



# CIVITAS TOTTENHAM

THE NEWSLETTER OF TOTTENHAM CIVIC SOCIETY

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## Haringey Design Awards

The Haringey Design Awards were held for the first time since 2012. The event was a triumph for Tottenham as the overall winner was the Broadwaters Inclusive Learning Community, next to the Broadwater Farm Estate.

Another winner for Tottenham was the re-landscaping of Tottenham Green, which won the Best Place/Landscape. Below is a close up photograph of the War Memorial, which was part of the restoration scheme. Around 35,000 men from the area served in the First World War, with more than 2,000 losing their lives. The memorial was unveiled in 1923 and was nationally listed Grade II in 2002.

TCS Chairman Matthew Bradby was one of the judges and he presented the award for best heritage project to the Green Rooms Hotel in Wood Green.  
<http://www.haringey.gov.uk/business/business-rates-and-planning/haringey-design-awards>



## Priscilla Wakefield Plaque

Concern has been raised about the state of the Green Plaque to Priscilla Wakefield. Priscilla Wakefield, nee Bell (1751–1832) was an English Quaker philanthropist who wrote on feminist economics and scientific subjects, as well as producing children's fiction. The plaque is located on the west-facing wall of the High Cross United Reformed Church on the east side of the High Road. It is now only partly legible but Council funds are lacking to effect repairs, estimated at £200. You can find out more about her life here:

<http://www.turnerintottenham.uk/priscilla-wakefield.html>



## Tottenham Clouds

This local group meets regularly and works with the national Cloud Appreciation Society to raise awareness of the historic and present connections between Tottenham and meteorology. They also work with Tottenham Civic Society to campaign for the restoration of 7 Bruce Grove, the former home of Luke Howard (1772-1864) the 'Namer of Clouds' who created the system of cloud naming that we use today. Find out more at their website: <https://tottenhamclouds.org.uk/>

## Tottenham Trees

Tottenham Trees was formed as part of the Charter for Trees, Woods and People, a coalition led by national charity, The Woodland Trust. Tottenham has some amazing historic trees, pre-eminent among them the great oak in Bruce Castle Park, but it also contains areas that are relatively denuded of trees.

Tottenham Trees hopes to raise awareness of the environmental and aesthetic contribution that trees make to our urban landscape. They also hope to encourage new trees to be planted. In these times of budgetary austerity, local authorities have less money for tree planting, but there are many grants available for voluntary groups to help them plant trees in their local area. You can find out more about the work of Tottenham Trees and how to get involved at: <http://www.tottenhamtrees.org/>

Tottenham Civic Society gave the following endorsement to Tottenham Trees:

'Tottenham Civic Society is delighted to welcome and support the Tottenham Trees initiative. It is great news that the Tree Charter will be represented in our area. Tottenham has some large historic trees, and has also benefited from new trees in parks and on streets in recent years. These trees improve the quality of life of residents and the amenity value of our public spaces, giving shade, improving air quality, and providing visual interest and beauty throughout the year. Together with the many trees in private gardens, they also provide a vital habitat for diverse urban wildlife, including birds, mammals and invertebrates. We look forward to working with Tottenham Trees to raise awareness of the importance of trees in our area.'

## St Ann's Hospital Site

A community land trust has been set up to put forward an alternative vision for this large site in south Tottenham. The trust website states:

'StART is a Community Land Trust seeking to acquire and redevelop two-thirds of the St Ann's Hospital site. We want a community-led housing development which meets the needs of people, not profit.

'Two-thirds of the St Ann's Hospital site in Haringey, London is due to be sold for private housing development, with only 14% of the homes classed

as "affordable". Current proposals take no account of the needs of local people at a time of severe housing need. We believe we can do better.

'StART wants to ensure that this valuable public asset is used to benefit the whole community. Based on the views of the community, our plans will provide a far higher level of truly affordable, secure, good quality housing. We also want to conserve and enhance public green space, and ensure the health needs of local residents are integrated into the fabric of the redevelopment.'

