

EDMONTON HUNDRED HISTORICAL SOCIETY

Founded in 1936 to promote and foster interest in local history in
Edmonton Enfield Potters Bar Southgate South Mimms Tottenham Wood Green Monken Hadley



February 2023

Newsletter

Our next meeting will be on **Wednesday 15th February**
2.30pm at **Jubilee Hall, 2 Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ**

Doors open at 2 pm.

Refreshments available before the meeting. Please come early to ensure a seat.

Turner and the Pre-Raphaelites in Tottenham: The collection of Benjamin Godfrey Windus

by Margaret Burr

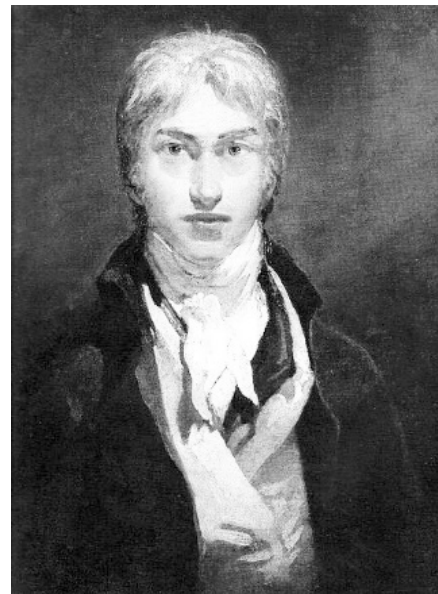
B.G. Windus owned a collection of over 200 Turner watercolours which he opened to the public; they were particularly fine as they were the source of the engravings for Turner's publications. John Ruskin acknowledged that access to these paintings enabled him to write *'Modern Painters'*.

Later Windus sold the Turners and became an early collector of the Pre-Raphaelites – his purchases included *Ophelia* (now in the Tate), *The Scapegoat* (Lady Lever, Liverpool) and *The Last of England* (Birmingham).

Margaret Burr is a Tottenham resident and admirer of J.M.W. Turner with an interest in local history. She has previously given the talk for Bruce Castle Museum and the National Portrait Gallery and has been invited to talk to the Turner Society.

www.turnerintottenham.uk

Free to members.
£2 minimum donation requested from visitors



Public Domain

J.M.W. Turner, self-portrait,
c.1799

Annual General Meeting

Our Annual General Meeting will be on **Wednesday 15th March at 8pm** (doors open 7.30pm). An agenda and minutes of the AGM held 20th April 2022 are attached. Please note we are not asking for subscriptions

After business our **President Dr Jim Lewis** will give a talk.

Visit to Luke Howard's grave at Winchmore Hill

This month's Turner in Tottenham speaker Margaret Burr will also give us a talk later in the year on the 'Namer of Clouds', Luke Howard of Tottenham. We are currently celebrating his 250th Anniversary year (28 November 1772). As part of that I shall lead a Tottenham Clouds group next month to visit his grave in Winchmore Hill. EHHS members are also invited. It is hoped this can take place on 21 March, the anniversary of his death in 1864. Details in our next newsletter.

Rachael Macdonald

Diary Dates - talks and events arranged by other organisations

Tuesday 14th February. 2-4 pm. Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, Tottenham, N17 8NU. Reminiscence Café. Wooing with Love Hearts. It's that time of the year again when we see ever more sophisticated adverts for ever more sophisticated gifts to give our loved ones on Valentine's Day. But I have a preference for the simpler adverts of my childhood. Most were aimed at adults; betting and beer, soap powder and scents, and many different brands of cigarettes. What adverts and bygone products do you remember most ?

Bruce Castle Museum

Tuesday 14th February. Online only. 8pm
That "Epidemical Madness": Women and Elections in 18th Century England
Professor Elaine Chalus (University of Liverpool)

Historical Association

Monday 20th February. 8pm. Jubilee Hall, Parsonage Lane, Enfield, EN2 0AJ
The Mercenary River. (also available on zoom for TES members)
Nick Higham

The Enfield Society

Farewell to the Trams in Enfield By Chris Whippe

In 1938 all the tram routes in Enfield and its surrounding area ceased to exist.

It started in May of 1938 when the last tram, route No.29, left Enfield Town for Tottenham Court Road via Winchmore Hill for the last time; this service was replaced by a trolley bus route No.629.

It cost money to replace the rattling trams, new extra overhead electric wires had to be installed and supporting poles erected.

The trolley buses were quieter than the trams and carried about 70 passengers. Their only problem was that if they tried to overtaking another trolley their poles would jump the wires.

