement applications to be treated in this way. This has only recently come to light. To make quite sure that all the work and effort described above, which has gone into strengthening the local policies and how to apply them, will not be eroded, we have also asked Camden to introduce an Article 4 Direction to the northern part of the Borough. This will subject all but the smallest applications to a BIA.

The costs

The Society spent around £8,000 from reserves in 2009 on technical advice and this year we have spent around £41,250 on legal and technical advice. The very generous support for our basement appeal last year has generated around £41,000 with Gift Aid. I hope you will agree that this has been money well spent.

Email address: reminder

If you have email, please email your name and street address to the Society at:

admin@beathandhampstead.org.uk

This will enable us to update our Membership Records and simplify our communications with you.
Thank you.

River Walks

The River Fleet from source to Thames

a two-part walk lead by

Robin Michaelson

qualified and experienced

City of London guide.

May 14 10.30 am -12.30pm

Start: the War Memorial by Whitestone Pond; Finish: St Dominics's Priory Church, Southampton Street, NW5 (corner of Fleet Road)

May 22, 11am - 1pm

Start: the Black Friar public house, 174 Queen Victoria Street, (close to Blackfriars Station, Finish: St Pancras Old Church, Pancras Road

Tickets £5 per person for each walk.

Book early: numbers limited to 25 for each walk.

To reserve places or for more information please contact Frank Harding at frankaharding@btinternet.com or on 020 7435 3728

New Members' Party

24 February 2011 7.00 - 9.00pm

Burgh House.

There is no keynote speaker; there is no dinner but rather drinks and canapés!

Invitations have been sent to all new members

Chairman's notes

by Tony Hillier

I should like to begin by wishing all our members a very happy New Year, and asking you please not to forget to renew your membership. We rely totally on your continued support.

Thank you

The Society also wishes to express our deep gratitude for the exceptionally generous response to our funding appeal to help meet the costs of the basement appeal. 294 of you contributed sums between £5 and £1000 to reach a total to date of around £41,500 including Gift Aid. This shows exceptionally strong support in these difficult times. I have summarised our strategy and the progress we have made with this backing in the article that begins the Newsletter and comment below on the two recent high-profile cases.

I have enclosed personal letters to thank all of you who contributed. I apologise that some of you may have felt neglected that I did not write earlier, but the delay was simply to save postage.

The Christmas Party

December's party was once again a very popular and happy event. Around 180 people attended at the Old Town Hall. Helen Marcus successfully organised our new team, and she found the Chamber Music Company to play some delightful palm court background music; the Mayor attended and a local firm of solicitors Manuel Swaden kindly sponsored the costs of sending invitations, so we could meet the budget and break even. We thank them most warmly.

Athlone House

The Athlone House Working Group, which pools our resources with those of the Highgate Society, is now ready to participate with the City of London as Rule 6 Parties in defending Camden's refusal of the application to replace

the familiar but much neglected Victorian house with a huge and garish new palace, threatening the permanent degradation of this view from the Heath. We have included in the Newsletter some of the trenchant words of our patron Sir Simon Jenkins writing about this for the Evening Standard. It is also particularly gratifying that two such exceptionally distinguished architectural historians as Joseph Rykwerts and Professor Robert Tavernor, and such leading experts as the Heath writer Deborah Wolton and David Altaras of Counsel, together with the Society's solicitors Hunt & Lisners, have been willing to give their services *pro bono* to this important local cause.

The Planning Appeal

The appeal against refusal of planning permission for demolition is due to be heard in February 2011, with a decision expected in March or April. The Appellant is shooting for an 8 day Public Enquiry. Fully costed for the time to prepare expert witness statements, to give evidence, and to be cross-examined, and for the legal team to prepare, make submissions and cross-examine, these can cost each party tens of thousands a day. Members will be interested to know that the Enquiry will take place at Hughes Parry Hall 19 – 26 Cartwright Gardens London WC1H 9EF between 10am and 5pm 15-18 and 22-25 February.

Closer Working with Residents Associations

For the past 15 months we have been wondering how best to improve our practical working relationship with local Resident Associations. In January 2010 we called a meeting at Burgh House to explore whether some formal ties might be appropriate. The feeling on this was negative. This January we held another meeting. It proved popular and

Chairman's notes (cont)

we plan to make such meetings regular events, probably every six months.

The practical outcome was that we received strong support for an initiative we are taking to Camden to introduce an Article 4 Direction across our area and beyond to make sure that all basement development is properly subjugated to the planning system. We also received an exciting report from Stephen Taylor of a web-based common site and network for those local organisations who wish to participate and exchange views. Stephen and Kate Streeter of Burgh House are developing the practical implementation of an initiative which was mooted at last year's meeting and which will be known as the "Hampstead Hub".

Flood and Water Management

On 20 January the local press published the City's plan to raise significantly the dam heights of the Highgate Men's and Boating ponds and the Hampstead No 1 pond (immediately above South End Green) and to make other safety modifications to many of the other ponds in the two chains. This will change the look of the affected parts of the Heath, including through the removal of many trees growing in the existing barrages, and will increase the water depths. It will probably start in 2013 and cost in excess of £10million from the City's own funds. It will disrupt wildlife, especially for the Bird pond, and change for years the visual appearance of these parts of the Heath for the worse.

Under the new Flood and Water Management Act of 2010 the City has no choice in this undertaking. The ponds are deemed high risk to the lives of about 1000 people in Gospel Oak, Dartmouth Park and through the railways as far down as Kings Cross in the event of a 1 in a 100 year flood, which London came close to in 1975.

They have engaged the services of the country's leading experts in hydrology and reservoir management. They have begun a programme of extensive consultation with the Society and all other organisations who use the Heath and will invite public comment. The City will try with the advice of all of us to do the works in as smart a way as possible: i.e. to minimise the adverse long-term effects, as well as the disruption during the minimum two year period to complete the works. There should be for example a permanent improvement in water quality. The Society's Heath Sub-Committee will keep you informed of what is proposed and how they will monitor and respond to the proposals.

Basement Diary

Recently there have been a number of high-profile decisions by Camden and the Inspectorate, some allowing basements to go ahead and some refusing them. I comment below on two. As we have emphasised before, it is regrettably not open to us to prevent the underground development of local property. What we have set as our objective is that those that are allowed must show that they have been properly designed so that any damage to neighbours' property is minimised to an acceptable level. This calls for a high level of expert investigation and judgement.

We have approached this objective by two main routes with some notable success as explained in the article preceding this. One is lobbying Camden to change the wording and application of their policies. The other is by making written and spoken representations to the Camden Development Control Committee and the Inspectorate on particular cases, with a view to either set or avoid important precedents and of course to stop individual applications which we consider dangerous.