You can find out more at:  
<http://www.startharingey.co.uk/>

## Edmanson's Close

Negotiations have been under way this year to change the nature of tenure at the nationally listed Drapers' Company Almshouses in Bruce Grove.

The view of the Drapers' Company is that the current internal configuration of the almshouses (mostly flats created in the 1980s) is no longer fit for purpose. Residents have been offered alternative accommodation in other housing schemes, and then restoration and conversion work will begin to create individual private houses. TCS has not been involved in the negotiations with the Drapers' Company, but we await further news with interest.

Some interesting history of the almshouses can be found on the London Gardens Online website:

'The Drapers' Almshouses originated from 3 sets of almshouses in the East End. In 1617 almshouses for 8 residents were erected at Stratford le Bow through the benefaction of Sir John Jolles, who was Master of the Drapers' Company. After his death in 1621 the Drapers' Company took over these almshouses. In 1681 John Pemel bequeathed £1200 to the Drapers and almshouses named after him were built for 8 widows in Stepney. In 1695 John Edmanson's almshouses were built adjacent to John Jolles' almshouses.

In 1863 John Edmanson's almshouses were sold and new ones were built on part of the Jolles/Edmanson land. However in 1868 the land was compulsorily purchased for the North London Railway, although Drapers' Company vigorously opposed this, arguing that the interests of the poor should not be overridden

by a profit-making company. Although the bill went through the railway was forced to buy the whole site, provide temporary accommodation for the displaced residents and pay all legal costs of the move to Bruce Grove.

'On 12 June 1868 a site in Tottenham with a private house called Elmslea was purchased by the Drapers' Company, joined with Trustees of Thomas Corney, a former Master of the Drapers' Company, who had died in 1866 leaving a bequest of £36,000. The almshouses were named after Edmanson as his trust was the largest.

Elmslea House, owned in 1866 by a Francis Edward Fox Esq., was then used as a school for fatherless Anglican girls, with the 1873 Directory of Drapers' Company listing Miss Mary Wallder as Lady Superintendent and 24 rising to 40 inmates aged between 7 and 18, who were taught here until Tottenham High School opened. Elmslea closed in 1930 and Tottenham Magistrates Court was built on the site. A large plane tree and a brick boundary wall remain from Elmslea, and a row of horse chestnuts appears to mark the almshouse boundary.

'The new almshouses were completed by 1869 and residents installed. The buildings are 2-storey yellow brick, with stone dressings and slate roofs, and in the centre is a neo-Gothic chapel. The architect was Herbert Williams, who designed the new Drapers' Hall in the City. Accommodation was for 27 pensioned sailmakers and the rest for poor people from Bow, Bromley and Stepney.

In 1879 a strip of land '1 rod 23 perches' was purchased to protect property from 'certain building operations'. The OS map of 1864 indicates a line of trees along the Bruce Grove side with the name Elmslea; later photographs record the felling of elms elsewhere in the road, which suggests that these may have been ancient elms.

Plans of 1912 appear to show the remains of quite an elaborate garden of Elmslea house complete with a large lake, now the site of the probation office, although there is no evidence that the almshouses garden was anything more than functional.'

For more information visit:  
<http://www.londongardensonline.org.uk/gardens-online-record.asp?ID=HGY012>

## High Cross Toilets

Work is underway to repair the former toilets at Tottenham High Cross, with view to converting the building into a cafe or restaurant. The early 20th century building is in 'mock Tudor' style and has some nice detailing in its woodwork and the cupola on the roof. The restoration work is being funded by the Mayor of London's office.

TCS members have complained for years that the building was deteriorating due to blocked gutters, causing water damage. There were also problems with vandalism and dumping, and neglected trees and landscaping.

The new proposals would involve reorientating the entrance of the building away from the High Road towards Rawlinson Terrace, improving its amenity value. You can read more here: <https://tottenham.london/explore/tottenham-green/tottenham-green-monument-way-toilets>

## Holcombe Road Market

The market near Bruce Grove has been completely rebuilt and is now open for business (below).





## White Hart Lane station

The newspapers recently reported that Spurs was considering paying £12m to rename White Hart Lane station 'Tottenham Hotspur Station'.

