



## Issue No. 40 Summer 2019

Summer has arrived, together with this issue of our Newsletter, both rather later than anticipated. So far this year there have been a number of important planning issues raised; we give an update on Olympia, details of the proposals for the West London Magistrates' Court and the Hammersmith & West London College sites, together with information on three other sites in the south of the borough. In this issue we have a report on the recent renovations at the Lyric, venue for our AGM last year; a vision for the future of the Grand Union Canal corridor, plus two pieces of historic interest on the Fulham Art Bronze Foundries and the Lyons Lab.

At the end of March the Health Secretary announced that the planned closure of the A&E Department of Charing

Cross Hospital would not happen. This reprieve means that the hospital will no longer be downgraded to a local hospital, with the greater part of the site being sold for housing. On page 4 we have an article by the Trust Archivist for Imperial College Healthcare on the history of the hospital and how it arrived in our borough.

May 2019 saw the reopening of Fulham Palace after a major refurbishment. We will feature this in the next issue of the Newsletter, together with details of the unveiling of the commemorative D-Day Information Board in St Paul's Gardens.

*Sheena Barbour, Editor*



*The Lyric Theatre Hammersmith auditorium after refurbishment (see page 2)*

## CHANGES AT THE LYRIC

*The Historic Buildings Group's Annual General Meeting was held at the Lyric in November 2018. After a guiding a tour of the Main House auditorium, Simon Davis gave a talk on the recent works at the complex, which he summarises below.*

Over the summer of 2018 the Lyric underwent a 15 week programme of refurbishment of both its Main House and Studio. It was the first major refurbishment of both spaces since the theatre reopened on its current site in 1979.

In our Main House we worked with our expert decorators *Hayles and Howe* to lovingly repair, clean and decorate the ornate Matcham designed plasterwork. We used samples from the original paintwork to keep the redecoration as close to the original as possible. The Main House also benefits with brand new carpets and seating. The seats have been kept in the same traditional style, but now benefit from supportive foam and luxurious fabric. All the seating is now easily removed which has allowed us to increase the availability and choice of wheelchair spaces. We have also been able to upgrade our induction loop as part of the works.



In our Studio we completely stripped out and fitted a new electrical rig. This is now fully LED compatible which will bring down the Lyric's emissions substantially. We have also replaced the old stationary seating block with a new retractable one. This brings new flexibility to the space which we did not have before.

Hopefully the works carried out in both spaces will see us through the next 40 years.

*Simon Davis  
Head of Building Operations,  
Lyric Theatre Hammersmith*

## FULHAM ART BRONZE FOUNDRIES

Alessandro and Ercole Parlanti were Artistic Bronze Founders based at 59 Parsons Green Lane in 1895. From famous large castings such as *Peter Pan* in Kensington Gardens and the huge



*Golden Eagle* (above) which sits atop the RAF Memorial on Embankment, to smaller pieces found in such respected locations as the V&A and Tate Britain, the Parlanti brothers cast in all metals, specialising in casting in bronze by the lost wax process. In 1917 the foundry moved from Parsons Green to Beaumont Road, West Kensington where it continued to 1930, changing the name from A Parlanti to E J Parlanti.

During their time they cast for all the top sculptors of the period, many of who lived and worked in and around Fulham, including Jacob Epstein, Eric Gill and Henri Gaudier-Brzeska. The Fulham War Memorial, sculpted by the local artist Alfred Turner, was cast at the Parlanti foundry.

Following the First World War the foundry was inundated with orders for bronze war memorials throughout the Commonwealth. During the casting of the RAF Memorial in 1923 the *Fulham Chronicle* reported 'Through the activity and technical skill of the Art Bronze Foundry in Beaumont Road in West Kensington, Fulham has already earned world-wide distinction as 'the birth-place of noted Memorials'.

The legacy of the Parlanti brothers lives on, as many bronze founders learned their trade at the foundry before starting up on their own, including Charles Gaskin who formed Art Bronze Fulham (which has just recently ceased trading), and Giovanni Fiorini whose company is still casting in Fulham.

