



Spring 2005 Newsletter

Ealing Civic Society Events 2005

AGM Tuesday 12 April 2005 8pm Telfer Room, Ealing Town Hall – speaker Bob Gurd/Eddie Tulasiewicz: *Ealing Broadway Centre 20 years on.*

Tuesday 5 July, Annual Lecture, 8pm Telfer Room Ealing Town Hall -- speaker Charles Mynors: *Historic buildings & conservation-- why bother?*

Saturday/Sunday 17/18 September: London Open House Weekend

Award Ceremony Thursday 20 October 2005 8.00pm Liz Cantell Room, Ealing Town Hall - speaker Nigel Burton, Chairman, Civic Trust

Chairman's Report

2004 was a busy year for the society. The highlights include:

- a generous bequest from a former member of the society;
- inauguration of a new plaque scheme;
- 15th anniversary of the annual award scheme and, for the first time, involvement of the Council;
- publication of a new recruitment leaflet which has already led to 50 new members joining the Society;
- some successes in our campaigns.

As reported elsewhere, Janet Millar left a sizeable bequest to the Society. We have expressed our gratitude to her surviving family members who have agreed that we should mark her generous bequest in some way. Although we are still planning what this might be, one possibility could be inauguration of a new annual

special event in her memory. I hope to say more about this at the AGM. We mentioned in our last newsletter that we were inaugurating a new scheme to commemorate events and people linked with the borough. After much trial and tribulation to get the necessary permissions the Waitrose plaque was unveiled at a special meeting of the Acton History Group in February. We are now looking to another event or personality to commemorate in the same way, preferably sponsored by a third-party. If you have any ideas please let us know. The award scheme continues to go from strength to strength in its 15th year. 2004 saw the Council's involvement on an extension of the scheme to include new designs as well as built projects. We are looking into possibility of extending it further to cover a new award for young people -- watch this space! Finally, we also published a new recruitment leaflet which has been made widely available. The success of this is evident from the number of new members that have been recruited recently - approaching 50 - whom we warmly welcome.



Janet Millar

The results of the tram consultation have just been received: the official consultation showed a majority against whereas the survey of around 1000 residents along the route has indicated a majority in favour. TfL explained the difference by saying that those opposed to the scheme were

more likely to express their views! Meanwhile, Ealing Council has agreed to become a joint sponsor of the Bill to Parliament assuming that the Mayor decided to proceed. The Crossrail Bill has also just been published and hearings will start shortly in Parliament. Whilst Crossrail has generally been welcomed, it does contain controversial elements such as the acquisition of land on Haven Green during construction for plant and spoil.



2004 Award presentation to St Mary's Church representatives with Ian Potts, Mayor of Ealing and Bob Gurd

In relation to our campaigns, we have had some modest successes. For example, following extensive lobbying by us and other groups in Central Ealing the Council has adopted a cumulative impact policy in this area in its recently published licensing policy under the Licensing Act 2003. This means that any new premises or expansion in size of existing premises will be unlikely unless applicants can prove that they would not undermine the 4 principles of licensing enshrined in the 2003 Act. The study into the history and character of South Acton carried out by English Heritage which was inaugurated last year was recently completed and launched at a special event in February. We continue to take a close interest in the proposals by the Council to regenerate the area. We have also been working closely with residents' associations and others to try to improve the

proposals submitted by TfL for replacing the two road bridges in Hanger Lane. Although discussions are continuing, we are hopeful that a much "greener" solution will be found than originally proposed. After many years of campaigning, a number of new conservation areas were designated or existing ones extended in 2004. This is good news and we must pay tribute to the Council's conservation officers for the work they put into this complex process. They are now reconstituting the conservation area panels, to include the new roads. If any members are interested in putting themselves forward to represent residents' views on planning applications in the areas please get in touch with Jerome Tait in the Conservation Section on 020 8825 5652 (jerome.tait@ealing.gov.uk).

Finally, we continue our work on Ealing Centre Partnership, which is making some progress on improving the streetscape in Ealing and coordinating developments in the key sites in the centre of town – there will be more about this at the AGM. This is quite apart from the bread and butter business of scrutinising around 3000 planning applications every year! I think you will agree that this is an extraordinary range of activities and, as ever, new blood to assist us on the Committee is always welcome! I look forward to seeing you at the AGM.

Bob Gurd

Janet Millar (1908 – 2004)

Janet Ferguson Millar, a past member of the Society who has left a generous donation to the society in her will, was born on 10 March 1908 in Glasgow. She spent her early years in Scotland, moving during her teenage years to Bristol. The family moved to Chester Gardens in Ealing in the 1920s and Janet remained in the family home for the rest of her life until ill health forced her to move into nursing accommodation in 2002. She spent her working career in the Ministry of Health from leaving school until her retirement in 1968.

She was a well-known figure in Ealing, having been a devoted member of St. Stephen's Church for all her adult life. She was a staunch supporter of the National Trust. She had a great many

other interests chief of which were a love of music and animals and an insatiable interest in amateur dramatics. She died in Woking on 12 July 2004 and is survived by family in Scotland.