Whether or not this is true, plans are now being finalised for a physical upgrade of the station, pictured above. This will include:

- New station entrance, ticket hall, station facilities and station forecourt
- New pedestrian entrance from Penshurst Road
- Improved access from street level to platforms, including new lift access and new platform canopies
- Improvements to the area around the station including new cycle parking
- Improvements to the former station building.

Plans should be finalised by the end of 2016.

## Ward Budgets

The Council recently published a list of the ward budget allocations across Haringey. There are a number of Tottenham allocations, including £2000 for Tower Gardens Estate in White Hart Lane ward, for tree planting, community clear up and a new website. You can see the new website at: <http://www.towergardens.org.uk/>

The new trees are intended to replace some that have been lost in recent years on one of the public greens fronting The Roundway. The trees form a vital screen to heavy traffic, and are an integral part of

the character of this cottage garden estate. One of the greens, between Risley Avenue and Gospatrick Road, had lost all of its original hawthorn trees, and the budget is to provide new trees during the next planting season.

## Heritage Champions

Residents interested in the heritage of our area are being sought for a new project celebrating north Tottenham.

North Tottenham Townscape Heritage Initiative is looking for enthusiastic members of the community with an interest in community heritage to join their team of Heritage Champions.

Heritage Champions will receive 10 free training sessions on topics such as:

- restoration and conservation of historic buildings
- planning and enforcement
- using historical archives
- oral history
- heritage tour guiding

These workshops will take place from September 2016-June 2017. Sessions will be delivered by Historic England, Oral History Society, Bruce Castle Museum and Haringey Council and will provide a valuable opportunity for those with an interest in conserving and celebrating Tottenham's built heritage and community history.

This scheme is part of North Tottenham Townscape

Heritage Initiative, a Heritage Lottery funded project to improve 28 historic 'at risk' properties along the northern end of the High Road. Alongside the important conservation work, there will be an exciting programme of events including workshops, talks, heritage trails, memory collecting workshops and exhibitions. As well as receiving dedicated training, Heritage Champions will gain 'on the job' experience by supporting this programme of activities as volunteers.

Heritage Champions will help ensure that the historic environment of North Tottenham and its community history will be preserved and celebrated for generations to come.

If you are interested in taking up this opportunity, or if you would like to hear more about upcoming opportunities and events connected with this Initiative, please get in touch with Adam Stoneman, Heritage Learning Officer, at [adam.stoneman@haringey.gov.uk](mailto:adam.stoneman@haringey.gov.uk), on 07811 421432 or at Bruce Castle Museum, Lordship Lane, N17 8NU. Anyone applying to become a Heritage Champion should state why they are interested in being a 'heritage champion' and explain how this will benefit them.

- Adam Stoneman

## Ten years of TCS events

Although it seems impossible to believe, the TCS events programme has been running for ten years. It seems a good time to review what we have seen on these tours and visits.

Over the period there have been eighty events and, as you might expect, the various Tottenham conservation areas have had the most attention. Each year there have been tours of different sections of the High Road 'historic corridor' – North Tottenham, Bruce Grove and Tottenham Green. Some of these have had a particular focus, such as rebuilding after the riots or seeing various regeneration projects. Our contribution to the annual Open House weekend has usually been some section of the High Road.

We had tours of Tower Gardens, St Ann's and Clyde Circus conservation areas. Ken Barker, author of 'How Rural Tottenham Disappeared', gave us a fascinating tour of the less well known Devonshire Hill estate in the north east corner of Tottenham which, although not a conservation area, boasts some nice buildings and good quality 1920s' council housing.

We have also had several visits to Tottenham Marshes, Lordship Rec and Downhills Parks, often led by members of Friends of Parks groups.

We have had visits to a number of places of worship: St. Bartholomew's, St Ann's, St Ignatius and the Baptist Church (all four listed), the Brook Street Chapel and the Sufi Centre. All these visits were led by a minister or other leader. The Brook Street Chapel has a particular interest because Luke Howard, 'the namer of clouds', was one of the founding members of this chapel in the 1830s.