*Steve Parlanti*  
[www.parlantibronzefoundries.co.uk](http://www.parlantibronzefoundries.co.uk)

## LYONS LAB

**149** Hammersmith Road is now Lyric House, an office building occupied by, among others, Turkish Airlines. But this is the original 1928 building, Sackville House, that housed J Lyons' Bio Chemical Department, testing thousands of food samples each year - and giving Margaret Roberts her first job.



Lyons' first food scientist was Dr Leslie Lampitt – who had met one of the Lyons directors in the trenches in the First World War. He was eventually tempted to work for Lyons by a very large salary and the promise of complete independence. His first laboratory was in Brook Green, but a new building was commissioned – Sackville House, with 7 floors and space for 300 scientists to test 40,000 food samples a year. At first the lab concentrated on food hygiene and safety, but soon was branching out into possible new products such as flavourings and essences.

One profitable area of research in during the Second World War was Frood –frozen ready cooked meals, a novelty at the time. Food was prepared and frozen at a Lyons Corner House, then re-heated and served to US army HQ staff in a converted tea shop. All was closely monitored by a Lyons chemist.

The staff were quite separate from the Cadby Hall HQ along the road. The lab had its own canteen, where men and women ate at separate tables. There was a table for graduates - juniors could only join them if they continued study and gained a qualification.

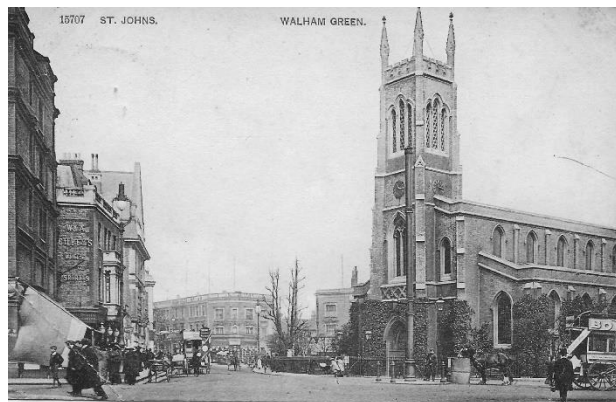
Margaret Roberts worked in the lab from 1949-51 until she left to marry Denis Thatcher. The joke has always been that she was researching putting cold air into ice cream – rather than the hot air she would later know well. The truth is less exciting – at Lyons she was working on the Vitamin C content of cabbage.

*Ann Jones*

## POSTCARD FROM THE PAST

**T**he medieval village of Walham Green, first recorded in the 14th century, is now better known as Fulham Broadway. The church was opened in 1828 to serve this part of Fulham due to the expanding population. It has a churchyard closed in 1853. Just a few grave stones survive. The site of the church was formerly the village pond, a natural watering hole fed by a stream which the village grew up around. By the beginning of the 19th century the pond became insanitary so in 1814, due to severe frosts that put men out of work, the opportunity was taken to infill it. In the background is the North End Road Market established about the 1870s. Notice the horse drawn buses.

*Keith Whitehouse*



*St John's Church, Walham Green circa 1904.*

## CHARING CROSS HOSPITAL AND FULHAM HOSPITAL

It always causes confusion that Charing Cross Hospital, built on the site of the Fulham Hospital, is in Hammersmith, and Hammersmith Hospital is at East Acton. Only by looking back at the history of three hospitals can we understand this anomaly. Fulham Hospital, on the Fulham Palace Road, originally built as part of the workhouse for Fulham and Hammersmith, existed from 1849 to 1973. In 1905 a new workhouse and infirmary for the poor of Hammersmith, dubbed the 'pauper's paradise' because of its lavish accommodation, was built on cheaper land at Wormwood Scrubs outside the borough boundaries. Intended for the sick poor of Hammersmith, it was named Hammersmith Infirmary. Both Fulham and Hammersmith Infirmaries were requisitioned as military hospitals during the First World War, and were known respectively as Fulham Military Hospital and, to add to the name confusion, Shepherd's Bush Military Hospital.

