

# Muswell Hill & Fortis Green Association

www.mhfga.org

Your Residents' Association working for the local community since 1948

## Pottery in the Second Century



Claire Skinner and Hugh Dennis tell a story of the Wood in AD 156  
*Photo by David Winskill*

Catherine West MP chaired the Friends of Highgate Roman Kiln's (FOHRK) evening of heritage, archaeology and fun at Lauderdale House, Highgate, when a full house gathered to support the charity's crowdfunding campaign to return the 2nd century Roman kiln in store in Bruce Castle Museum for exhibition in Highgate Wood where it was excavated.

The event was attended by MHFGA Chairman, John Hajdu and the generous contribution to the campaign by the MHFGA's Community Fund was acknowledged by Catherine West.

Duncan Hooson, of Clayground Collective, described the first time he handled one of the delicate, finely-made, Highgate Ware pots, known as 'poppyhead beakers'. 'It was quite a moment,' he said. Duncan is working on the FOHRK project to make high quality replicas of Romano-British pots from Highgate for handling at lectures and other learning events.



Duncan Hooson's 'moment' measuring up a Highgateware poppy beaker

*Photo by Clayground Collective*

## March/April 2022



Inside this issue:

- 2 Notices  
MHFGA contacts
- 3 Member Profile: Ian Christie  
Robert Paul Exhibition
- 4 Queen's Wood Flood Management Plan  
Report from our Transport Officer
- 5 News from our Tree Officer  
Membership
- 6 February Members' Meeting  
Meet the MHFGA Committee
- 7 Local Organisations  
MHFGA Website
- 8 From our Archive

Stars of the evening were FOHRK's patrons Hugh Dennis and Claire Skinner. Hugh gave an entertaining and thoughtful account of More 4's 'Presenting the Great British Dig: History in your Garden' which stressed how engagement with archaeology can bring communities together; Claire then joined him to play his granddaughter in a light-hearted sketch of how life might have been for potters in the Wood in AD156.



Most Muswell Hill residents will be aware of the work of Ben Wilson 'the Chewing Gum Man'. Here is one of his artworks made for MHFGA member Ruth Edwards to commemorate her 80th birthday. He managed to incorporate into the tiny design references to two of her hobbies, painting and playing the violin, as well as the Parkland Railway bridge nearby, her initials and the date.

## Members' Meetings

**Thursday 17th March, at 7.45pm**

**Opera houses, concert halls and theatres from 1950 to 2020.** This talk will look at theatre buildings including opera houses and concert halls and how they have evolved and changed over the last 70 years. It will start with a Greek amphitheatre and finish with a 20 seat amphitheatre in Slovenia. It will embrace many of the most significant theatres of this period and explore how architecture was changed by the TWA Flight Centre at New York's Idlewild (now JFK) Airport and its influence on the Sydney Opera House.

Our speaker, **David Staples**, an MHFGA member, was a theatre consultant advising clients, architects and governments on the building of new theatres, concert halls and opera houses around the world having worked in 67 countries. For the past seven years he has been collaborating with 41 people from 14 countries to create a book – *Modern Theatres 1950 – 2020*.

**Thursday 12th May, at 7.45pm**

**AGM** at the United Reform Church Hall in Tetherdown, Refreshments will be served. The agenda will be published in our next issue. If there are any issues that you would like to go on the agenda, please contact MHFGA Secretary John Crompton by the end of April.

**Sunday 12th June, at 11.00am**

A walk around Kenwood with Peter Barber. This walk was postponed from June 2020. In March 2019 Peter conducted a fascinating walk for our members in the grounds of Waterlow Park and explained the history of Lauderdale House. We look forward to another interesting outing with Peter this summer.

## Change of Membership Secretary

We are sorry to lose Richard Marmalade from his role as Membership Secretary. Richard joined the Committee two years ago and was responsible for the introduction of a new computerised membership system. He also records our Committee meetings if the Minutes Secretary cannot attend, and our Members' Meetings on Zoom so that we can more accurately report on the meetings in this Newsletter.