At the Sufi Centre in the former Roman Catholic convent in St Ann's Road we heard about the philosophy of this liberal branch of Islam – this is why they are content for the Cross and statues of the Virgin Mary to remain in place on the building. We spent sometime after the visit trying to persuade a local community activist (you will guess who) that he must be a 'living saint' but he wasn't keen on this title.

We haven't only looked at heritage areas and buildings. We had several interesting tours of the Broadwater Farm Estate led by the Neighbourhood Officer. When we went to the Ferry Lane Estate we were lucky to get the GLC architect who designed the estate in the 1970s to lead the tour. Architects and project officers took us round Hale Village, Isobel Place and Brook House developments.

Individual buildings that we have visited include the Haringey Sixth Form Centre, the restored Town Hall, the new mortuary in the Tottenham Cemetery Lodge House and 639 after it was taken over by the GLA. One of our most popular visits was to the Redemption Brewery in an industrial unit in north Tottenham – can't think why.

We have developed three cross-borough walks. The Alexandra Palace to Bruce Castle walk goes through eight conservation areas and various parks. Another is the Moselle River walk which starts at Queen's Wood in Highgate and ends up at the River Lea. The third is the Palace Gates to Seven Sisters railway walk. All three of these have been published as free walk booklets by Haringey Friends of Parks Forum and Haringey Federation of Residents Associations (they can be downloaded <http://haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk/>)

Thanks to all who have helped by leading these tours and visits. Let us have your ideas for events in 2017.

- Joyce Rosser, TCS Events Organiser

## Bob Morrison, Tottenham MP

*'Wherever he travelled, Tottenham remained his yardstick'*

Anyone wandering around Tottenham comes across reminders of Robert Morrison, who was MP from 1922 to 1931 and again from 1935 to 1945 (he then went to the House of Lords as Lord Morrison of Tottenham). His name is on the 1924 plaque outside 8 Bruce Grove recording its opening as the Tottenham Trades Club and Labour Institute. It is also on a 1937 plaque inside 7 Bruce Grove (see Sheila Peacock's article in Civitas Spring/Summer 2015) but it isn't possible to access this important heritage building.



There is the Lord Morrison Hall community centre; Morrison Yard, the handsome former brewery building now the home of some small enterprises; and his name is displayed on the list of Tottenham mayors in the Town Hall. We also know that he lived in the attractive 'Spring Cottage' at 41 Talbot Road (now Grade II listed - shown on the right).

But how many people know who he was? He has the misfortune of sometimes being confused with Herbert Morrison, the more famous Labour politician from the same period. Unlike Herbert Morrison who was a Londoner, Robert Morrison was Scottish. Born in Aberdeen in 1881, the son of a railway man, he left school at 12 and later did an apprenticeship as a

wood carver. His early political activity was with the leftwing Social Democratic Federation. Then he came to London and worked as a school teacher. He was involved in the Labour and Co-operative movements and in 1914 was elected to Wood Green Urban District Council.

He served in France from 1915 to 1919. Bruce Castle Museum has one of his war diaries which covers the period September to November 1918 (the last entry is for 3rd November, eight days before the Armistice). It is an amazing document with very short entries written in a tiny notebook that he must have kept in his pocket. After being promoted to corporal he commented 'if the war lasts 10 years I may be a sergeant – if I live.' The diary will soon be available online.

Returning to London he was elected to the Middlesex County Council. He was elected as MP for North Tottenham in the 1922 General Election – the first Labour MP for Tottenham (South Tottenham returned its first Labour MP in 1923). He became Parliamentary Private Secretary to Ramsey Macdonald, the Labour Party leader, and in the 1924 government was a junior transport minister. But in 1931 he refused to follow Macdonald into the National Government.

When asked why he said 'No money will ever tempt me to vote for cutting wages and salaries, starving the unemployed and crippling our Education and Social services. I am not a stranger – here today and gone tomorrow. My home is in Tottenham. How could I hold my head up amongst my fellow-citizens whose standard of living is being ruthlessly cut down if I had deserted them to serve my own financial interests. When these cuts are made hundreds of families in Tottenham – decent and respectable people – will be literally starving.'