Two major basements have recently been given the go-ahead which we have lobbied against. We wish to assure members that our arguments have nevertheless safeguarded the position for neighbours as far as we could reasonably expect. We support the architectural and conservation aspects of the South Hampstead High School rebuild. We were worried that their geotechnical report, despite being produced by well-qualified advisers, had completed only one of the four stages now required by Camden to complete a Basement Impact Assessment for the planning decision.

Camden acknowledged that this should not establish a precedent and we were able to agree a strongly worded Condition to the approval, which in effect calls for the three remaining stages to be submitted for approval before works can be started. This exception to the rule was allowed, because the works must be carried out within an unusual timetable to fit in with the timing of the school terms, and because we accepted that the team advising the Governors is of the highest professional quality.

9 Downshire Hill

Much more controversially the Inspector allowed the appeal on 9 Downshire Hill. We still disagree strongly with the Inspector's assessment of the literally reams of technical analysis by which the developer argued that the damage caused to neighbouring listed buildings would be acceptable. We have, however, through our earlier interventions with Camden as well through our participation at the Public Enquiry, set a very high and expensive hurdle of technical investigation and analysis, which applicants must now undertake to comply with Camden's new development policies on basements.

An award for Camden

Vicki Harding reports

Our tree expert Vicki Harding reports that a new annual award has been instituted by Barcham Trees for the local authority which has demonstrated most outstanding urban forestry management.

We congratulate Camden Council for gaining third place. Bristol City Council took the first prize of £5,000 worth of 12-14cm girth containerised trees, suitable for urban planting. Walsall Metropolitan Borough came second.

Judges Dr Mark Johnston, Jeremy Barrell, Les Round and Martin Kelly assessed local authorities on criteria which included possession of a tree strategy and management system, community involvement, TPOs and development sites and sustainable working practices.

Monicas Caterers

would like to thank you for giving us the opportunity to provide the canapes for the

Society's Christmas Party
at Hampstead Town Hall.

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Greed, egos and yet another blot on the horizon

Our Patron Sir Simon Jenkins speaks out against proposed plans for Athlone House

Our campaign to save the Heath skyline at Athlone House rumbles on. As readers will know, a new owner, a Mr Naseer Al-Kharafi, is now trying to get planning law set aside for his own purposes, so that he can replace the House with a gargantuan palace. We must be grateful that Camden has held firm so far and refused permission. We are most grateful also for the support for our campaign from the Ham and High who have given it prominence.

Over 600 objections

But the Kuwaiti billionaire seems determined to use his unlimited resources to have his palace and destroy the centuries-old Heath skyline. Some 600 organisations and individuals have formally objected to the proposals – a splendid response to the leaflet we sent round.

Tony Hillier has mentioned some of the eminent voices who have lent their names to the protest. Others include the Victorian Society, Lynne Featherstone MP, and Wesley Kerr, the former BBC journalist who now heads the Heritage Lottery Fund's London committee.

Under the title over this page our distinguished Patron, Sir Simon Jenkins wrote a forceful protest in the Evening Standard last October. With his kind permission we give some excerpts below.

This precious vista

Sir Simon began by contrasting the environs of Hampstead Heath with those of the great London parks, that had been scarred as “various developers bulldozed their towers through the planning system” so that these “now punctuate every vista”. The view south from the Heath also “had been wrecked by the Royal Free hospital in Pond Street, but apart from Highgate radio mast, that to the north was a glorious illusion of the rolling uplands of Middlesex, stretching for ever”. This vista north across London to the

crest of the Heath is “especially precious”. Athlone House, a “mediocre Victorian mansion” is, as Sir Simon says, no architectural gem. But it does not destroy that vista. Now it has been “handed over to private developers, a breed whose dream, since the Heath was created in the 1860s, has been to build over it”.

A bold and bombastic Xanadu

He describes the proposed 50,000 sq ft £100 million, neo-classical house by architect Robert Adam as “this Xanadu”, “.....bold and bombastican unashamedly dominant palace, towering over the landscape.a mixture of Blenheim and Versailles..... Copper domes will rise over the trees of Kenwood and Highgate ponds. Terraces and grand steps will descend onto a ghosted ‘Capability Brown’ landscape. Ballrooms will spread, swimming pools will delve into the hillside”. “Described as “a magnificent new landmark” or, by its critics, “a mix of Stalinist palace and Victorian lunatic asylum”, the new Athlone is intended to be a singular presence on the horizon.....”

Our skyline pockmarked by political deals

Sir Simon lambasts the planning laws that allow such situations to arise. His analysis, that the history of this project “illustrates all that is most vulnerable in London planning”, is well worth repeating here.

“In the past four years the local council, Camden, has been blitzed with 15 planning applications for Athlone House, with various so-called “sweeteners”. In planning law, these are meant to allow an outrageous planning breach, usually a high building, in return for some gift, usually inexpensive, delivered to the council. Such gifts were normally an underpass or roundabout adjacent to a tower, as at Centre Point, Stag Place, Victoria or Euston Tower. Now they are

so-called “section 106 agreements”, usually for a school or public housing elsewhere in the borough. The London skyline, once protected by statute as in Paris, Rome or Amsterdam, is pockmarked by political deals”.

One blot spoils the picture

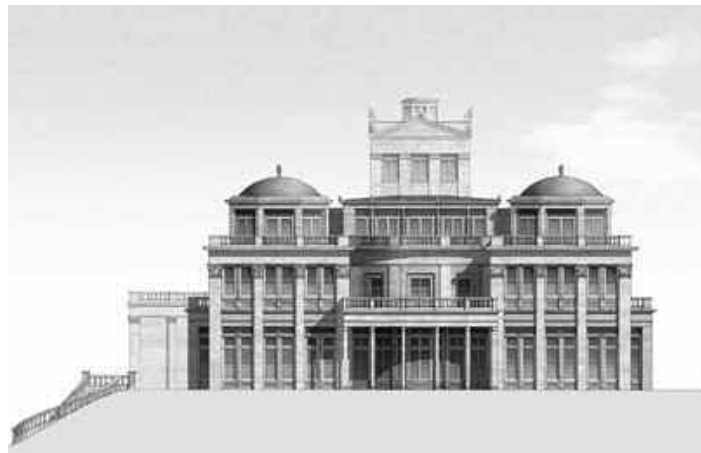
Sir Simon makes clear that he has nothing against the work of architect Robert Adam; it is the inappropriate context. “.....landscape is landscape and horizon is horizon. What is acceptable in one place is not on another. The rules governing city views and open spaces are meant to apply to everyone, not just those who cannot afford fancy architects and lawyers. Allow any exception and a planning rule is defunct. One blot spoils the picture”. Tellingly he makes the point that “The developers will point to every past concession that has been carelessly made by Camden planners, and cite every conceivable precedent. They will be allowed to import a dozen “expert witnesses” to lend clout to their case”.