Richard is moving away from London and we wish him every happiness in his future endeavours as well as thanking him for all his hard work.

We would like to extend a warm welcome to Lara Maisey who will be taking over this very important role at our Committee meeting in mid-March. We will run a profile on Lara in our next issue.

## North Bank for Sale!

See page 6



## MHFGA Committee

### Chairman

John Hajdu MBE  
chairman@mhfga.org

### Planning/Vice Chairman

Nick Barr  
planning@mhfga.org

### Secretary/CAAC/Alexandra Palace Statutory Advisory Committee

John Crompton  
secretary@mhfga.org

### Chair of the Consultative Committee, Alexandra Palace, Twitter

Duncan Neill  
ap@mhfga.org

### Treasurer

treasurer@mhfga.org

### Membership Secretary

Lara Maisey  
membership@mhfga.org

### Environment/Green Spaces

Brian Livingston  
environment@mhfga.org

### Transport/Highway /Photo Archives

Anthony Wells  
transport@mhfga.org

### Publicity and Events

George Danker  
events@mhfga.org

### Website

Alex Vincenti  
webmaster@mhfga.org

### Newsletter Editor

Christine Morris  
editor@mhfga.org

### Social Media/Notice Board

Zoe Norfolk  
social@mhfga.org

### Minutes Secretary

Laura Bugden

### Tree Office

Jonathan Popper  
treeofficer@mhfga.org

### Graffiti

If you wish to report graffiti or flyposting, please go to the "Report It" section at [www.haringey.gov.uk](http://www.haringey.gov.uk) and enter the details there.



[www.facebook.com/MHFGA](http://www.facebook.com/MHFGA)  
(over 1,900 followers)



[@theMHFGA](https://twitter.com/theMHFGA)  
(over 1,000 followers)



[@mhfga](https://www.instagram.com/mhfga)  
(400 followers)

Visit our website [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) for lots of information about the local area including old photos, early films and John Hajdu's history of the Association. If you have a photo or news item why not share it with our members on Twitter [@theMHFGA](https://twitter.com/theMHFGA) or visit [www.twitter.com/theMHFGA](http://www.twitter.com/theMHFGA). We tweet regularly on Association and local news, so please follow and spread the word. And don't forget our Facebook page [www.facebook.com/MHFGA](http://www.facebook.com/MHFGA)!

## Member Profile

### Ian Christie

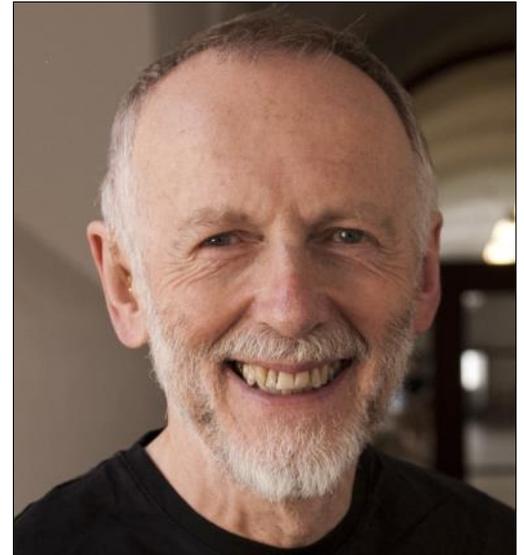
I feel slightly fraudulent to be a member of the Association, as I live down the hill in Crouch End. But Muswell Hill has been very much a focus of my interest and research for nearly two decades. In fact, I spent so much time walking around Sydney Road and nearby roads some years ago that one resident asked if I was lost, and someone else offered me a cup of tea.

My reason for prowling the area was researching where Robert Paul, the film pioneer and electrical entrepreneur, had been based for most of the Edwardian period. As I hope many Association members now know, Paul and his wife Ellen moved from central London to what was then a developing suburb in 1898. My late friend Roland-François Lack, who himself lived on Colney Hatch Lane, managed to establish that the Pauls moved quite frequently over the following years, before building their own house on Sydney Road – although only after Paul had closed down his film business in 1909. However, the very successful electrical instrument business continued until at least the 1950s, after which the access road he had created became Cambridge Gardens with a new housing development.