Both Morrison and Frederick Messer, the Labour MP for South Tottenham, lost their seats to National Government candidates in 1931. Morrison lost to Edward Doran, a National Conservative candidate and Messer lost to a National Labour candidate.

In 1933 Morrison spoke at a meeting held at the Tottenham Palais called by the local Jewish community to protest about Nazi Germany. Morrison attacked Doran for his views saying his reaction to the arrival of Jewish refugees bordered on anti-Semitic.

He was re-elected MP in 1935. His role as Chancellor of the Duchy of Lancaster in the wartime Coalition Government is interesting to us today because he coordinated the government's salvage and waste policies, or what we would call 'recycling'. This included using food waste. Tottenham was famous for 'Tottenham pudding' – whereby waste food was boiled and used for feeding pigs.

A 1941 letter to The Times from Lord Bledisloe, a Tory peer, said 'The Government should surely take its courage in both hands and ...compel (and not merely ask) every municipality and urban authority to organise the collection of domestic food waste ...for feeding pigs and poultry, as...the Borough Council of Tottenham, under the inspiring leader of its patriotic member of Parliament, are doing with conspicuous success.'

After its landslide 1945 election victory, the Labour Party needed more people in the House of Lords so Morrison became Baron Morrison of Tottenham. A year later he was a member of the Anglo-American Committee of Inquiry regarding the problems of European Jewry and Palestine. There were 100,000 Jews in displaced persons camps in Europe. Entry to Palestine was barred and the US refused to take them.

Richard Crossman MP, another member of the committee, describes in his book 'Palestine Mission' (published in 1947) how they heard representations from interested parties in Austria, Cairo, Jerusalem and New York. Eventually they came down in favour of the partition of Palestine arguing that the 'injustice done to the Arabs by dividing the country and permitting the Jews to achieve a majority in their portion would be less than the injustice done to the Jews by not letting them into Palestine.' The committee foresaw many of the conflicts which have occurred in the Middle East since then.

Crossman has a wonderful description of Morrison, 'Throughout the inquiry, he showed a great native shrewdness and the practical man's dislike of books and theories. Wherever he travelled, Tottenham remained his yardstick.'

Both before and after he was an MP Morrison was a local councillor and then an alderman. He was mayor

in 1953, the year he died, and his wife Grace, also a councillor, became mayor in his place. She was mayor again in 1958. He was a JP from 1928 to 1953. They were active in the local community organising regular parties for elderly people in their home. Morrison was a director and then President of Spurs. His funeral procession went past the Town Hall, the Drill Hall and Spurs.

- Joyce Rosser

## Tottenham and the Antarctic

Walter How was a resident of Birkbeck Road, Tottenham, for many years. Born in Bermondsey on Christmas Day in 1885, this humble man had endured perhaps one of the most famous survival episodes of the 20<sup>th</sup> century. He went to sea at the age of 12 and served on many ships before being chosen as Able Seaman on the Endurance Expedition of 1914-1917 led by Sir Ernest Shackleton.

The Endurance Expedition was also known as the Imperial Trans Antarctic Expedition, comprising a team of 28 men led by Sir Ernest. Walter How was regarded as an asset to the crew, having previously worked in the sub-Arctic with the Canadian Auxiliary Survey Ship. Their objective was to be the first group to cross the Antarctic continent on land after having reached it on board the *Endurance* via the Weddell Sea. Unfortunately, the ship was beset by ice at sea, near Vahsel Bay, and it was eventually crushed before sinking.

All her crew was left stranded on the ice, but Shackleton is well-remembered for his kindness in



looking after his men and ensuring that no life was lost. The men spent months in makeshift camps before finally reaching the uninhabited Elephant Island. From here, Shackleton and five crew members made an open boat, 800 mile journey to South Georgia to

get help and return for the men stranded on Elephant Island. Thankfully, all the crew were rescued and eventually returned to England.