Fulham Hospital was taken over by the London County Council in 1930 after the abolition of the Poor Law. In 1948 it became part of the new National Health Service. There were plans to rebuild the hospital, but in 1959 the Ministry of Health decided that Charing Cross Hospital would move from central London to the Fulham Hospital site where there was more room for expansion than in its original location. Building work took place on the site of the old workhouse which had been demolished in 1957. Fulham Hospital was closed when Charing Cross transferred to the new site in 1973. All that remains of it is its 20-ft high black painted weathervane in the hospital grounds, and the railings.



Charing Cross Hospital (above) was founded in 1818 by Dr Benjamin Golding as the West London Infirmary and Dispensary. Renamed Charing Cross Hospital in 1827, the foundation stone of its new building in Strand

designed by the architect Decimus Burton, was laid in September 1831. This is now occupied by Charing Cross Police Station but the foundation stone can still be seen in King William IV Street. Designed by Ralph Tubbs in the shape of a cross, the present-day Charing Cross Hospital was opened by the Queen on 22 May 1973.



*Nurses with model of new Charing Cross Hospital. circa 1973.*

Traces of its earlier history and of the history of earlier hospitals on the site still exist. Busts of the founder Benjamin Golding and of Thomas Huxley, one of the most distinguished members of the staff of Charing Cross Hospital Medical School, can be seen in the current Riverside Board Room. Hand-painted tile panels of the 1890s by W B Simpson & Sons showing domestic and agricultural scenes from the Outpatients' Department of the original Charing Cross Hospital are now displayed on the first floor of the new hospital. Bedplates from Charing Cross are now mounted opposite the entrance to the chapel. These bedplates recorded the endowment of beds by various individuals and organisations in the days when it was a voluntary hospital dependent upon charitable funding. Beds endowed by West End theatres show the extent to which Charing Cross was the actors' hospital.

*Kevin Brown  
Trust Archivist,  
Imperial College Healthcare NHS Trust*

## HBG PLAQUE UPDATE



*The HBG plaque now to be seen on the new RIVERSIDE STUDIOS building.*

## CANAL PLACEMAKING STUDY

The Old Oak & Park Royal Development Corporation is currently producing a high level vision for placemaking and the management of uses and movement along the corridor of the Grand Union Canal. Within the borough boundaries the canal runs across the Old Oak North and HS2 regeneration area between Kensal Green Cemetery, Scrubs Lane and Old Oak Common Lane and is highly valued by the local community as a green, tranquil open space for leisure, boating, walking and cycling.

The study sets out three types of interventions that address these needs which are ‘caring’ projects about behavioural change, accountability and management, ‘nurturing’ projects which are designed to protect and enhance existing qualities, and ‘enlivening’ projects that improve the quality and amenity of the new urban development in the regeneration area.

Scenarios for a number of key stretches of the canal corridor are presented in the study to demonstrate potentials to improve access to the canal and to manage movement, to establish an environmental network of planted edges, pocket parks, nature reserves and to integrate industrial edges and pockets of activities. The history of the canal and its industrial heritage form an important basis for the proposals.

In Hammersmith, those key areas are the junctions of the canal with Old Oak Common Lane and with Scrubs Lane

and Mary Seacole Gardens. Here, improved access and the clustering of activity, leisure uses and a variety of green and amenity spaces would provide local community and townscape benefits. A more natural approach is suggested for the existing birchwood on the south side of the canal which would provide opportunities to strengthen the environmental potential of the canal corridor and improve biodiversity, air quality and amenity.

The study is due to be published on the OPDC website in summer 2019:

<https://www.london.gov.uk/about-us/organisations-we-work/old-oak-and-park-royal-development-corporation-opdc/opdc-planning>. The document will become part of the Public Realm Design Supplementary Planning Guidance.

*Kerstin Kane*

*Design & Conservation Officer, LBH&F*



*Grand Union Canal in Hammersmith and Fulham.*

## PLANNING MATTERS

**Olympia Buildings** Ahead of proposals for a major renovation and expansion of the Olympia site under the new owners, Historic England reviewed the listings on the site: 2 buildings were raised to Grade II\* - the Grand Hall and Pillar Hall, while the listed status of the rest of the site was clarified and the Maclise Road car park Grade II listed, adding it to the Grade II listed National Hall and Emberton Building.