Martin Millar

ECS Award Scheme 2004

The society's award scheme had a good range of entries in 2004 although it was disappointing that there were no houses, flats or offices of suitable quality for entry. There were however six playground areas submitted by Ealing Council's Parks and Countryside Service. One of these, the Horsenden Hill Farm Environmental Play Area by the canal at Horsenden Hill, was highly commended by the assessors. It is a playground with a difference, set back from the canal for safety, with a planted maze and wooden play equipment. Designs by children are used on seats which can be used by people making canal trips as well as those using the playground. Another open space well worth visiting is the Northolt Manor House site, which has been landscaped and interpretation boards added to raise public awareness of this historic site.



St Mary' s church, Ealing- award winner 2004

The Library Service entered Pitshanger library, which has been renovated to provide disabled access, space for computers and a bright interior.

It is a good example of how to provide for people with disabilities in a small shop area. There was also a highly commended entry from Notting Hill and Ealing High School. Their West Wing extension has some interesting interior features including a swimming pool that avoids the use of strong chemicals, a music hall and specialist classrooms. The top floor art rooms were provided with circular roof-lights that give added daylight to students working there. Heat from the pool warms the extension!

The society's 2004 Award was presented by Paul Velluet, English Heritage, to St Mary' s Church, Ealing for a brilliantly restored interior which provides a vibrant multi-purpose space accessible to wheelchair users. Modern pews are movable while the traditional ones are retained in the gallery. The original colour scheme is restored and new lighting illuminates the whole to spectacular effect. The scheme brings back to life the 1866 design and decoration scheme of S. S.Teulon.

Judy Harris

ECS plaque scheme

The first ECS plaque was successfully unveiled on February 9th by Nigel Burton, Chairman of our parent body, the Civic Trust, and a former Development Director of Waitrose together with the Mayor of Ealing, Councillor Ian Potts. The ceremony in St Mary's Acton Church Hall was organised by the Acton History Group and was preceded by a fascinating talk with period photos by Janet Hobbs on 'Mr Waite, Mr Rose and Mr Taylor in Acton'.

We were told that Mr Taylor dropped out of the new business after a few years and that the flourishing new Waitrose business soon expanded by purchasing the two shops (Nos 265 & 267) adjacent to 263 High Street, Acton Hill and by building a south facing second floor conservatory at the back for ripening bananas amongst many other improvements. The business grew into a chain of stores and the original shops on Acton Hill were sold after the First World War. Waitrose was bought out by the John Lewis Partnership in the 1930s.

The bronze plaque was installed in the pavement a week later in front of No 263 which is now occupied by *Babylon Pizza*. You will recall from the article in the Autumn Newsletter that our original plan was to install a green ceramic plaque with white lettering on the façade of the premises. However following difficulties in contacting the building's owners to obtain consent to install the plaque we took up the suggestion of Sarah Harper, Conservation Officer with Ealing Council, and obtained permission from the Council to install a round bronze plaque in the pavement. The plaque is inscribed with the words: 'Messrs Waite, Rose and Taylor opened the first Waitrose shop here in 1904' with the names of 'Acton History Group' 'Ealing Civic Society' and 'Waitrose Ltd' as joint sponsors of the project inscribed on the outer rim.



Plaque unveiling ceremony (L-R David Bays, Janet Hobbs (Acton History Group), The Mayor & Mayoress (Councillor and Mrs Ian Potts), Bob Gurd, Nigel Burton (Chairman, Civic Trust), photo by Phil Weedon, Waitrose)

We are particularly grateful to David Parkin, Branch Manager of Waitrose's nearest branch at West Ealing, for arranging for the sponsorship of the cost of installing the plaque and for providing some excellent refreshments during the event. Please take the opportunity to see the plaque and to walk over it several times to help to keep its shine bright!

We now intend to consider proposals for new plaques in Ealing dedicated to famous places or people in the Borough. We would like to install

them in green ceramic with white lettering where possible. We may well adopt the criteria used by Westminster Council for its Green Plaque Scheme which 'celebrates the remarkable endeavours of some of its former residents' by commemorating people who:

- are regarded as eminent by most members of their profession or calling;
- have genuinely contributed to human welfare or happiness and deserve recognition for it;
- are reasonably well-known.

Finally, sufficient time should have elapsed to show their lasting contribution to society.

Sometimes a building may be commemorated for its own significance. Plaques may occasionally be placed on "the site of" a building which no longer exists if the owner agrees and if there is a suitable position on the building for the plaque to be displayed.

Mike Tiley

John Wibberley tells us of his plans for the Friends of Pitzhanger Manor

Planning his new country residence, John Soane, writing on 'the last day of the present century', describes his new project as a 'Dream'. The architectural significance of Pitzhanger Manor-House cannot be overstated. This is the show house of an architect reaching the peak of his powers, without client or budgetary constraints. It is home for a growing art collection, but also a place of retreat, entertainment and pleasure. As Soane reaches his own half-century, he is already conscious of his earthly mortality: the buildings are to be the legacy of a self-made man and a celebration of a unique architectural style.