When he set sail on the Endurance, Walter How had been married for only a year and had a daughter just six weeks old. Upon his return to England after the expedition, he joined the Merchant Navy and became blind in one eye after his ship hit a German mine. He was awarded two medals for his bravery.

During my research I was surprised to discover that in the late 1930s and throughout WW2, my uncle had also lived in Birkbeck Road along with his young family. Having revisited Birkbeck Road I discovered that his house was almost immediately opposite that of Walter How. Clearly the two families would have been known to each other, but at no time was there any family mention of living opposite a veteran of Sir Ernest Shackleton's historic expedition.

Walter How made it a point to keep in touch with his fellow seamen at dinners and reunions that were organised for the crew of the Endurance. In 1968, as one of the three surviving members, he was present at Portsmouth, England to celebrate with and encourage the crew of the Royal Navy's new Antarctic survey ship, H.M.S. Endurance, as they left for sea. Two years later, he was present to welcome them home after their successful journey.

Walter How died of cancer on 5 August 1972. He was 86 years of age. Sir Ernest Shackleton was quoted as describing him as 'a man among men'. The involvement of a Tottenham man in this famous expedition was recognized by Cllr Douglas Clark who was Mayor of Haringey in 1973. Some former residents of Tottenham had drawn his attention to the exploits of Walter How shortly after his death.

To add more local interest to this story, at a presentation made at the Local History Fair at Bruce Castle Museum in 2011 it transpired that, prior to his Expedition, Sir Ernest Shackleton lived for a while at an address in South Tottenham close to Stamford Hill. The lady who made the presentation was now living in the very same house and had discovered this fact while conducting the role of a house detective. Was it just coincidence that Walter How lived just two miles away in Birkbeck Road and were they known to each other at this time? A fact I fear that we shall never know!

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

- Alan Swain

## Local Artist: Clare Davies

Clare is one of the artists who works at the Chocolate Factory in Wood Green and she has produced a number of paintings of the area, including Tottenham. She writes: 'Primarily I'm a painter but I also use video and photography to support my work as I like working with both. My work reflects whatever is happening to me at the time.'

The picture below is entitled 'Carols in the Antwerp', showing some of the New Tottenham Singers at last year's carol concert in the Antwerp Arms pub. **This year's concert takes place on 20th December at 7.30pm.**

You can find out more about Clare's work here:  
[http://www.clarebdavies.com/Art/About\\_Me.html](http://www.clarebdavies.com/Art/About_Me.html)



## London Open House

Around fifty people attended the tour of the buildings of Tottenham Green Conservation Area, led by TCS committee members and other volunteers.

A walk along the High Road was also one of the events on Haringey Walking Weekend. Around twenty people attended in spite of heavy rain.

Events for 2017 will be advertised on the Society's website in due course - visit:  
[www.tottenhamcivicsociety.org.uk](http://www.tottenhamcivicsociety.org.uk) .

## Palace Gates to Seven Sisters Railway

To coincide with the council's Haringey Walks campaign, a new walk guide has just been published. It follows the three-mile route of a railway which went from Palace Gates near Alexandra Palace in the west of the borough to Seven Sisters in the east.

This Great Eastern Railway line opened in 1878 and did not close until 1964. Wood Green shopping centre, Wood Green Library and Park View School are all built on the site of the railway. Two stretches of the line have become allotments, others are housing estates. Remains of the railway, such as embankments and bridge abutments can be seen at various points.

The railway line went through the centre of Wood Green, then under Westbury Avenue near Turnpike Lane. The route enables people to see some of the wonderful urban art displays on walls, shop fronts and street furniture created by the Turnpike Art Group. They include an image of a guard waving a green flag and a booking office window painted on the wall of an electricity sub-station.

The walk goes through Downhills Park, passing statues of three famous Tottenham people – Luke Howard, Walter Tull and Nicola Adams. It crosses West Green which has had major improvements with two-way traffic replacing the gyratory system and the entire north side pedestrianised.

The names of various railway pioneers, such as Isambard Kingdom Brunel (Brunel Walk), Archibald Sturrock (Sturrock Close) and Sir Nigel Gresley (Gresley Close) are commemorated in the names of some of the housing developments built after the closure of the railway.