“Money does the talking”.

Athlone House could be saved or at the very least “rebuilt on its existing plan, invisible below the tree line. There should be no need for intrusive ostentation”. But Sir Simon expresses the fear that the hundreds of objections from across north London sent in to Camden “will be of little account” and that “money does the talking”. He hopes that “someone gets these professional mercenaries to reveal how much they are paid to lend spurious objectivity to their client's

case. These destructive and costly London arguments have always the same cause, the authorities gutless in the face of serious money coming over a horizon it wants to spoil”.

For details of the appeal against refusal of planning permission, see page 5.



Two views of the proposed “Xanadu”, which will tower over the landscape. The new design is a storey higher than the current building while the tower appears to be at least two storeys higher



Heath Report

by Tony Ghilchik

With snow lying thick on the ground to highlight the prospect of a dreamed-about white Christmas, at least by children and Heath-lovers not trying to get away, it is hard to recall that the hot dry weather in early summer caused three of the Heath's large veteran oaks, and many large branches, to fall. At that time barbecues were being a menace – especially as thistle seeds love the bare patches burnt into the grass by them.



photo: Thomas Radice

Economic problems bite

Since then the City has received its 12th annual Green Flag award, plus a Green Heritage award, for the way it manages our Heath – indeed this year the City won a total of 14 Green Flag awards for its various open spaces, with 7 of the sites also getting Green Heritage awards. This exemplary performance is, however, under threat from the universal need to reduce public expenditure, and although funding for the Heath comes not from the Public Purse but from the income on the City's own funds built up since the Middle Ages, this too is under pressure. There is a need to find a 10% saving in the already tight provisional 2011/12 budget and we, like other local groups, will be talking with the Heath management about how this can

be achieved without jeopardising what we consider the essential elements of the Heath – set out a few years back in our Heath Vision and there on our website.

I am pleased to report that the agreed programme of repairs to infrastructure of the Heath are excluded from this belt-tightening and we have already seen the benefit of the protected spend with the well-restored Hill Garden Shelter, which was formally re-opened on 15th September.

Pedestrian safety

The section of North End Way through the cutting from the Bull and Bush up to the Whitestone Pond is very dangerous for cyclists, and Camden proposed that the pavement

above North End Way be widened, by taking land from the Heath, to allow shared use by pedestrian and cyclist. We strongly opposed this proposal, especially as North End Avenue, the old road which runs past Pitts Garden parallel to North End Way up to Inverforth House, could be acceptable as a shared use path. Camden is to undertake a detailed feasibility study of this alternative route and we would support the proposal, provided that it is not used as a precedent for more routes on the Heath and that the only work to the path is the removal of encroaching vegetation.

At the other end of the Heath, the high risk to pedestrians from vehicles using the Highgate Road entrance to the Heath has still to be addressed and local resident groups have been asked for their ideas. We can see no ideal solution, but our suggestion is that any solution should be based on first moving the Parliament Hill depot to the Kenwood Staff Yard to reduce traffic, and then the tennis courts should be moved to enable the existing pathway to be widened just enough to reduce the risk to an acceptable level. A small working group, including Jeremy Wright and representatives from three other local groups, has been set up to discuss the options, and consultants will evaluate all the proposals before any decision is taken.

Threat from invasive water plants

Water Fern, *Azolla filiculoides* also known as Fairy Moss, Mosquito Fern or Red Water Fern, is a free-floating, perennial, aquatic fern. Although native to North and Central America, it has been recorded in the UK for over 100 years and may well have once been native here as spores have been found in sediments from the last interglacial period. As a floating fern, it can occur in any depth of still or sluggish water,

spreads over a large area of water in the summer, and turns red as temperatures fall in autumn. It can be a problem in the Heath's ponds as it can build up into such a dense cover of floating weeds that it reduces the light level beneath the surface so much that submerged weeds and algae die off and result in serious deoxygenation.

Last year *Azolla* was a problem on many of our ponds and a very thick layer virtually killed off the lovely water lilies on the Viaduct pond; since then a few leaves have re-appeared from time to time only to vanish again, probably gobbled up by water birds. *Azolla* does not like very cold weather and winter's last frosts seem to have pretty much killed it off as it has not been a problem in any of our ponds this year.

Those of you who walk on the Heath Extension will have seen that two of the Seven Sisters Ponds (Nos. 2 and 4) have been de-silted – the bramble-covered area beside the pond No. 4 was flayed and covered with a foot or so of silt. The area will remain fenced off whilst the silt dries out over the next few months, after which it is to be harrowed and seeded with a wild flower mix.

Kenwood

Over in Kenwood, we are pleased that English Heritage has now demonstrated that it can restore the grass damaged by the summer concerts audience within a reasonable time – this year the repairs were done in October; fine for the re-turfing needed on the worst areas but rather too late where re-seeding sufficed. In future years the re-seeding is, we are assured, to be done in September.

English Heritage is about half way through its phased replacement of the roof of Kenwood

Heath Report (cont)

House. The 4th phase (of 7) was due to start in the autumn, with the front of the house to be done at the same time, but they have re-looked at both the length of time and the cost of these repairs and have decided to do the rest of the job, plus the south facade, as a single project. This is much more cost-efficient and will enable the key south facade overlooking the terrace to be included within the original total cost.

The full programme is now being planned in detail, but the expected timetable is for the service wing to be done over the 2011/12 winter and the exterior of the house from around April 2012. When work starts on the house all the paintings and other valuables will need to be protected: from dust; from the increased security risks having scaffolding outside, and from builders erecting scaffolding inside the house to reach the skylights. Some paintings will go off-site, so they can be on view somewhere, and others, too fragile to move, will be securely encased.

We are very pleased that English Heritage is doing all this work, but the downside is that keeping even part of the house open during this time would be very difficult and expensive, and the house will need to close for most of 2012. Our first reaction was surprise that closure was planned for the summer of the Olympics but English Heritage say that statistics from the Athens and Beijing Olympics show that the Games actually reduced general tourist numbers whilst the games were being held, as those not coming for the Games decided not to come in the Olympic year and those coming for the Games tended only to visit sites near where the Games were being held. However, over the longer term, those staying home and watching on TV end up wishing to visit the cities which

got so much good exposure, so visitor numbers were very high the following year – when the house will be open again.

English Heritage is also working on a proposal to take advantage of the closed period to redecorate those parts of the inside which have not been done recently, but have still to get approval.