HBG wrote a very strong letter of objection on the scheme submitted for planning and listed building consent last year for the redevelopment of the Olympia Site. Once it was understood that the planning officer's report recommended approval, we asked the MHCLG to ‘call-in’ the application for the Secretary of State, James

Brokenshire, to determine. Though even the applicants were expecting this initial application to be deferred or rebuffed to allow for further negotiation, council resolved to grant permission on 30 January 2019. However the Mayor of London still has to decide whether to intercede. Were the application to be called-in, HBG would be a principal opponent of the scheme at any inquiry held by the Planning Inspectorate.

Meanwhile the architects SPPARC working with David Chipperfield are proceeding with further applications for temporary works of full mezzanine decks over both halls to allow the rebuilding work to go ahead while the exhibitions carry on, and we will have to review these proposals. David Chipperfield have produced more details of the new build proposals. The group are to be represented on a working group set up by the council to work on the details of new building proposals.

**West London Magistrates' Court** HBG has written to the council to object to this application for the West London Magistrates' Court site between The Ark and the BP Service Station on Talgarth Road south of the Hammersmith Flyover. The site was bought by Dominvs Ltd who recognised its development potential as it is within the Hammersmith Town Centre. They also looked to the Landmark House development and saw that the Rogers Stirk Harbour scheme at 20 storeys had approval. Their proposals are for TWO 400+ bed hotels on the site housed in three buildings: a 25 storey tower beside the road, 16 storeys in the middle and 8 storeys along the railway.

The site (pictured below left) is right beside The Ark designed by Ralph Erskine, 30 years old later this year



and reckoned to be one of the best late 20<sup>th</sup> century buildings in west London. The development will have major impact on the setting of that landmark building, as well as the Barons Court Conservation Area and the buildings within it. Lately the applicants have submitted revised proposals lopping 3 storeys off the tallest element, which makes little difference to the view that this is over-development of the site. Historic England are at present not willing to consider The Ark for spot-listing on the grounds that the threat to it from the 25 storey tower beside it is not significant, and they think the special interest of The Ark has been diminished by the 2010 internal refurbishment. We support efforts to get The Ark spot-listed.

**Hammersmith & West London College Site** HBG has been involved in meetings with both the college and the local residents concerning the development proposals.



*CGI of proposed West London College site*

The site is on the south half of the old St Paul's School site between Hammersmith Road and Talgarth Road.

Partly enclosed by the railings and walls of the St Paul's School, designed by Alfred Waterhouse 1881-5, the college is the biggest site developed by ILEA. It was designed by Bob Giles of the GLC Architects Department, originally planned in 1965 but not constructed until 1977-80.

The proposals first issued for consultation a year ago are to demolish all the buildings on the site and replace them by a college building occupying the SE corner of the site by the Talgarth Road-Gliddon Road junction and three blocks of housing on an N-S axis to the west. The sale of the two-thirds of the site for housing would finance the new college building. At present the college has to sort out its finances and the sale of other sites, but as soon as this is done, the new college CEO and Principal Karen Redhead and the project manager Laurie Morley want to

submit the application for planning to redevelop along with an EIA.

The local residents and Bob Giles applied for the building to be listed. This was turned down. They are appealing this decision, meanwhile the college are seeking some certainty by applying for a Certificate of Immunity from Listing. The HBG will have to decide on our stance on the loss of the 1970s building and the impact of the proposed new college building and housing on the setting of the grade II St Paul's Studios on the opposite side of Talgarth Road and the Gunter Estate Conservation Area to the east. A concern will be to ensure the preservation of all the surviving lengths of the Waterhouse wall, but the heritage value of this brutalist building is worth considering.

**Ada Lewis House 2 Palliser Road** On the end of a block in Palliser Road between Comeragh and Barton Road stands a 5 storey classical brick building, Ada Lewis House, an unrecognised piece of social history.

