

PRESIDENT'S REPORT AGM 2022-23 ILFORD HISTORICAL SOCIETY

It's been a good year for the Society after the travails of Covid. We've made a good recovery, recovered some members and attracted new ones, organised 4 walks last summer and kept a healthy bank balance- always very comforting. This has allowed us yet again to propose no rise in our subscriptions. Our membership is back up to a healthy 59.

We organised 4 successful guided walks: a Dickens walk in London starting at St Martin-in-the-Fields church Trafalgar Square and finishing at the 'Roman' bath, a walk around Barkingside including Trinity church, its churchyard and the Dr Barnardo monument to its deceased children and staff, a Chelsea walk where we became Sloane rangers for a day and saw Oscar Wilde's home, and a walk around Ilford. These walks- just £3 each- contributed £186 to our funds- very useful and **Thanks to Treasurer Dr Colin Runeckles** for all his help and taking the cash at them and at the door ie from visitors and new members whilst monitoring Twitter (over 380 followers). He has ably kept our accounts up to date and will present them and the proposal about 2023-24 subs' with our bank balance at present is around a healthy £3,000 minus bills to be paid- leaving us £2,389. I hope you all agree that there's no need to raise subscriptions this coming year.

Our Committee have met in a variety of locations ranging from the Central Library foyer to my house and members have been very committed attending meetings. Thanks particularly must go to Colin and **Janet Seward- our harassed Secretary** (and Gary Barnes) who 'manfully' put up with all the aggro' of attempting to open up Zoom operations to allow distant members to take part in our meetings. With varied success.

Congratulations to IHS member **Alan Simpson** on his success in publishing his booklet: "*A Lodge By Any Other Name- Claybury Lodge, Tomswood Lodge or Forest Lodge?*" Published by Loughton and District Historical Society, £5-50p, tremendous research.

Our Society has two editor members: **Georgina Green** excellently edits our Newsletter whilst **Lynn Haseldine-Jones** edits Loughton HS's. Lynn and partner **Peter (our auditor Examiner)** thankfully provide everyone with refreshments. One change we need to note is that long-time member **Martin Fairhurst** is resigning from the Committee. He looks after the Society's Facebook page, unlocked and closed up Ilford Hospital Chapel when we met there and so to keep his expertise I will propose him as our new Vice Chairman. Our one new member of the Committee who I will nominate at the AGM will be **Janet Risby**.

One of our VP's is resigning: **Roger Backhouse**. His excuse is that he now lives in York and he can't contribute much. But his articles for our Newsletter have been very good so Thanks to him for all his support. Vice-President **Cllr Muhammed Javed** has been a great help to the Society and will be giving us a talk on his work as a councillor and housing in September. Our other VP's are **Dorothy Lockwood** and Georgina.

Sylvia & Sinclair Fydlund moved away to a new home near their daughter as Sinclair was ill but sadly he died soon afterwards. They were a great asset to the Society.

This year's programme has gone well so far with talks on 'Redbridge Village', Alfred Hitchcock's early life in Leytonstone, local life and history in Redbridge, Wanstead House- a

lost London palace, Valentines Mansion's many owners, a 'virtual' stroll around Snaresbrook and in April Ilford Medical Services from 1800 to the NHS. The final talk in May is on 19th century Ilford: from village to town to be given by Colin. Many of our members: myself, Janet, Georgina, Lynn, Alan, Colin, etc give (many) talks to other societies. I gave a talk during International Women's Month in Wanstead Library in March on 'Famous Women of Redbridge'.

For the coming year 2023-24 we have a programme of talks on: London's public statues, shops and shopping, southwest Essex aviation, the Victorian way of death, Epping Forest, Monkams, Ilford in the latter part of the 20th century, and the 200th anniversary of the founding of the National Gallery, 1824. We hope to also organise guided summer walks around 'Fitzrovia' in London concentrating on the Bloomsbury set, Monkams, Ilford & a tour of the Guildhall Art Gallery & Roman amphitheatre (if open).

Our other main success is the publication of a book on Gants Hill in photographs. I and Vincent Goodman of Speedprint in Gants Hill got together to find new photos of the area and write the captions and so our publisher The History Press backed us- as did the Society with £200- with a contract to get the job done. Already on Amazon, publication date is on 4th May. There will be a book launch on 1st June and an open event for members on 8th June to include a talk on Gants Hill's history. I hope you can all make it- and buy a copy!

Best wishes, Jef Page, President
Ilford Historical Society, 17 April 2023.