In 1804, Mrs Soane's diaries record the first hot meal in the family's new 'Dream House'. Two hundred years on, the Friends of Pitzhanger Manor want to revive the Dream. We have five main objectives, providing moral, voluntary and, eventually, financial support to the building in order to:

- secure the next 200 years of history for the House (including the lodge, bridge

and immediate gardens) with comprehensive conservation and maintenance programmes for the physical building fabric;

- recreate the spirit of Soane's glorious interiors: the restoration of the principal rooms comprising Soane's House, should be completed and properly interpreted, including the subsequent history of the building;
- do similar justice to the fabulous Martinware pottery collections, left to the Borough by enlightened benefactors;
- celebrate Ealing's cultural wealth and diversity through imaginative use of the house and gallery spaces for visual and performance arts;
- create a hub of arts activities for the whole Ealing community: a café spilling into the garden, a shop, an enviable programme of events, exhibitions and educational activities, full use of the whole building with year-round Sunday and evening opening are all realistic aspirations.



Pitzhanger Manor Arch in 2004

How can you help? Many houses, museums and galleries could not survive without Friends organisations. We ask you to register your support for the ideas above with a phone call to 020 8621 8526 or an e-mail to friends@pitzhangermanor.com. There is no membership fee at this stage. And do write to politicians and newspapers; we are tired of being

told, "there's no votes in the arts," or "it's run by the Council, so what do you expect?"

The Friends share the optimism expressed in Soane's final thoughts on *his* Pitzhanger Dream: "notwithstanding all that has passed ... all may yet end well." *John Wibberley*

Open House

In addition to the annual Open House London event, the Open House organisation has some year-round initiatives:

Open House Architecture Bulletin brings you monthly details of London's architecture events, exhibitions, tours and talks. You can subscribe at the discounted rate of £12.50 for 1 year's subscription (plus a free copy of the Open House London Annual Event buildings guide). Tel: 020 7267 7644, post cheque (payable to London Open House) or payment details to Open House, PO Box 25361, London NW5 1GY, mentioning "Societies Offer".

London Architecture Tours - discover London with Saturday morning architecture tours, led by experts, exploring Docklands, the Square Mile, West End or Bankside. For details and dates of tours: tel. 020 7267 7644 or visit website www.openhouselondon.org.

Message from the Membership Secretary

May I remind members that the new subscription year commences from 1st April 2005? For those of you who pay by standing order no action is required and I am writing separately to all 'life members'. For those of you who pay by cash or cheque would you please pass your remittance to me at the address below or alternatively at the forthcoming AGM. The subscription for the membership year 2005/6 remains unchanged at £5 (individuals) and £10 (corporate).

The notice of the AGM below includes a resolution to increase the membership fees with effect from 1st April 2006. This proposed increase is due to a variety of factors but one is the failure of many members to pay their subscription annually leading to a decreased

asset position for the Society. **I would therefore appreciate it if all members would ensure their 2005/6 subscriptions are paid fully up to date.** You are free to contact me to ask any questions as to unpaid subscriptions from previous years.

I would also stress the benefits to the Society of members completing Gift Aid forms. Completion of the form covers members for all future years' subscriptions. If you haven't already completed a form and wish to do so please contact me.

If agreed, the subscription increase will only become operative from 1 April 2006 and no immediate action is needed on your part. If you pay by standing order I will write explaining arrangements in the next newsletter.

If you wish to contact me please write or email me:

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email: paulfitzmaurice1948@hotmail.com

EALING CIVIC SOCIETY

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2005

The 2005 AGM will be held in the Telfer Room, Ealing Town Hall at 8.00pm on Tuesday 12th April 2005.

Agenda

1. Apologies for absence
2. Chairman's Report for the year 2004
3. Adoption of the Chairman's Report
4. Treasurer's Report for 2004
5. Adoption of the Treasurer's Report
6. Appointment of Auditors
7. Election of Officers

Currently: Chairman: Bob Gurd

Vice-Chairman: vacant

Publicity officer: Mike Tiley

Secretary: Judy Harris

Treasurer: Huw Foxall

Membership Secretary: Paul Fitzmaurice

Newsletter Editor: Margaret Gold

8. Election of other Committee Members

Currently: Adrian Cook, John Templeton, Tony Miller (co-opted), Corinne Templer, Jim McLaughlin

9. **Resolution** – see below

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

11. Talk on *Ealing Broadway Centre – 20 Years On.*

Resolution: Amend Paragraph 4 of the Society' s Constitution wef 1 April 2006 to read:

‘The minimum Annual Subscription for all members shall be –

Households: £10

Businesses and associations (corporate membership): £15

Standing Orders or Direct Debits shall also be accepted as will payments under the Government's Gift Aid Scheme.”