In 1901, money lender Samuel Lewis left £670,000 in his will – the equivalent of £30million today – to form a charitable trust providing housing for the poor. His wife



*Ada Lewis House at the junction of Palliser Road and Comeragh Road*

Ada, herself a wealthy philanthropist, was concerned about the lack of decent housing for single, low-waged working women and used the money to set up the Ada Lewis House Women's Lodging Houses under the Samuel Lewis Trust.

The Samuel Lewis Trust, now Swan Housing, have emptied Ada Lewis House and are bringing forward an application to demolish the building and replace it with a taller building that fills the site and comes out to the back of the pavement on all three roads. The site is in the

Barons Court Conservation Area, where its red brick elevation set back from Palliser Road with trees in front forms the character of this part of the conservation area.



*Proposed Ada Lewis House Replacement*

HBG are opposed to the present proposals but wish to see the applicants reconsider the development of the site in such a way that it actually takes account of the location in the conservation area.

**Challoner Crescent & 114 North End Road** HBG objected to this application for the demolition of the present building on the Continental Coachworks site and its replacement by an office and housing development. The site is in the Barons Court Conservation Area, and the building, though an early 20<sup>th</sup> century industrial building, is not without some interest as an early car and coach building works. As yet there is not decision on the application, but if developed as proposed the new development would adversely affect locally listed buildings in Challoner Crescent and Lanfrey Place. We would wish to see a more sensitive proposal in this location, both in terms of the impact on Challoner Crescent and the views down North End Road to this site on its dogleg.

**Barons Court Station** Work is proceeding apace to convert the shops on the south side of the Grade II station into a coffee shop/deli/retail space for The Roasting Party, a Winchester based company. Oddly the LBC does not appear to have been given consent, but all the interiors of the old shops have been removed and they have been knocked together with large steel beams going in. HBG might question why this listed building is being treated like any unlisted shop. Hopefully the result will maintain and enhance the character of this part of the station and the windows and external blinds will be restored. But it does seem to show that TfL and those operating within its properties do seem to be able to do things other listed building owners might be stopped from doing.

*H&F Historic Buildings Group*



## STOP PRESS

### Hammersmith Bridge closure

As announced at public meetings in Barnes and Hammersmith, the London Borough of Hammersmith & Fulham is determined to fully restore the bridge to its Victorian splendour. Weekly surveys have been in place since 2015. It has been found that many of the large bolts have seized up, and that the chain system within the towers which regulates the movement of the bridge is no longer working as it should. In April microfractures were discovered in the cast iron pedestals, meaning that the bridge had to be closed for safety reasons. In-depth daily surveying is now taking place. A group of 18 top international engineers are presently undertaking a most comprehensive survey, investigating the current state of the bridge and possibilities for renovation. By the middle of August the engineers will present their full diagnosis; solutions and costings should be available by September. It is intended that bridge should be fully restored and fit for the 21<sup>st</sup> and 22<sup>nd</sup> centuries.

At the meetings on 19 June in Barnes, presentations were given by the Leaders of both Richmond upon Thames and Hammersmith & Fulham Councils, together with senior officers from both councils and a representative from TfL. The ensuing question and answer sessions were lively, ranging from how traffic on the bridge could be reduced should H&F's 'flyunder' scheme be adopted, whether the bridge should only be open to pedestrians, bikes, buses and emergency vehicles when repairs have been completed, whether to reinstate the cross-river ferry, build a temporary Bailey bridge, whether to introduce a toll for non-local traffic, to whether it would be quicker and cheaper to pull it down and start again (that's one option that definitely isn't going to happen!).

In the meantime new LED lighting is to be installed on the bridge, and there will be a daily police presence until midnight. H&F and TfL are planning to implement the introduction of electric buggies which will be used to transport Freedom Pass holders who are less easily able

to walk across the bridge. A separate consultation about buses is being undertaken by TfL and new routes and timings will be in place by October.

While no definitive timescale can be given until the reports have been submitted, costing approved and funding put in place, it is now expected that the bridge will be reopened in three years' time.

*Sheena Barbour, Editor*

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