My years of research on Paul involved chasing up many blind alleys, since the Pauls seems to have been distinctly private, with no known descendants and a remarkable talent for staying out of local newspapers. But for a 2006 BBC television programme about the early years of British cinema, I persuaded the director that we should film on location, trying to evoke what the area must have been like around 1900, when the studio was operating. We also succeeded in getting permission to film on Muswell Hill golf course, where Paul staged some 'Reproductions of Incidents of the Boer War' in late 1899, while waiting for footage to come in from the Cape.

As a film and media historian, Paul hasn't been the only focus of my work, but he's certainly given me lasting interest in local history. Before my wife and I moved from Ladbroke Grove to Endymion Road in 1978, we didn't even realise that Finsbury Park was an actual park. At that time I was working for the British Film Institute, having previously taught in art colleges in Derby and Nottingham. I was born in Northern Ireland, and had left Belfast after graduating from Queen's University, where I devoted more time than was wise to student drama, and publishing the work of emerging young writers such as Stewart Parker and Seamus Heaney.

In England, my student interest in film coincided with a growing movement to bring this into education. After teaching film history to art students and in Extramural classes, I worked in programming The BFI's cinemas around Britain, and was lucky enough to enter the secretive world of film distribution, while it was still based in Soho. I also got an early start in video publishing, and helped the BFI celebrate the 'centenary of cinema' in 1996. Which led me to our unacknowledged pioneer, and my historic neighbour, Robert Paul.



### Once upon a time in Muswell Hill...



### ...a studio and an industry were born

In 1898, Robert Paul and his wife Ellen, a former Alhambra dancer, bought a four-acre field in the new suburb of Muswell Hill. They planned to create what would be one of the world's first studios 'designed for kinematograph work', with space 'for taking subjects on a more ambitious scale than was possible' in the city centre, where they'd started. And for the next ten years they did just that, producing over 800 films, many of them

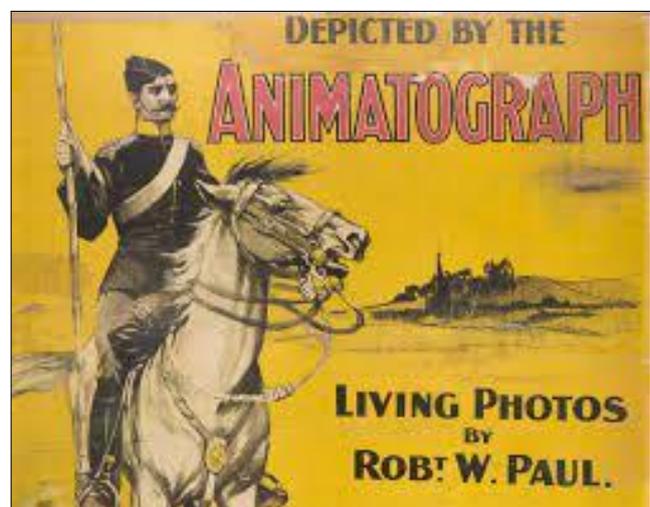
technically and dramatically ground-breaking. They also trained the next generation of Britain's filmmakers, and this was the first of the studios that would eventually circle London.

So why don't we know more about them, and the studio? Come along and find out. Open hours: Monday – Friday: 1PM – 7PM. Saturday 1PM – 5PM. Sunday 12PM – 4PM.



Haringey  
LONDON

This exhibition, which ran throughout February at Hornsey Library, has been extended into March. Don't miss the opportunity to learn more about Robert Paul and his legacy.



## Update on Queen's Wood Flood Management Plan - February 2022

### from Friends of Queen's Wood (FQW)



Photo by Zoe Norfolk

After a lull of several weeks, the Council's engagement with us has perked up. Last October FQW had put forward ideas on how the scheme might be improved. These would entail primarily re-siting some of the berms, reducing their number and reconfiguring the works in the area of, and downstream of, the Dogpool as well as around the area of the Wood Vale entrance. Even then some major elements of the scheme had yet to be clarified and resolved, such as the works around and upstream of the Frogpool.