By the following October trams had vanished from the routes serving Waltham Cross and the City of London. They were the No.59 Waltham Cross to Holborn Circus and the No.79 Waltham Cross to Smithfield. The No.79 also ran along Southbury Road to Enfield Town. These were replaced by trolley bus routes No.659 and 679, but the section of the No.79 route which ran to Enfield Town ceased to exist.

The end of 1938 saw the final demise of the remaining trams in the Enfield area. Tram route No.27, Tottenham Court Road to Edmonton, and route No.49A, Ponders End to Stamford Hill,

were converted to trolley bus routes, No.627 and No.649 respectively. With the end of the trams at Edmonton, the Tramway Avenue Depot became the trolley bus garage.



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The last tram at Enfield Town, May 1938

Footnote.

In 1961 London Transport in their wisdom scrapped the Enfield trolley buses and replaced them with noisy and dirty diesel buses. But their numbers live on as school bus journeys, one being 629 Palmers Green to St. Ignatius College, Great Cambridge Road/Turkey Street.



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No. 629 trolley at Enfield Town

I do not remember the old trams but recollect travelling on a 629 trolley bus to Camden Town to get to London Zoo, when I was a little kid.

First published by the Enfield and District Veteran Vehicle Trust

The Fire Brigade in Winchmore Hill

Stuart Delvin

I was interested to read about Enfield Fire Brigade in the December issue of the newsletter. My own interest is in Winchmore Hill. In June 2019 I paid a visit to Philip McGriskin of Rowantree, on the south side of the Green, Winchmore Hill, to discuss the history of his house. The premises date from at least the 18th century and were originally one house known as Woodside. It was split into two probably in the 1880s, the section furthest from The Green retaining the old name Woodside, the more easterly premises being named Rowantree. Philip said that his enquiries led him to believe that the single storeyed building (shown on the right in the photo) was in fact the late 19th century fire station.



Woodside House Winchmore Hill Green

Stuart Delvin 2019 ©

Horace Regnart in his *Memories of Winchmore Hill* (1952) says that when the Kings Head was being built in its present form in the late 1890s, a fire station was built alongside adjoining Devon House.

In the 1901-2 directory the fire station was indicated alongside The King's Head, on Church Hill. By the time of the 1914-15 edition of the directory it was listed as the 'Southgate Urban District Council Fire Brigade Station', rather than as simply a fire station. The new name was used in the 1925 directory. However, by the time of the 1928 edition of the fire station had disappeared.

At pages 89-90 of my *Winchmore Hill Lives* (A Collection of Recollections) of 1991, are parts of the accounts given by Mr and Mrs Surtees. Keith Surtees said Downes used to graze the horses he used for his coal carts in the fields behind Woodside. He said that during his father's younger days (b.1883) Downes's horses were also used to transport the fire engine kept by The King's Head in Church Hill.

Mr Salmon the plumber was captain of the fire brigade. He had lived in one of the cottages alongside the Kings Head until they were demolished to make way for the new The King's Head and the fire station. He moved to no.26 The Green (more latterly called The Larder), which I understand he built, along with Nos. 20,22 and 24, in 1895, as commemorated in a plaque between 22 and 24.

My late friend Lucy Pettifer, nee Maynard, who was born near The Green in 1901, says at p.76 of *Winchmore Hill Lives*, 'I also remember Salmon testing out the old fire engine one evening a week by driving it round and round The Green before raising the ladders to the windows of the flat over his shop.'



Enfield Local Studies & Archive ©

Fire station between Devon House and the Kings Head on Winchmore Hill Green

The Water Babies of Enfield

Ian Jones

Over the last few years there has been much talk about the benefits and joys of so-called 'wild swimming.' However, until the opening of the first swimming pools in this area at the end of the 19th century this was the only way in which adults and children living away from the coast and its beaches could swim and play in the water especially in hot weather, particularly those unable to afford even the odd day out at places like Southend. The first swimming facility in the district seems to have been the one opened at Enfield Lock sometime in the 1890's, largely financed by donations from workers at the Royal Small Arms factory. This was followed in 1905 by the open-air pool in the Town Park but then there was a long gap before Southbury Road opened in 1932 followed by Barrowell Green the next year.

One unexpected oddity of the Victorian Age was that in general men and boys still swam naked though the pressure for men to wear a costume led to the practice being banned for adults in the 1860's. Children, including teenagers, continued as before with the practice not finally starting to die away until the early part of the 20th century. The desirability and great dangers, both physical and moral of this wild swimming, especially when child bathers could not swim, exercised both correspondents and editors in the Observer from within a few years of its foundation. Although this article is concerned with children's swimming, it should be remembered that far more adult men died in such accidents during this period though these rarely attracted more than a short mention in the local press.

On September 1st 1869 a tragic but by no means uncommon case involving children was brought before the local magistrates.