Large audience for Oliver Rackham

Our distinguished guest speaker attracted by far the largest audience we have had in all the years of this series; an unprecedented 200 people came to Rosslyn Hill Chapel for the Heath and Hampstead



Society's fifteenth Annual Springett Lecture in October. Professor Rackham rarely speaks in London, and the audience came not only from the local area but from throughout London.

The effect that changing land use and of becoming surrounded by an urban environment has had on the flora of the Heath is one of Professor Rackham's research topics. For those of you who could not make it, there is an outline of Professor Rackham's talk later in this Newsletter (page 18)

The Society is most grateful to Allen Bordoley for providing and operating the projection equipment. His expertise contributed greatly to the success of the evening.

Planning Committee Report

by Douglas Maxwell

In planning terms, the last few months of 2010 resembled the well-known curate's egg: it was good in parts. There have been unsatisfactory planning decisions at appeal, but there have been good ones as well; and some issues that have been rumbling below the surface for some time are now being addressed in conjunction with the Council.

New planning policies in force

You will have read in the last Newsletter of two important new items of local planning policy, which are now fully in effect. The first of these is the programme of Article 4 Directions for the Hampstead, Belsize and Swiss Cottage conservation areas. These control smaller scale changes which can have a significant effect on the appearance of the conservation area, and came into effect on 1 September 2010.

The second is the new Local Development Framework or LDF which replaces the Unitary Development Plan. After a lengthy passage through its public examination stages the Core Strategy and Development Policies were approved by the Council on 8 November 2010 and now apply to new planning applications. At the time of writing, the Council is consulting on the first of the supplementary planning guidance to accompany the LDF, and we expect to file our comments on this during January 2011.

Permitted development

The progress made on these fronts has been partly undermined by claims that some basement development falls within the definition of permitted development ie. it does not require planning permission. A recent consequence has been that, acting on legal advice, the council has granted a Certificate of Lawfulness for works including a basement at The Garden House. Many of you will remember

that a decision to grant planning permission for an earlier scheme was overturned by a judicial review brought by the Society in 2007.

One effect of this decision has been to throw into sharp focus how the current legislation can be interpreted in ways that were probably never intended; and the Society is working with the Council with the aim of closing these loopholes so as to restore the position.

Other decisions

The development proposals at 94 South Hill Park, 3 Kidderpore Gardens and 9 Downshire Hill all went to appeal following refusal by the Council. All of these are basement schemes, and while the first was allowed, the second - involving a very large basement under almost the whole of the curtilage, was dismissed.

The decision on 9 Downshire Hill is expected as I write and if announced, it will be recorded elsewhere in this issue. Our thanks are due as always to Tony Hillier, for his unstinting efforts on all these cases, particularly the last.

South Hampstead High School

A well-attended Development Control Forum organised by Camden on 6 September saw a revised scheme presented at the school by Andrew Barnett and his colleagues from Hopkins Architects. The proposals were for the most part favourably received by those present.

A planning application has now been made and was considered in detail by the planning committee which, in its response to consultation on behalf of the Society, supported the proposals in general terms. This is in line with the views expressed by local residents' groups. However there were two main caveats to this; the basement proposals and the arrangements for coach parking at the school. We have

received a response to our comments from the school's planning advisers, which at the time of writing is under consideration.

Athlone House

The Athlone House Working Group, a consortium of local bodies including the Heath and Hampstead Society, has been working to secure the preservation of this important house by way of the implementation of the original planning agreement, which the current owner wishes to set aside. Instead he has proposed to demolish the property and build a new house of much larger size in a style which the Society finds wholly unacceptable in architectural terms. For more details about the pending appeal see the Chairman's report.

Impossible without

The major cases described above are only part of the planning committee's work. It also reviews all planning applications made in the Hampstead area and comments or objects where appropriate. I would like to thank Gordon Maclean who continues to lead on this important work; and also my colleagues on the planning committee and the main committee, our local councillors, and especially all of you reading this – the Society's members – for your support.

The future?

So what will 2011 bring? On 13 December we saw the first reading of the Localism Bill which promises to devolve more powers to councils and community groups – including planning powers. Too early to say what the practical consequences will be, but it could represent an opportunity for the Society to contribute more to the planning process; and we have already opened discussions with the Council. Watch this space!

by Gene Adams

The new post office which opened in Budgens on Haverstock Hill last year, and which took us six years to get, has been 'granted' as a trial run by PO Ltd. In truth we have Andrew Thornton, Budgens Manager, to thank, and also Camden for giving its support.

They have now been 'granted' (by kind helpful PO Ltd) a second counter because there is often a long queue.

In spite of this obvious need, and their written assurances on many occasions saying that they "intended to return our post office which was closed in error", we believe PO Ltd may well close it - again - if it is not a success. I don't know the criterion for their judgement of 'success' and it bodes ill that they continue to refer to it as a 'trial'!

Therefore I urge all of you and all our organisations to keep spreading the word to use it as often as possible, just in case some official turns up unannounced on a quiet day and makes a judgement.

H&HS members please note!

Don't forget to use the Hampstead Card



The current list of businesses taking part in the scheme can be found on the Society's website

www.heathandhampstead.org.uk

Benefits offered are granted at the traders' discretion. The Society cannot be held responsible for changes in terms or availability of any discounts or offers

Town Committee Report

by Frank Harding

When I drafted the report of the Town Committee for the last issue of the Newsletter in August, I said that I was “particularly aware of the hot summer days we have been enjoying”. Four months and one issue later I am reminded of the old adage that we have in this country a great climate – it is the weather that is the problem – as I sit warm and comfortable indoors with the snow on the Heath and in the village, the airports closed and traffic moving slowly over the icy roads.

The committee has been closely monitoring Camden’s reactions to the early winter freeze and has thus far been reasonably impressed with the efforts made to keep the main roads and bus routes clear and many of the side roads gritted from time to time. It would certainly appear that there is an improvement on the position last winter.

This has been a relatively quiet time for the committee although much preparatory and planning work has gone on and continues behind the scenes. I am sure that some of our plans will see the light of day during 2011.

Victorian water mains and traffic in Hampstead

The road closures and diversions of the spring and summer to enable the Victorian water mains to be replaced were originally scheduled to last until November; in the event the work was finished some six weeks ahead of schedule – much to the relief of local residents and traders. Our thanks go to the officers of Camden and the works teams for having achieved this target.

Walks - a new initiative.....

Whilst we still intend to develop a series of walks in and around Hampstead passing by those buildings on which Hampstead, English

Heritage and other plaques have been placed, they will take place later in the year.