At the beginning of February the Council at last confirmed that these ideas would form the basis of the further work needed prior to finalisation of the scheme. They set out a timetable for this work with a view to a start being made on implementation on 1 June. They also confirmed that the scheme had been put into the hands of a dedicated project team – welcome news to us.

There is still a lot to do before the scheme can be regarded as fit for purpose and not cause unacceptable damage to the Wood. We want to ensure that the process and timetable provide the opportunity for full engagement with the Council before any decision is taken to go ahead. Unfortunately we have not yet even seen any detailed designs based on the new ideas, so already the timetable seems to be extremely tight. We have raised a number of concerns in this regard and expect to be discussing the timetable and process at a remote meeting in the near future.

In the meantime the Council has at last published the report on its consultation last spring - a mere nine months after the date due under its consultation code. It can be found on the Council's website at [https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/queens\\_wood\\_nfm\\_scheme\\_da\\_report\\_-\\_february\\_2022\\_0.pdf](https://www.haringey.gov.uk/sites/haringeygovuk/files/queens_wood_nfm_scheme_da_report_-_february_2022_0.pdf). Be warned: it is

188 pages long. The most interesting thing is that the number of objections to the scheme was 300, compared with supportive responses at 51. No wonder the Council is having to make the effort to listen to us!

## Report from our Transport Officer

### Low Traffic Neighbourhoods (LTN)

The Association has agreed to work together with the Highgate Society and Other Groups to review the Haringey Walking and Cycling Plan.

There are concerns that the review process has been dominated by the very powerful cycling lobby. They are well organised with the result that there was a very high proportion of grade 5 (very high) approval ratings for them in the action plan. However, almost universally, those who did not identify cycling as a means of getting around opposed the action plan and gave very well-argued reasons why. What is even more concerning is the Bounds Green case where the LTN was recently imposed in spite of a 65% vote against it.



Not enough consideration seems to have been given to the needs of older members of society and the disabled.

No account seems to have been taken of the hilly nature of Muswell Hill, Highgate and Crouch End.

It has been suggested that the Council are trying to rush this through prior to the May Elections.

### Alexandra Park West Proposed CPZ

While there has been no official announcement from the Council, it has been reported that, following the period of consultation, a response rate exceeding the minimum required was achieved for a decision to be reached, and of the roads consulted none reached the minimum threshold in favour of parking controls.

Tony Wells

## News from our Tree Officer

### What to do if you see a tree being felled

If it's a street tree or in a park or nature reserve, just ask the man with the chain saw, why it's being felled. They will normally be very happy to tell you and there may even be a notice up about it. If you're not happy with the answer, do let me know.

If it's on private land, given that most of us live in a conservation area, you should ask the owner if they have permission from the Council. If you don't want to risk a confrontation, you can check on the council website:

<http://www.planningservices.haringey.gov.uk/portal/servlets/TPOSearchServlet> - just click on the "Tree Preservation Order" search and type in the address.

If they've sought and obtained permission, that's great. But if they haven't you can either contact the council directly or let me know. And take some photos of before and after. If it's an emergency, and an attractive tree is being felled without permission, you can try to get the council to intervene by using the planning emergency website:

<https://www.haringey.gov.uk/contact/out-hours-emergencies/planning-emergencies>



Photo by Zoe Norfolk



Photo by Zoe Norfolk

### Tree planting at Fortis Green Reservoir and Pumping Station

Following on from a visit to the site in the Autumn, I have continued the conversation with Thames Water about tree planting at Fortis Green reservoir and pumping station. There is a range of opportunities for new planting at Fortis Green reservoir and Woodside Avenue pumping station. There is also a range of outstanding actions from Thames Water arborists which need to be funded and completed before any new planting is installed. Some arboricultural action is expected before bird-nesting season begins, and we hope that tree planting will commence in the 2022/23 planting season. If so, we'll be looking for members of the Association to bring their spades to join in the tree planting.