Two lads, Henry Stanley age 11 from George's Row, Bunhill, and William Mason age 10 from Hackney Wick were charged with begging at Bull's Cross. A painful story, as given by the boys and others was, that on the 13th ult, (13th August) they, in company with another boy, Edward Frost, left London and followed some vans down to the Rye House. They begged by the way, slept in the fields that night and on returning by Bullsmore Lane the next day, Frost stripped and went into the New River to bathe; he got out of his depth and was drowned. His two companions called for assistance which soon came in the person of Mr. Hull's foreman who got the lad out; medical assistance was obtained but the unfortunate lad was passed recovery. P.C. Head, seeing the present offenders begging about detained them, as he said, principally to secure their evidence at the inquest which was held this day and a verdict of accidental death returned. Both boys were discharged with a caution.



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The Greyhound public house on the corner of Ordnance Road, where the Victoria Swimming Club was founded in 1887

There were other incidents of this sort over the next decades and I imagine it was in part to help prevent such tragedies that the **Victoria Swimming Club** founded in 1887 at the Greyhound in Ordnance Road had taught hundreds of boys to swim by 1895.

Local bye laws made the practice illegal but a few cases appeared before the local magistrates like this example reported on the 22nd July 1873:- *Henry Street, High Road, Enfield Highway was charged with bathing at the brook in Turkey Street on the 22nd ult. The boy said he did not know he was doing wrong; on promising not to repeat the offence he was dismissed.*



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Playing beside Turkey Brook

Probably most such cases never came anywhere near the magistrates as a telling off from a local constable was probably judged to be sufficient. However, in circumstances where there were many witnesses including ladies a more forceful approach was seen here with the paper both reporting a case on 12th August 1876 and following it up with an editorial comment on the 19th.

THE BATHING NUISANCE AT EDMONTON

W. Wright, W. Riley, J. Patmore and W. Rogers were summoned for behaving in an improper manner by bathing in the gravel pit between Edmonton and Silver Street stations. Mr. E. Moore, solicitor, appeared for the Great Eastern Railway Company. The case was clearly proved and Mr. Moore said the Company had no desire to have the defendants sent to prison and were willing to withdraw the summons if they paid the expenses and apologised. It was their first offence and the Company wished only to have the practice put a stop to. The Bench pointed out what punishment the defendants had rendered themselves liable to by their disgraceful behaviour and said that if they were brought up again, they would be severely dealt with. The summonses were then dismissed on the conditions mentioned.

The subsequent editorial showed the problem involved more than the four youths mentioned above and called for action. *A few weeks ago Mr. E. Moore, solicitor.....in making his application he informed the magistrates that numerous complaints had been made by passengers of the disgraceful behaviour of a lot of young men and boys who were in the habit of frequenting the place in question, which the reader is probably aware is passed between Edmonton and Silver Street stations and quite adjacent to the line.....Notwithstanding the leniency I notice that the same thing is still carried on and the same disgraceful conduct witnessed . If there was any excuse in the first instance there surely ought to be none now. The bathers are there more or less throughout the day in full view of the passing trains, many of them being apparently of an age which render their indecorous conduct still less excusable. No countenance must be given to those who persist in doing what they know to be wrong and we hope the Company will take decisive steps so as to ensure the comfort of the passengers and teach these individuals that they cannot break the law with impunity.*

Unfortunately, it is not clear what, if any action was taken.

Tottenham Board of Health steps up

The obvious solution was to create somewhere safe for bathers which could be shielded from the public and possibly the first moves in this direction were apparently taken in Tottenham at a meeting of the **Tottenham Board of Health** reported in the **Observer on June 30th 1877**.

Mr. Clarke would like to see a committee formed with a view to ascertaining whether they could not get some concession from either the New River Company or the East London Waterworks Company for bathers. They were constantly hearing of people losing their lives through bathing in dangerous places. Cleanliness was next to godliness and he thought the Board should encourage bathing. He thought the officials of one or other company would agree to such proposition if the Board were to wait upon them. They would all agree with him that working men and working lads should have an opportunity of bathing. It would be an immense boon not only to the men but to the youths. By bathing they would be better occupied than being engaged in many objectionable practises in which they were now engaged after they had left their work. He thought the Board might even go so far as to erect a shed for the purpose of dressing and undressing. Such precautions as this and choosing a good part of the river would save a great many lives. He was of the opinion that as much good was done by having bathing places as providing recreation grounds; it was quite as needful. He would like to see the committee formed and wait upon the officials with reference to the above subject. Bathing to commence after nine o'clock in the evening.

The matter proceeded somewhat ponderously and on the 28th of July a very comprehensive report on the subject of bathing was duly presented.

