

ILFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY PRESIDENT'S REPORT 2021-22

Covid has affected many of us over the past two years. Fortunately although I and my wife haven't been made ill (Sylvia, Sinclair & Janet etc, have), close relatives to us have died or been ill. So far in the UK over 165,000 have suffered Covid related deaths. Currently over 143,000 infections this week, thousands of children are off school, but over 43m have had at least 1 vaccination so far. Whilst the bug maybe its losing its strength, vaccinations running into the millions have given us greater protection than ever before. After a year of just Zoom talks well organised by **Secretary Janet Seward** (great thanks to her with grateful help from **Gary Barnes**) it's good to get back to regular face-to-face meetings. Our sad losses included **Jean Potter** and the passing after a long illness of **John Sharrock** whose obituary is published in our April Newsletter. He was our treasurer for many years, a local campaigner on many issues with a very sharp sense of humour.

Our Society's members rejoined so our membership is up to a healthy 57. Because many members are prepared to give talks this has saved us £100's so our bank balance is at present over £3,300. **Treasurer Sylvia Frydland** and the committee have agreed to propose a continuation of our annual sub' to just £10 again (visitors £3 a meeting) which I hope is accepted at the AGM (it was). Social media is going along nicely providing much needed extra publicity. **Colin Runeckles** now manages our IHS website (originally created with great thanks to **Christine Slaughter**). He has updated it, adding our old Newsletters back to 2011 and is preparing an index which would be a really great help in searching for past articles and key words. Colin also manages our Twitter account which has 366 followers. **Martin Fairhurst** looks after our Facebook entries though he recently had some 'hacking' problems. Our real problem with publicity is displaying posters, i.e., in libraries.

We've had mixed success with this year's programme but Constable's "*The Haywain*", "*Victorian Policemen in Ilford*", "*an Underground Guide to London in the Roaring Twenties*", "*100 years of the BBC*" and Georgina Green's "*Highams, in Walthamstow*" were a success. A slight technical hitch caused problems to Janet's talk '*The Way We Were 1952-2022*' which will be reprised on June 6th; free to members. The Newsletter, excellently edited by Vice-President **Georgina Green**, and quickly printed by Vincent Goodman of *Speedprint*, is one of the best around with 3 issues a year. A paper copy is freely available to members, £1 to visitors, it will soon be on our website & an email copy can be

sent out. Of the programme for 2022-23 talks include *'Redbridge Village'*, the early Leytonstone life of *'Alfred Hitchcock'* (part 1), *'London Through Artists Eyes'*, *'Valentines Mansion'*, *'A Stroll Around Snaresbrook'* & the long delayed *'Ilford Medical Health from 1800 to the NH'*- all dates to be confirmed. I am organising a programme of 4 walks this summer: 2 in London based around Charles Dickens & Oscar Wilde, 1 in Ilford and 1 around Barkingside, tbc.

For the coming season changes are afoot. Firstly: to allow us more prep' time to set up meetings and Zoom talks for distant members & visitors, we can enter the Library's Studio 2 at 6.30pm, room opens for everyone at 7pm, talks will start as usual at 7.30pm, and we will finish at 9.30pm allowing us more social and discussion time. Not quite such a manic rush and though the extra hour will add more expense it should be a welcome change.

Another big change is that Membership Secretary & Treasurer Sylvia, & **Sinclair (our chef de cuisine)** are moving to distant parts so a new Treas' is sought. (Colin agreed to take on the responsibility). Our accounts are not onerous to manage and there are only a few committee meetings to attend. They provided excellent hospitality at their home for committee meetings so we will greatly miss their help, generosity, conviviality and bread pudding. Seeking re-election to the committee will be Martin Fairhurst and Alan Simpson but standing down from the committee is long standing member **Carol Franklin** who has been very helpful to us. One person has been asked to join the committee and will be proposed at the AGM: Lynn Haseldine Jones brings a wealth of local history knowledge to us (accepted).

Thanks to all the committee for their help getting the meetings going and attending all committee meetings. It is only with the committee's members that we can keep moving the Society forward. And thanks to all the members for supporting the Society in these 'challenging' times.

Kay Waheed joins our committee for the first time.

All our VPs were re-elected and Peter Haseldine was accepted as the Examiner of our accounts.

Jef Page, President, Ilford HS.

April 2022.