I am now working with two local groups seeking to protect trees in the Borough: Community Tree Protectors, a group which organised direct action to stop tree felling, most recently in Queens Wood and Parkland Walk; and SHIFT, a group which is seeking to persuade Haringey to be more proactive and protective in managing our trees.

Jonathan Popper

## Membership

### New Members

Welcome to our new household members: Lara Maisey, Christopher White, Veronica and Nick Sanderson, Diana Stoker, Patrick Watson, Verity Coyle and Brenda Allan.

Ambitious About Autism	Friends of St. James's Square	Muswell Hill Pharmacy	Socials For My Business
Angela Rose	Gibfit 30	Muswell Hill United Reformed Church	St James's Muswell Hill
Baby Sensory	Green & Blossoms	Muswell Hillbilly Brewers	Studio Moe Ltd
Barnet Furniture Centre	Green's of Highgate	North London Chorus	Tatlers Estate Agents
Barron Salon	Harington Scheme	North London Symphony Orchestra	The Hampstead Butcher & Providore
Bob's Café	Hollickwood Primary School	Panoptica - MH Optical Ltd	The Mossy Well
Broadway Pet Stores	Hopper & Bean	Picture Framing Muswell Hill	The People's Pantry
Broadway Pharmacy	House of Books	Planet Organic	The Real Greek
Bund Chinese Restaurant	House of Nails	Point 5 Kitchens	The Robin Kiashek Osteopathic Clinics
Capital Gardens	JHK Estate Agents	Rhodes Avenue Primary School	Toffs
Children's Bookshop	Lambert Welch Kitchens	Robert Linsky Optometrist	Victory Auto Services
Clissold Arms	La'De Kitchen	Roni's Bagel Bakery	W Martyn
Cosi Homewares	Laytons (Jeraboams)	Rowan Antiques	Walter Purkis & Sons
Dunn's Artisan Bakers Ltd	Le Pot de Terre	S&D Express	WAVE Café
East Finchley Open Artists	Men at 107	Sable d'Or Patisserie	White Tusk Studios
Everyman Muswell Hill	Misk Boutique	Sally Bourne Interiors	Woodland Tree Surgery
Fierce Grace Hot Yoga	Muswell Flyer	Snappy Snaps	Yogamatters
Firkins Chimney Sweeps	Muswell Hill Bowling Club		
Freehold Community Association	Muswell Hill Creatives		
	Muswell Hill Methodist Church		

## February Members' Meeting

### North Bank for Sale!

Gill Simpson, Church Community Worker at Muswell Hill Methodist Church, treated members to a fascinating talk on the history of North Bank, the beautiful house and grounds in Pages Lane, which was gifted to the national Methodist Church by previous owner Guy Chester.

The house, built in the 1850s, was variously called The Gothic Villa, The Hermitage, and finally Northbank. In 1868, the house was sold to John Rock who died of TB in 1871 at the young age of 27. The house was then put up for sale and purchased by William Cooke, a carpet manufacturer from Yorkshire, whose bachelor son, Samuel, lived in the house until his death in 1924 aged 70.

Guy Chester, a local Methodist and supporter of the YMCA which was based at North Bank, rescued the property and its grounds from the likely purchase by property developers. Guy completed restoration of the house by 1932 and, together with the Methodist Church around the corner at the junction of Colney Hatch Lane and Alexandra Park Road, developed plans for the house to become a centre for youth activity, education and spiritual development.

In the 1980s, structural problems forced the church to sell up, the proceeds of the sale being used to fund the building of a new church adjacent to North Bank.

Gill and her husband Brian have done an enormous amount of research on North Bank and its history. Space doesn't permit a fuller report on Gill's talk, but more information can be found at

<https://mhmc.org.uk/wp-content/uploads/2018/10/OurInheritance.pdf> and a recording of the talk is on our website at <https://mhfga.org/category/catchup/>.

## Meet the MHFGA Committee

The MHFGA Committee meets 6 times a year and organises 4 members' meetings, a local walk and the AGM in May. Your Committee works very hard on behalf of the Muswell Hill community and we thought it would be of interest to explain the different areas they cover.