The walk booklet is the third in a series published by Haringey Federation of Residents Associations ([www.haringeyresidents.org](http://www.haringeyresidents.org)) and Haringey Friends of Parks Forum ([www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk](http://www.haringeyfriendsofparks.org.uk)). The first was 'Alexandra Palace to Bruce Castle' and the second followed the route of the Moselle River.

Copies of the three booklets can be obtained from local libraries, residents associations and friends of parks groups or downloaded from the HFRA or HFPP websites.

## Obituary - Janet Harris

- Founder member of TCS

Janet Dorothy Harris, retired nurse, published historian and doughty campaigner on many local issues, died aged 79, on March 17 2016 at the North Middlesex Hospital, after a short illness.

Janet Turk was born in 1937 in Canning Town, East London, an area heavily bombed during the Blitz in her early childhood. Despite losing her mother aged 9, she went on to pass the '11 Plus' and gain a place at Plaistow Grammar School for a time--sadly having to leave before completing her education there. Her uncle Carl was German (interned at Alexandra Palace during World War One), and she also boasted of her Irish ancestry.

Shortly after leaving school, Janet married Norman Harris, and they eventually moved to Essex to raise their two children, Eve and Jenny. Janet juggled family life with unremarkable factory and administrative roles, but always remained keen to learn, joining various societies and avidly reading the daily broadsheets - The Daily Telegraph being her favourite.

After Eve and Jenny grew up and moved away, Janet's marriage ended, and she swiftly moved back to London where she became a mature student of nursing. After qualifying, she worked across North London eventually specialising in supporting drug users in rehab programmes.

Janet lived in Higham Road, Tottenham, for a number of years before moving to the Edmansons Close almshouses in retirement, where she continued to pursue her studies and threw herself into social activism. She was highly popular with the residents there who would often seek her help when they ran into problems with, for example, filling in forms.

From her arrival in Haringey in 1985 until her passing, she founded, promoted and remained active in a number of local and campaigning organisations. For instance, Children with Disabilities, a charity and family support group, where she edited their newsletter Autism Us, and the Tottenham Civic Society where she edited Civitas for a time.

She immersed herself in local history by invading the archives' section of Haringey's Bruce Castle Museum and went on to publish two local history

books, Tottenham Outrage and Alexandra Palace - A Hidden History. The incredible story of the former - where a policeman and an 8-year old schoolboy were killed by Russian anarchist armed robbers. This book received a trail of publicity from Little Russia to BBC Radio 3. Janet later toured the borough to give slide presentations of this story from her laptop. Janet also succeeded in getting a blue plaque installed in Mitchley Road to mark the site of the schoolboy's death.

Janet was also, in its early stages, Chairman and Treasurer of the Friends' of Bruce Castle Museum, established the Haringey Local History Forum, was active in the Tottenham Conservation Area Advisory Committee (CAAC), and in community campaigns to save Crouch End's Red Gables Children's Centre and the Wolves' Lane horticulture and garden centre project for children and adults with learning difficulties.

She was never shy in positioning herself at the forefront of campaigns, often launching them from scratch herself and occasionally indulging in the odd stunt to draw the media's attention to a heart-felt cause. On one such occasion, she was threatened with arrest after dressing up as a sheep and sitting in the road outside the Ministry of Agriculture, causing traffic chaos, to oppose the live export of animals. Janet was a prolific and respected letter-writer to local and national publications, including the Broadway Ham&High and the now defunct Tottenham and Wood Green Journal series.

Janet entered party politics rather late in life, joining the Conservatives in 2008. By early 2010, she was actively campaigning to become a councillor in White Hart Lane ward. Although she did not win, she came a creditable second place. Later that year, she made legal history in the Court of Appeal (Janet Harris v. Haringey Council and Grainger Seven Sisters Ltd) and halted the demolition of Ward's Corner, the thriving Latino market at Seven Sisters.

She successfully argued in front of Lord Justice Pill, as a member of the Ward's Corner Community Coalition, that Grainger (Seven Sisters) Ltd proposed development of the site was in breach of section one of the Race Relations Act of 1976, which requires local authorities to "have due regard to... the need to equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups".