The Clerk read a report of the General Purposes Committee on the subject of bathing, which was to the effect that they had met the Conservators of the River Lee and East London Waterworks who would each permit bathing after seven o'clock in the evening. The committee suggested that the report be adopted and referred back to them to be carried out. A letter was also read from the Lee Conservancy Board to the effect that they would permit bathing and that they had no objection to a shed provided it was erected in such a manner as their engineer approved of; that all persons bathing should do so in proper dress; that a policeman be kept at the place to see that this was done; that no person be allowed to run about the ground away from the shed without his clothing; the structure to be removed at any time by order of the Conservancy Board. Under these conditions bathing would be allowed from seven o'clock at night until ten o'clock in the morning. The shed could be erected in a week and a board with the rules under which bathing would be permitted painted thereon, put up so soon as an answer was received from the Board. A communication was also read from the East London Waterworks Company expressing their willingness to allow bathing in their waters on condition that the Board pay to them a nominal rent of ten shillings, (50p), per annum. The shed to be removed at the request of the Board.

Have no fear, it is not over yet, there are still several other nits to be picked!

Mr. Clarke hoped the Board would receive the report and adopt it and afterwards refer it back to the committee to carry out the scheme. The restrictions were not onerous at all but were such as the Board might agree to. Having in view the interests of the public he hoped the Board would authorise the committee to carry out the work within a week or two so that the public might have a place to bathe. Referring to the hours allotted, he, (Mr. Clarke) said it was the evening hours they had endeavoured to obtain as the working classes could not bathe in the morning on account of their work. In answer to a question, he said the whole expense of carrying out the scheme would not exceed £25 for the shed and a fence and ten shillings per year for the rent. The place they proposed to arrange for was near Page's Lock. He was in hopes they would get a concession from Inspector Grey that they should pay nothing for the police to keep order. He would propose that the report be adopted and referred back to the committee.

Mr. Stacey said he was glad the arrangements had been so admirably carried out by the committee, as he believed it would be a great boon to the inhabitants of Tottenham. He thought where it was proposed, at Page's Lock, would be very objectionable as there were a great number of passengers past that place over the marsh and if adopted, would spoil a good summer

evening's walk. He himself and his wife and family were in the habit of walking that way in the evening, as were many others he knew. He hoped that if they did decide on that spot, they would keep it well to the right of the lock.

Mr. Clarke said the committee thought this would be the best place they could choose for the bathers as it had a good hard bottom. The shed and fence would keep the persons bathing from the view of foot passengers through the marshes.

The Chairman said the fence was long enough there would be no indecency whatever.

Mr. Kidd said the report was very satisfactory and he would second its adoption.

On being put the motion was carried unanimously.

It is odd, especially in the light events mentioned elsewhere, that the fact that this supervised bathing area would also provide a safe space for children to bathe in the presence of adults most of whom would be able to swim was not mentioned. They do not also seem yet to have considered the obvious dangers of bathing after dark in an area that was presumably largely unlit. I do not know if this scheme was carried out; if it was the Observer failed to report it. A problem with newspapers is their tendency not to follow things right through.

Ian Jones, 29th December 2022.

One Hundred Years Ago in the Edmonton Hundred

At Last !

The experiment of the Labour District Council of Enfield in entrusting the erection of houses in Southbury Road to the Guild of Builders has gone to show that theory and practice are two vastly different things. Commenced in November, 1921, the Guild of Builders has now practically completed the erection of 50 houses and tenants are rapidly getting their gardens in order. It is to be hoped that progress in this direction will be far more rapid than that of the Builders in erecting the houses.

Enfield Gazette 26th January 1923



The houses in Southbury Road

Echoes of Enfield's Past

From the "Enfield Observer" of February 1st 1867

We have been requested to call the attention of the public, and more particularly that portion of it who are frequently in the habit of travelling by the **Great Eastern Railway** to London, to a fund that has been raised as a testimonial or seasonable gift to be presented to the engine drivers on this line. We are reminded that every time we travel by rail our lives are in their hands, that they are exposed in all weathers, employed in a hazardous calling, and excessively worked; as such they merit an acknowledgement, if only to show the kind feeling the inhabitants of Enfield have for them. The treasurer, Mr. F. J. Harris, of Percy House, has already received, in subscriptions of half-a-crown and five shillings, the very respectable sum of ten guineas, and would gladly receive another ten, if sufficient interest can be excited to induce those who travel to contribute towards this fund. The subscription list may be seen at the Enfield Public Library.

Enfield Observer 1st February 1867 reprinted Enfield Gazette 9th February 1923

Graham Frost

Registered Charity No. 299073.

Please send contributions to the newsletter to Kate Godfrey, 69 Margaret Road, New Barnet.
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