**Chairman** – John Hajdu.

**Planning/Vice-chairman** – Nick Barr scrutinises scores of planning applications for the area and comments and/or makes objections on behalf of the Association.

**Secretary/Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC) /Alexandra Palace Statutory Advisory Committee (APSAC)** - John Crompton has a special interest in the Muswell Hill conservation area. He is a member of both the CAAC and the APSAC which gives our Association a voice in these areas.

**Chair of the Consultative Committee - Alexandra Palace, Twitter** – Duncan Neill is the Association's representative on Alexandra Palace matters, and also looks after our Twitter account.

**Membership Secretary** – Following Richard Marmalade's move out of Muswell Hill (*see page 2*), Lara Maisey has recently taken on the vital role of keeping membership records up to date. The role involves working closely with our Treasurer. We will be profiling Lara in our next issue.

**Environment/Green Spaces** - Brian Livingston is responsible for maintaining the flower boxes at the Muswell Hill roundabout, the cattle trough opposite the library, the pocket park opposite The Village Pub, and the Colney Hatch Lane beds. Brian maintains close contact with the Parks Department and reports such items as potholes, graffiti, blocked gullies and damaged street furniture. He works with a team of volunteers.

**Transport/Highway** - Tony Wells keeps an eye on traffic and transport issues in our area, and holds our shop front photographic archive.

**Publicity and Events** - George Danker informs members of any local issues and events organised by the Association. He also sends out press releases and helps with the organisation of members' meetings.

**Website** - Alex Vincenti is our web manager and keeps our website up to date with archived material as well as recording statistics and ensuring the security of the site (*see page 7*).

**Newsletter Editor** - Christine Morris collates articles for the bi-monthly Newsletter, produces the finished product using desktop publishing software, sends it out electronically and liaises with the printer. She also puts together the occasional article on the history of the area.

**Social Media/Notice Board** - Zoe Norfolk, a professional photographer, regularly posts information and photos on our social media platforms (Facebook and Instagram) and looks after our noticeboard next to Sainsbury's. She introduced the Odd One Out competition which attracted many young participants and helped raise the profile of local shops. She hopes to run the competition again at some point.

**Minutes Secretary** - Laura Bugden produces accurate minutes at our bi-monthly meetings in a very professional manner.

**Tree Officer** - Jonathan Popper, a recent recruit to this new role, keeps a very close eye on all issues relating to trees in our area.

Many man/woman hours go into the community work of the Association, and all members are committed to their particular roles.

## Local Organisations

### ST JAMES'S CHURCH

St James's Church Legal Advice Centre and its sister organisation Coppetts and Colney Legal Advice Centre (in Wilton Community Church) provide free legal advice on all issues, including immigration and the legal requirements of the Coronavirus Act 2020. Their drop-in sessions **[Monday and Saturday mornings at St James's and Tuesday morning at Wilton]** are suspended for the duration but they continue to provide a free legal advice service by email 24/7 at [pt.anythinglegal@gmail.com](mailto:pt.anythinglegal@gmail.com) and [coppettslegal@gmail.com](mailto:coppettslegal@gmail.com).

### FRIENDS OF QUEEN'S WOOD

Friends of Queen's Wood are volunteers who support and care for the wood. Do join the Friends!

**Sunday 24 April 2pm** Wild Flower walk with David Bevan.

**Friday 28 May 8pm** Set up moth traps by torchlight with Dan Hackett.

**Saturday May 29: 9.30am** Identify and free moths from previous night.

For all events meet outside Lodge Cafe off Muswell Hill.

[fqw.org.uk](http://fqw.org.uk)

### NORTH LONDON EPILEPSY ACTION

Contact Barbara Penney 020 8883 0010 or e-mail [barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:barbarapenney@yahoo.co.uk)

### HORNSEY PENSIONERS ACTION GROUP

Contact Ann Anderson (020 8340 8335) or [www.hornseypensionersactiongroup.org.uk](http://www.hornseypensionersactiongroup.org.uk).