....beginning with two River Walks

In the meantime we are kicking off this series of walks with a two-part walk along the route taken by the River Fleet from its source in Hampstead to the point where it joins the River Thames in the City. These walks will be lead by Robin Michaelson, a qualified and experienced City of London guide, and will take place on May 14 and 22. The first will start at 10.30am at the War Memorial at Whitestone Pond and finish at St Dominics’s Priory Church, Southampton Street, NW5 (corner of Fleet Road) at approximately 12.30pm.

The second will start at the Black Friar public house, 174 Queen Victoria Street, near Blackfriars Station, at 11am and finish at approximately 1pm at St Pancras Old Church, Pancras Road. The reversal of what might have been the expected route is due to the timing of the tides on the Thames. The price will be £5 per participant for each walk. Please contact me at frankaharding@btinternet.com or on 020 7435 3728 to reserve places on the walk – numbers will be limited to 25 for each walk.

Whitestone Pond in its full glory

I previously reported that the work on and around the Pond was substantially complete. It can now be seen in its full glory – and the restoration is indeed glorious. There was a formal relaunch early in October by the Mayor of Camden with thanks and compliments being showered on the City of London and Camden teams, English Heritage and Transport for London for their support and the Heath and Hampstead Society in general and Juliette Sonabend in particular for their inspiration and involvement throughout the process.

Town Committee Report (cont)

Renovation of Whitestone Pond launched

We have since received numerous letters and emails expressing pleasure and thanks for the great improvement to the area. The pictures on this page give some idea of the event.

In conclusion, may I on behalf of all members of the Town Committee wish all our members and readers a very Happy New Year.



Above: Juliette Sonabend making her speech with Michael Welbank, Chairman of the City's Heath Management Committee on the left and the Mayor of Camden on the right

Below: Michael Welbank

Left: Looking south showing the new reed bed

Below left: Horsemen from The King's Troop join the ceremony

photos: John Hunt



Imminent threat to local bobby on the beat

By Jessica Learmond-Criqui

The sight of bobbies on the beat in our local communities is under threat. The Metropolitan Police Authority is currently reviewing police services to see where it can make the 20% savings it is required to make over the next 4 years.

A decision is being reached as we go to print about where the savings will fall and there is great concern among residents that the Safer Neighbourhood scheme may be seen as a soft target and therefore removed. If this is of concern to you too, then please read on.

The Safer Neighbourhood scheme,

The Safer Neighbourhood scheme, led by former Police Commissioner, Sir Ian Blair, introduced bobbies on the beat 5 years ago across 624 wards in London. The team comprises a sergeant, two police officers and three police constable support officers in each ward. Control over each team was gifted by Sir Ian to representatives of the local community in each ward who formed a Safer Neighbourhood Panel. The Panel regularly sets their team three or more crime-fighting priorities in the local ward on a regular basis.

The team is in addition to and works alongside the normal police service who continue to deal with emergencies on the 999 dial code. Non-emergency issues are dealt with by the team and they concentrate their efforts, to tremendous effect in some wards, on particular criminal activities which are prevalent in that particular ward. They do not work 24/7 as the normal police service does but they often work shifts to meet the needs of their priorities.

Policing by consent

The purpose of the scheme is to achieve policing by and through consent with the local community and to re-engage with the local community and, in general, it has been a great

success. Crime across Camden since the scheme was introduced has been cut by 20% and the Safer Neighbourhood Team and the bobbies on the beat have reduced the fear of crime immeasurably. Addressing not simply crime itself, but the fear of crime, must be an objective which the MPA can be persuaded is worth maintaining. The only credible way in which this has been addressed over the past 5 years has been through safer neighbourhood policing.

The financial ring-fence which once defended the scheme is up for review. When the MPA makes its decision, it will instruct the Borough Commanders to implement the decision. There is time, therefore (but not much time) to make your voices heard if this is of concern to you.

Please write with your objections

In order to keep this scheme, please write with your strongest objections to its removal to the following people who are all involved in the final decision:

- Kit Malthouse, Deputy Mayor
- Kirsten Hearn, MPA link for Camden
- Brian Coleman, member of the Greater London Authority
- Glenda Jackson, MP

I invite you to join this campaign to keep our local communities safer than they were 5 years ago. Please write to these people today.



Oliver Rackham gives the Society Springett Lecture

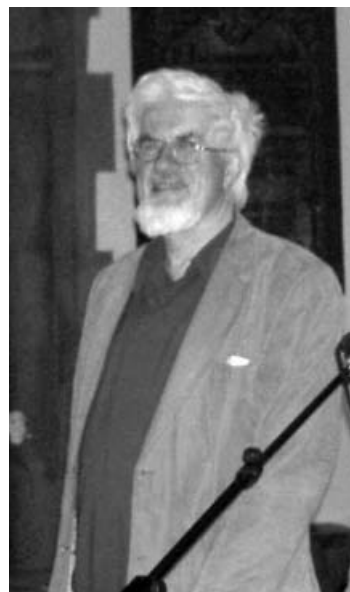
A summary of Professor Oliver Rackham's lecture by John Hunt

Professor Oliver Rackham is a Fellow of Corpus Christi College, Cambridge and Honorary Professor of historical ecology at the university. He has been described as “a Renaissance man, an ecological Sherlock Holmes. He is also a national treasure. No other scientific writer has so lucidly demonstrated that humans and woods are ancient partners of linked origins, and could be so again”. He is renowned for debunking myths and debating passionately, but remaining balanced and objective, backing up his ideas with detailed case studies and general statistical and analytical arguments.

Historic overview

Professor Rackham opened with a historic overview of the development of woodlands, and ranged widely, including some interesting literary references. The generally accepted view is that in pre- Neolithic times, until the Mesolithic period, about 6,000 years ago, England was covered with continuous wildwood which may well have looked similar to the historic wildwood in North America. However this is now a matter of controversy. Francis Vera's rival theory is that wildwood was not continuous woodland; it was a shifting mosaic of woodland and grassland, one turning into the other. Professor Rackham suggested that had Vera come to Hampstead Heath he would have said that the Heath illustrated the phase of the grassland turning into woodland as the woods adjoining the grassland expanded at their edges.

Although this is still unsettled, analysis of pollen grains provides a good deal of evidence from all over the country about the composition of the woods: in pre-Neolithic times there were many different kinds of woods but the commonest type was limewood.



Professor Rackham addressing the meeting photo John Hunt

Then there came people who grew crops, and kept cattle and sheep, and over thousands of years created the historic landscape of farmland and woodland. The composition of the woods sometimes changed. At Epping Forest a most striking change since wildwood times is the complete

replacement of the Lime by Hornbeam. This was presumably completed by Anglo-Saxon times because there is an absence of Lime place-names such as Lyndhurst in the New Forest.

Highgate Wood has the remains of a Roman pottery industry which implies not just primeval wildwood, but managed woodland to provide fuel. Highgate Wood pottery site is one of the few instances of a Roman fuel-using industry located within what is still ancient woodland.