In the landmark ruling, the senior Law Lord concluded that the borough had failed to discharge its duty

to "promote equality of opportunity and good relations between persons of different racial groups" when granting permission for the controversial "regeneration" project. This, a few years later, was something Janet's own granddaughter Claire was taught whilst reading law at Bristol University. This was a very proud moment for Claire and the wider family.

Janet went on to resurrect the women's branch of the local Tory Party and serve on the Parochial Church Council (PCC) of St. Mary's, Tottenham.

In 2011 Janet suffered a major stroke which led her to being hospitalised for three months and thereafter relying on a wheelchair and with only limited use of one arm. Despite this, Janet remained determined to live life as fully as her new disability allowed, supported by her daughters and helped by Justin, her close friend who became her carer. The pair could often be spotted at Bruce Grove's San Marco restaurant when not going for days out further afield.

It did, though, halt the research and publication of Janet's third book which was going to be on the Hankin Family, who were servants at Bruce Castle (the House's most famous resident was, of course, Sir Rowland Hill, the great postal reformer and founder of the modern postal service).

In 2014, Janet stood as a 'paper' candidate in the Northumberland Park Ward. She later joked that she could barely sit, let alone stand, in that contest. Laughing - mostly at herself - was something she often did and carried on with friendly 'banter' and "being out there doing something" was something she achieved right up to her final week.

She is survived by her loving daughters Eve and Jenny, five grandchildren and great-grandchildren, in addition to leaving behind hundreds of friends, colleagues, parishioners, neighbours and a collection of her trademark hats.

- Justin Hinchcliffe

## Tottenham's Most Unloved Block of Flats? Contributors

This block of flats (photographed recently below) adjacent to The Fountain public house seem to have been bypassed by Decent Homes funding in recent years.

While plans to demolish the rather handsome, solid and well maintained towers of the Love Lane Estate in North Tottenham seem to be going ahead like an unstoppable juggernaut, other far more dilapidated buildings in Haringey are left alone.

This four storey block between West Green Road and Turner Avenue has signs of extensive water damage, old and inefficient single glazing, untended grounds, empty unused green space, and unsightly and badly located bins. Surely this is a missed opportunity and urgent works are required in the short term.

We welcome contributions from all members of the Society. Articles, photographs, news, event notices should be sent to the editor, Matthew Bradby, by email [mattbradby@hotmail.com](mailto:mattbradby@hotmail.com) .

Contributions are preferred in Word format, or as text in an email, and photographs as jpeg files.

If you would like to join the TCS committee please contact one of the current members (details overleaf). We normally meet every two months for an evening meeting at the Garden House restaurant on Tottenham High Road.

We also need volunteers to lead walks and to help staff stalls at exhibitions such as Haringey Local History Fair. It's a great way to meet other local people with similar interests.



## JOIN TCS

I/we would like to join the Tottenham Civic Society (TCS). Annual membership will provide four copies of our quarterly newsletter, Civitas, attend meetings and events, and support our campaigns to promote high quality, heritage-led regeneration in Tottenham.

I/we enclose a cheque for the following amount:

£5 unwaged

£10 individuals

£7.50 per person - two or more people in the same household

£15 for organisations with under 100 members

£20 for organisations with over 100 members

Name.....

Organisation.....

Address.....

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Email.....

Do you want to join the TCS Yahooogroup?

Yes                      No

Would you prefer to receive your copy of Civitas by

Post                      Email

Please make cheques payable to Tottenham Civic Society and post to: TCS,

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TCS email network:

<http://uk.groups.yahoo.com/group/TottenhamCS/>

To join this network, you need to follow the registration process and your membership will be confirmed by the group moderator. It's a great way to find out what's going on locally.

TCS is affiliated to Civic Voice, the national charity that represents local civic and amenity societies. Visit their website at:

<http://www.civicvoice.org.uk/>

We are also affiliated to the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies - visit their website at:

<http://www.londonforum.org.uk/>