### HORNSEY HISTORICAL SOCIETY

[www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk](http://www.hornseyhistorical.org.uk)

Local History Surgery. Phone 020 8348 8429 or email [hornseyhistoricalsurgery@gmail.com](mailto:hornseyhistoricalsurgery@gmail.com) with a brief outline of the problem.

### HIGHGATE CHORAL SOCIETY

Saturday 12 March 7pm Bruckner, Faure and Mozart. All Hallows Church, Savernake Road, London NW3 2JP

21 May 7pm Faure Requiem. St Michael's Church Highgate, South Grove, London N6 6BJ

[www.hcschoir.com](http://www.hcschoir.com).

### MUSWELL HILL & DISTRICT HORTICULTURAL SOCIETY

Contact: Jenny Kruss on 020 8442 0031 or

[bloomngn10@outlook.com](mailto:bloomngn10@outlook.com).

### MUSWELL HILL PHOTOGRAPHIC SOCIETY

[www.muswellhillphoto.org.uk](http://www.muswellhillphoto.org.uk) or email

[contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk](mailto:contact@muswellhillphoto.org.uk).

### MUSWELL HILL BOWLING CLUB

King's Avenue N10 1PB (next to No. 36).

[www.muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk](http://www.muswellhillbowlingclub.co.uk) – or call Richard Johnstone on 07986 873312 or e-mail [richardjohnstone@gmail.com](mailto:richardjohnstone@gmail.com).

### THE FREEHOLD COMMUNITY CENTRE

9 Alexandra Road, N10 2EY. Please check at

[www.familiesonline.co.uk/local/barnet/listing/freehold-community-centre-195857](http://www.familiesonline.co.uk/local/barnet/listing/freehold-community-centre-195857) or

[freehold2003@gmail.com](mailto:freehold2003@gmail.com) or ring 07935 324578.

### ALEXANDRA PALACE AND PARK

The Alexandra Park Visitor Centre near the Grove car park is open **every Sunday** between **2 and 4pm**. The Centre will be well-ventilated and we will ask visitors to wear a face covering.

### UNIVERSITY OF THE THIRD AGE NORTH LONDON for the

retired or those heading to retirement: [www.nlu3a.org.uk](http://www.nlu3a.org.uk)

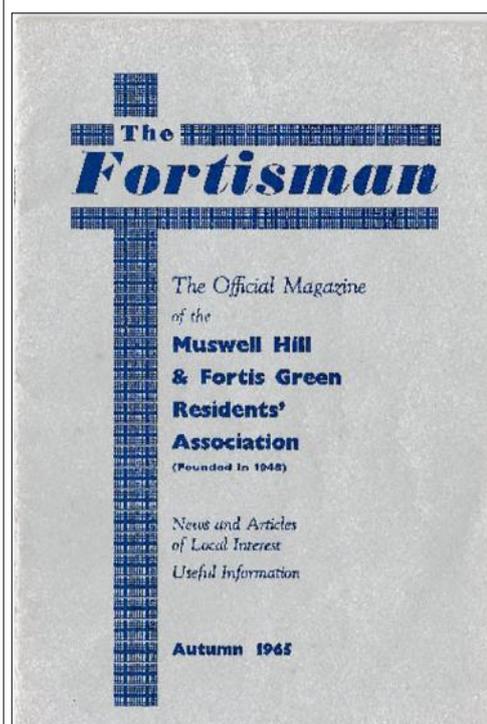
### WEA MUSWELL HILL

For details visit [www.wea.org.uk](http://www.wea.org.uk) or see brochures in libraries.

### MUSWELL HILL CHILD CONTACT CENTRE

The Contact Centre which is attached to the Methodist Church in Pages Lane, provides a friendly and supportive place where the children of separated parents can meet their non resident parent in a neutral and safe space on Saturday mornings.

Further information can be obtained from our website <https://mhmc-contactcentre.org.uk> or by email at [contact\\_centre@mhmc.org.uk](mailto:contact_centre@mhmc.org.uk). Apart from a £20 referral fee the service is free.