The 1086 Domesday Book records, though unsatisfactory, seem to show that Middlesex was about 30% woodland, double the percentage for England as a whole. The description of Hampstead having wood for a hundred swine implies at least 200 acres of woodland – perhaps more if it was Hornbeam which did not feed pigs.

By the Middle Ages woods were managed in two different ways. Coppicing was cutting trees down to the ground to produce multiple stems. This kept woods in existence, maintaining a permanent supply of wood in the form of rods, logs and faggots, with a few trees left standing for timber as beams and planks. Coppice-woods have various characteristics including boundary banks through or around them as at Kenwood, and big coppice stools; some can be traced back to the 13th Century and might be many feet in diameter.

Coppicing gave rise to specialized crafts such as wattle hurdles, which go back to the Neolithic period, in situ hurdlework and fencing, and infill for timber-frame buildings. Faggots were in great demand for firewood and sea defences;



*An
ancient
oak on
the Heath*

*photo:
Jeremy
Wright*

another product was charcoal. London was an excellent market for woodland produce although there was competition from Newcastle coal which had a lower labour cost.

Kenwood is an ancient wood surrounded by a strong woodbank. It is now very shady with a lot of holly, occasional service trees and not much ground vegetation. The special feature of Kenwood is the huge and ancient oak trees which Professor Rackham reckoned to be late 17th Century. They are much bigger than the timber oaks in most woods

Woods could be grubbed out altogether to make farmland. Although woods were on the worse soils, there were times when even bad farmland was preferred to woodland. It would have been the continuing use of the woods that prevented them from being grubbed out: 1660 - 1740 was a big period for grubbing out woods.

Wood-pasture was a second typical use of common land, where the trees were sparse enough for grassland to grow between them for grazing. The trees might gradually disappear leaving pasture or heathland. This is probably the origin of Hampstead Heath, the oldest part of which probably goes back to Anglo-Saxon times or earlier. In the mid-19th century it was still a heath with few bushes. By the 1890s it was well on its way to becoming a woodland again. Parliament Hill was added to the Heath out of ordinary farmland: the oldest oaks on the Heath are some of those in the hedges that remain from the fields.

The Professor went on to deal with parks with particular reference to the Bishop of London's deer parks north of Kenwood. Popular misapprehension calls them 'hunting parks', but most medieval parks were actually deer farms.

The Springett Lecture (cont)

His own research, and that of Anne Rowe in Hertfordshire, had found very few mentions of hunting in the deer parks; deer appear far more often in the context of feasting than of hunting. It was difficult to see how it would be possible to hunt deer in a park if two thirds of it was woodland as the Bishop's parks were in the 17th century. He described how woods were compartmentalised to keep the deer out of the cut areas until the new shoots were large enough to survive being chewed up by them. Hunting in these parks did not become fashionable until Tudor and Stuart times. The Bishop of London's estates were sold off in 1647 by Commissioners for the Sale of church land.

What happened to the woods?

The Professor traced the changing landscapes of Hampstead Heath and its surroundings, and the disappearance of the woods, through comparing maps, starting with Rocque's maps of 1743 and 1754, and ending with Google Earth satellite images. By Rocque's time most of the woods that appear in Domesday Book had gone, presumably to farmland.

Very unusually the Heath got bigger when Parliament Hill was added to it, but it ceased to be a heath because after grazing ended much of it reverted to woodland, particularly on Sandy and West Heath.

He ended his talk by referring to the effect of global warming. The increase in temperature is

so far, rather small. The apparently greater variability of weather is more significant. Another change is the local urban heat island effect of built-up London. Hampstead Heath may already be experiencing some effects in advance of general global warming. He asked the audience if there were already any signs of this, and received several responses. His talk was followed by a lively question-and-answer session.



A packed house at Rosslyn Hill Chapel photo John Hunt

Books by Professor Rackham that mention Kenwood and Hampstead Heath, may be of interest:

Trees and Woodland in the British Landscape;
The History of the Countryside;

The Last Forest:

The story of Hatfield Forest; Woodlands.

Books of interest

North and South in East and West

Highgate Cemetery and The American Civil War (1861-1865) by Michael Hammerson

Archeologist Michael Hammerson, a long serving committee member of both Highgate Society and the H&HS, has written a facinating and well

illustrated booklet about Highgate Cemetery throwing light on a little known connection to the American Civil War. It tells the story behind the lives of the three men buried at Highgate, one of whom, Richard Booth, turns out to be the half-brother of the notorious John Wilkes Booth who assassinated President Abraham Lincoln.

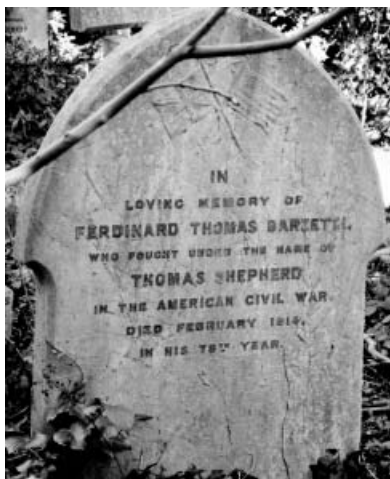
The recent discovery of three burials in Highgate Cemetery, each illuminating

some aspect of that era in very different ways, introduces cemetery visitors to an era which has affected our lives significantly, yet which is now neglected by our educational system and virtually forgotten in Britain.

On August 12, 1864 The Times wrote "The country between the Rappahannock and the Potomac has become as familiar to the English public as the space between St. Paul's and South Kensington."

The booklet is available from Highgate Cemetery, price £3,

A must for those of you keen on local history.



Camden, a Political History

by Piers Wauchope

Camden History Society 40th anniversary

Camden History Society's first meeting in 2011 celebrated its 40th anniversary in great style by inviting Piers Wauchope, former Leader of the Conservative Group on Camden Council, to talk about his new book. Its intriguing subtitle is *How Labour lost its way and won and found its way and lost.*

The event took place in the Council Chamber at Camden Town Hall, where the CHS was inaugurated, with a reception beforehand, kindly hosted by the Mayor.

The book costs £14.95 and is published by Shaw Books.

Letter from a member

After our piece about Pilgrim's Lane in the last issue we received the following interesting information from Mr. Simon Raggett:

'The name change at Pilgrim's Lane is not a myth. The name applied only to the narrow curved bit of Pilgrim's Lane between Kemplay Road and Rosslyn Hill. The wider straight road to the junction with Willow Road was known as Worsley Road until 1968, and it was the name change for this portion that is attributed to Michael Foot. The house I write from from was 21 Worsley Road until that date. I still have the documentary evidence for this'.