## MHFGA Website: New for 2022

After refreshing our help pages (if you haven't done so yet, go to [www.mhfga.org](http://www.mhfga.org) Links tab to see what's new), it's now the time to give everybody a chance to catch up with missed Zoom talks. A new page is now available on <https://mhfga.org/category/catchup/> to show audio/video recordings of talks, the first being the fascinating presentation by Ian Christie on Robert Paul and the birth of cinema in Muswell Hill.

A reminder also that our Newsletters are available online. Aside from the last two issues, reserved for members, all others are freely available to the public. At present, on <https://mhfga.org/category/newsletters/>, you can browse through every Newsletter published since September 2011, more than ten years' unique history of planning, the environment, transport and general local news of Muswell Hill, Fortis Green and Alexandra wards. In the next few months, more than 200 issues will be added, going back to 1965 and the publication of *The Fortisman*, as it was called at the time. Incidentally, there appears to be a gap in our records between Fortisman of Summer 1970 and the Newsletter of May 1976. Does anyone have copies from that period? The current archive is in the process of being scanned and will be soon available online.

Watch this space!

*Alex Vincenti*

## From our Archive

By Christine Morris

### From Highgate to Hornsey



Among the items from our archive that John Hajdu handed over to me when I became Newsletter Editor 6 years ago was a delightful booklet called *From Highgate to Hornsey, a portrait in old picture postcards*, by Ken Gay and Dick Whetstone, published in 1989. The following is taken from its introduction, written by Ken Gay.

Situated some five miles or so north of London, the Middlesex parish of Hornsey, now absorbed in the London Borough of Haringey, was still rural in the third quarter of the 19<sup>th</sup> century. The 1873 Ordnance Survey map shows little urban development, with fields and open spaces still dividing the village centres of Hornsey, Crouch End, Muswell Hill and Highgate. Settlement tended to be in the form of villas and small estates for prosperous Londoners who wanted a convenient retirement home in the countryside.

Unlike Highgate, Islington, Hackney and Hornsey, Muswell Hill was not built up until early in the 20<sup>th</sup> century. However, the spread of houses was not total and the area is fortunate in retaining some large open spaces such as Finsbury Park, Highgate Wood, Queen's Wood and Coldfall Woods. The latter was originally much larger but there are still remnants accessible from Creighton Avenue.

Four hundred acres of Tottenham Wood farm stretched to the north of Hornsey parish, much of it to become Alexandra Park, opened in 1863, and Muswell Hill golf course, opened in 1893. Alexandra Palace was opened in 1893 and its financial failures with 19<sup>th</sup> century owners sometimes meant that land was sold off from the Park to provide funds. But since 1901 the Park had been preserved by Act of Parliament in local authority ownership.

### The Borough Arms of Hornsey

The Borough Arms are illustrated here on a postcard published by Stoddart & Co of Halifax in their 'Ja-Ja' heraldic series which covered almost every city and town in the British Isles. Hornsey became a chartered borough in the County of Middlesex in 1903, having been previously administered as an urban district (1894), a local board of health (1867) and as a parish. The borough existed until 1965 when it joined with the boroughs of Wood Green and Tottenham to form the London Borough of Haringey. The coat of arms was granted in 1904, the oak trees denoting Hornsey's historic association with woodlands and the motto meaning 'Stronger by which more prepared'. The heraldic description is '*Per chevron argent and gules, in chief two oak trees eradicated proper and in base two swords in saltire proper, the latter pommelled and hilted or*'.



### Muswell Hill Roundabout in 1890...

...looking towards the top of the Hill and the Green Man, seen on the right. This junction was once known as the Plantation, occupying a site where there once had been a village pond. When the suburb was built, at the end of the 19<sup>th</sup> century, Queens Avenue and Dukes Avenue were added to the meeting place of Muswell Hill Road (now Broadway), Muswell Hill and Colney Hatch Lane, making a five road junction.

**Copy date for May/June 2022 edition of this Newsletter**

If you would like to submit an article, letter, picture or diary date for our next edition, please send your copy to [editor@mhfga.org](mailto:editor@mhfga.org) by 1st April 2022.