However, the Pilgrim in question is the 19th century landowner Charles Pilgrim - whatever Michael Foot may have thought!.

Invasive Crayfish on the Heath

by John Hunt

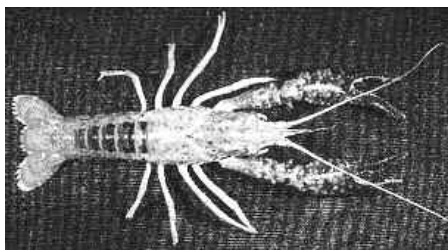
Non-native invasive crayfish are increasing their range in many of London's waterways and they have been in the ponds on the Heath since around 1991 having first been introduced into the country from the early 1970s for the restaurant trade.

The Red Swamp Crayfish

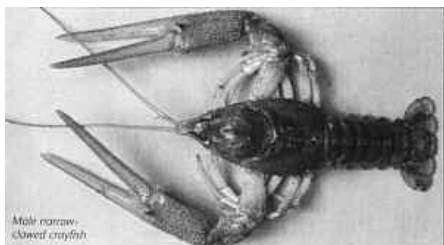
It appears that the first to arrive were the Red Swamp Crayfish (*Procambarus clarkia*), a hardy freshwater crayfish from the USA, otherwise called Louisiana Crayfish. It is usually dark red and can weigh up to 50 grams or more. Adults reach 5.5 to 12 cms (2.2 to 4.7 inches) in length.

Initially found in the Men's Pond, it appears now to be ubiquitous in all of the Highgate Ponds and more recently in the nearby Regents Canal, in London. However, so far these are the only known populations of Red Swamp Crayfish in the UK.

Unlike the native European crayfish species it is able to tolerate dry periods of up to four months.



*Above: red swamp crayfish;
Below Turkish crayfish*



It is therefore able to occupy a wide variety of habitats, thriving in warm, shallow wetland ecosystems, such as are found in natural and agricultural areas throughout south central Europe, where it has been introduced. It is typically found in seasonally flooded swamps and marshes, wet meadows, reservoirs and permanent lakes,

slow flowing water, and streams and rivers.

It is a successful coloniser and an aggressive competitor with native crayfish. It has a short life cycle and high reproduction rate. In comparison, the native White-clawed species has a long life cycle and low reproduction rate. This combined with its ability to grow and mature rapidly and to adapt to seasonal waters, has enabled the establishment of the Red Swamp Crayfish as the most successful freshwater crayfish in the world during the 20th century. As with many pests in the world this proliferation is due mainly to commercial exploitation, particularly in the USA and Spain where it is a popular delicacy. Fishing for crayfish (and a bent pin with a piece of meat on the end is perfectly adequate!) has also become a popular pastime in this country.

It has contributed to the decline of native European crayfish by introducing interspecies competition and causing the transmission of the crayfish fungus plague, *Aphanomyces astaci* which our native Crayfish are susceptible to. It also reduces the value of the freshwater habitats in which it occurs by consuming invertebrates and macrophytes.

Its burrowing behaviour degrades river banks, and may also cause significant agricultural problems. So far no such damage has been reported on the Heath.

In Europe only physical and, to some extent, climatic barriers limit the spread of Red Swamp Crayfish which is reported in the cooler Netherlands, Germany, Italy and Switzerland and in large, expanding populations in the warmer regions of Portugal, Spain and France. It may become a keystone species, affecting many components of the ecosystem and altering the nature of native plant and animal communities.

The Turkish Crayfish

The most commonly recorded invasive crayfish species in London is the Turkish, or Narrow-clawed Crayfish, *Astacus leptodactylus*, introduced to Central Europe in the 19th century from the Caspian Sea region. It can grow up to 30 cm (12 in) in length but it is more commonly found at around 15 cm (6 in). It is fairly docile, especially the male.

On the Heath it is found mostly in the Highgate No.1 Pond. Its large, uniquely shaped long and narrow claws make it easily distinguishable from the White-clawed crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*), the UK's only native. It favours relatively still waters. and populations in London are thought to be stable south of the River Thames, and declining in the area to the north of the River Thames. They are, however, still abundant in the Serpentine and also to be found on the Grand Union Canal in West London.

Can they be managed?

The question of management is a difficult one. Many methods have been tried to reduce populations of invasive crayfish. Only the use of predatory fish such as eels, burbot, perch and pike has had any success and I have seen cormorants on the Heath catching them. The populations on the Heath are well established and may be having a detrimental impact on invertebrate numbers and water quality, although this is very difficult to establish. Once established, populations are thought to be almost impossible to eradicate, but sustained trapping may reduce numbers in the long term. The Heath is carrying out some trapping and is in liaison with research students and professionals to try and identify possible future management options.

Other species

The distribution of our native White-clawed

crayfish (*Austropotamobius pallipes*) is governed by geology and water quality. It is unlikely that there is or has been any or any significant population of native crayfish on the Heath. The species can be found in a variety of locations including canals, streams, rivers, lakes, reservoirs and water-filled quarries, where it occupies cryptic habitats. Populations are concentrated in northern and central England in areas of chalk, limestone or sandstone deposits.

The Noble crayfish (Astacus astacus) is the most common species of crayfish in Europe, but is not native to the UK, although now present in some sites. The Noble crayfish is also susceptible to crayfish plague and is in decline in Europe. Consumption of the Noble crayfish in Europe has been documented back to the middle ages.

Two more crayfish from N. America that pose a threat to the UK's indigenous crayfish, are The Signal crayfish and the Virile crayfish.

The Signal crayfish (Pacifastacus leniusculus) is a large, aggressive species that has wiped out almost 95% of our native White-clawed Crayfish since it was introduced to Great Britain in 1976. It is now the most widespread alien crayfish in Europe, occurring in 25 countries, from Finland to Great Britain and from Spain to Greece. It is less prominent in London but has been recorded in a number of locations in Hillingdon borough, on the Fray's river, River Colne and Grand Union Canal, and also on the Lower Lee, and the River Beam in the north-east of London.

The Virile crayfish (Orconectes virilis), has been recorded in a number of locations along the River Lee and the Turkey Brook, in Enfield borough. This is the first occurrence of this species in the UK; its potential impacts are largely unknown although it is also a potential vector of the crayfish plague.

Bulletin Board - News of members

Gerard Mansell 1921 - 2010

We heard with great sadness of the death of Gerry Mansell, aged 89, on December 18.

His distinguished career with the BBC - Controller, Radio 4 1965-9; Director, Programmes, BBC Radio 1970-72; Managing Director of the World Service, 1972-81, and Deputy Director-General of the BBC, 1977 - 81, has been well documented elsewhere. We remember and celebrate here his vital work

for the local Hampstead Community after his retirement in 1981, which particularly involved helping to steer two important local landmarks through difficult rebuilding projects.

Gerry was born in Paris; his father, who had gone to open the first French branch of Lloyds Bank, was English and his mother was French. He spent his early life in France where he was educated, including at the Ecole des Sciences Politiques, and was bi-lingual. The family narrowly escaped the German invasion in 1940, and once back in England he immediately joined the army serving first in the Royal Norfolk Regiment and then in the Durham Regiment, in the Western Desert, Sicily and north-west Europe. He was mentioned in dispatches and awarded the Croix de Guerre. He left the army with the rank of major, aged just 25. After demobilisation he enrolled at Chelsea School of Art and in 1951 he began his career in the newsroom at Bush House.

Outstanding amongst his contributions to a wide range of local charities and community organisations was his Chairmanship of the Burgh House Trust, from 1995 to 2004. He guided it skillfully through a crucial period of development which included obtaining a £660,000 grant from the Heritage Lottery Fund



to refurbish the house.

As a Committee member of the Friends of Hampstead Town Hall his wide experience and contacts, and wise counsel during the Lottery- funded multi-million restoration of the Town Hall, were invaluable and contributed hugely to the success of the enterprise.

He was able to persuade a colleague from his BBC days with expertise in such building projects to join the Project Board, and was ever ready to give unstintingly of his time – and his smoked salmon sandwiches, which became legendary! - to the various fund-raising events.

He was a good cook, a talented painter of landscape oils and still lifes, and a deep lover of *la France profonde*. His kindness, humour, generosity, and sheer good fellowship will be remembered and treasured with deep affection by all those who knew him.

Members in the New Year's honours list

We warmly congratulate three Society members who have been honoured with MBEs in the New Year's honours list for their outstanding contributions to the arts.

Simon and Pamela Majaro founded the superb Charitable trust, **Cavatina** with the aim of introducing school-children to the treasures of the chamber music repertoire.

Susie Gregson has been the driving force behind the splendid **St. Jude's Proms** which raises huge sums for charity and gives pleasure to thousands of local residents.

Bulletin Board

Hampstead & Highgate Festival Festival Quiz Evening

a fun fundraising event in aid of the
Hampstead and Highgate Festival

Saturday 26th February 2010, at 7pm

Dining Hall, Highgate School

Bishopswood Road, N6 4PB

with questions related to Hampstead and
Highgate set by the Festival's own

Quiz Master Bob Rothenberg

Enjoy dips, fish and chips and fruit which will
be served during the evening

The total ticket price is £20 per person.

To book tickets and for more information

please contact Pippa Rothenberg on
020 8348 7771 pippa@rothenberg.co.uk

Hampstead Film Society

Hampstead Town Hall,

Interchange Trust, 213 Haverstock Hill.

Tuesday evenings @ 7pm:

A wide range of world cinema, documentaries
and must-see movies throughout the year.

Membership fee: £15.00 Adults

£10.00 Concessions/ Students/ Over 60

£6.00 for one day membership

Admission fee: £3.00 per film for members/
£5.00 for their guests.

For more information: Tel: 020 7692 5811

Email: tim.wilmott@interchange.org.uk

www.interchange.org.uk/movies

Hampstead Town Hall Centre,

213 Haverstock Hill, London, NW3 4QP

Burgh House & HAMPSTEAD MUSEUM

Exhibitions

The Exhibition *Modernism in Hampstead
The Tradition of the new* continues until
February 27.

Marilyn Greene will lead a walk in
connection the Exhibition on February 18th
at 11am **Tickets from Burgh House**

The next Exhibition opens on March 3rd

Past Poems and Personalities; a look at
Hampstead's poets exploring their lives and
where they lived.

Look out for the *Poetry Slam* in May

Support the Friends of Burgh House

Honorary President Piers Plowright

For more information or to join the Friends
tel: Burgh House on 020 7431 0144 or
contact Dawn Somper at
dawn@somper.co.uk

Burgh House Museum, Buttery, Bookstall

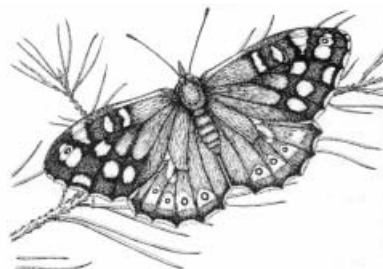
Exhibitions, talks, concerts and classes

Burgh House, New End Square NW3

www.burghhouse.org.uk Tel: 020 7431 0144

Open Wed - Fri, & Sun, 12 - 5.00pm

(Saturdays by appointment)



Heath Walks 2011

Walks are normally held on the first Sunday of every month except January. Most start from Burgh House, New End Square, London NW3 1LT – 10 minutes walk from Hampstead Tube Station (for map see www.burghhouse.org.uk)

NB parking is extremely difficult, especially in spring and summer. Starting times are either 2.30pm or 10.30 am (9.30 for birds), depending on season and subject matter.

Walks last approximately two hours. They do not necessarily follow made-up paths; you are recommended to wear suitable footwear as conditions may be rough or muddy.

You will be invited to make a minimum donation of £3.00 per adult, to be collected at the beginning of each walk, to help support future development of the walks programme and to promote the Society's activities generally.

The Society does not organise walks specifically for children but they are always welcome so long as they are suitably sbod, can walk reasonable distances and are accompanied by an adult taking full responsibility for them.

Please note starting times and meeting points

Further information from walks organiser,

Thomas Radice,

Tel: 020 8455 1025;

mobile: 07941 528 034 or

email: thosradice@gmail.com

6 February 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Ponds of the Heath led by Marc Hutchinson, Secretary, Hampstead Heath Winter Swimming Club; member of the H&HS Committee and Heath Sub-Committee

6 March 10.30am (meet at Burgh House) Curiosities of the Heath led by Thomas Radice, member of the H&HS Heath Subcommittee

3 April 10.30am (meet in North End Way, on Hampstead side of Inverforth House) The Pergola, the Hill Garden and Golders Hill Park led by Peter Tausig, member of the H&HS Committee and Heath Subcommittee

8 May 9.30 am (meet at Burgh House)

NB early start and that this is the 2nd Sunday of the month.

Birds of the Heath led jointly by John Hunt, former Chairman of the Marylebone Birdwatching Society and Sash Tusa, members of the H&HS Heath Subcommittee.

5 June 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House)

Flora of the Heath led by David Bevan, Conservation Officer and Past President, London Natural History Society, and Fellow of the Linnean Society, London

3 July 2.30pm (meet at Burgh House) Caring for the Heath: the work of the City of London led by Richard Payne and Meg Game

