

COULSDON

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# WEST

***Defibrillator installed at  
the Smugglers inn***

***AGM: June 8th – see page 4***

**RESIDENTS'  
ASSOCIATION**

**Spring  
2023**



**ONCE YOU'VE  
READ ME,  
FORWARD ME  
ON TO A  
FRIEND OR  
NEIGHBOUR**

# Who's who?

## YOUR CWRA COMMITTEE

**RICHARD WALKER**     *Chairman*     Local planning issues, website

**KEITH EDWARDS**     *Treasurer*

**PETER APPLEFORD**     *Committee member*     Public Transport

**KEITH WATKINS**     *Committee member*     Social Media

**JEANNINE NEWHAM**     *Committee member*     Environment

**DOREEN AND  
DAVID RAWLINSON**     *Committee members*

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## ELECTED REPRESENTATIVES

### MP for Croydon South

**Chris Philp**     [chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk](mailto:chris.philp.mp@parliament.uk)

### London Assembly Member for Sutton and Croydon

**Neil Garratt**     [neil.garratt@london.gov.uk](mailto:neil.garratt@london.gov.uk)

### Local Councillors

**Mario Creatura**     [mario.creatura@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:mario.creatura@croydon.gov.uk)

**Ian Parker**     [ian.parker@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:ian.parker@croydon.gov.uk)

**Luke Shortland**     [luke.shortland@croydon.gov.uk](mailto:luke.shortland@croydon.gov.uk)

### **Disclaimer:**

The views expressed in this newsletter are personal views of the contributors, and do not indicate endorsement, or otherwise, by any of the current CWRA committee.

## Do you remember this?

When I commenced writing 'Local History In Coulsdon West' using the pen name Cuthraed, I never expected the series to run for four and a half years in the CWRA quarterly newsletter.

Already in these rapidly changing times, some buildings mentioned have been demolished or changed in some way. The Ashdown Park Hotel was pulled down early in 1971, thus ending an association with that site which commenced in the reign of King John.

The branch shop of Messrs. Sainsbury is closed, Oakeshotts is now a greengrocers shop, Wymans bears the name of John Menzies, while at the time of writing the Red Lion is undergoing alteration before being re-opened in the autumn as one of Messrs. Mann Crossman's Schooner Inns [1].

Smitham Primary School, opened in 1886, is under marching orders, whilst "Willy" Smith, the G.O.M. [2] of Merstham, died in 1969 just short of his final century – during his 50 years with Merstham C.C. he scored 61 of them. The village shoe repairer, he found time to coach the boys of Alleyn's School, Dulwich for 25 years. He was probably the last eye witness I interviewed who actually saw James Selby's great coaching feat in 1888 [3].

Finally, I trust my humble contribution to local history in Coulsdon West Ward will be of help to those children who have been told by teacher "find something out about the history of your district and write an essay on the subject".

William George Tharby.  
January, 1972.

Editor's notes, 2023

W.G. Tharby wrote a series of articles about the history of Coulsdon, which appeared in the newsletters of CWRA. Later, in 1972, they were compiled into a small booklet, from which this text is taken.

[1] Mann Crossman's later became part of the Watney's brewing empire.

[2] "Grand Old Man".

[3] James Selby was a stage coachman, who, on 13 July 1888, established a record by driving "The Old Times" coach from London to Brighton and back – 108 miles in 7 hours 50 minutes – changing horses 13 times on the road. This he achieved in the year he died, and presumably, he passed through Coulsdon each way. The Museum of London has a painting which depicts Selby driving on his epic journey. He is buried in Highgate Cemetery..

## **CWRA Annual General Meeting**

**The 2023 AGM will be on Thursday, 8th June at 7:30pm  
at the Coulsdon Community Centre, Barrie Close  
(off Chipstead Valley Road).**

**This year, Tom Oliver, the City of London Commons Ranger for our area,  
will be our guest speaker.**

**The agenda and accounts, are on the website, along with the minutes of  
the previous AGM (held in July, 2022).**

**See [www.thecwra.co.uk](http://www.thecwra.co.uk) and/or email us at [info@thecwra.co.uk](mailto:info@thecwra.co.uk)**

### **Another AGM already!**

With lashings of ginger beer, lemonade, and even some biscuits, we will be enticing members and prospective members alike to join us at the Community Centre in June.

Tom Oliver will be speaking about some of the wonderful green spaces on our doorstep – Farthing Downs, Happy Valley, Coulsdon Commons and Riddlesdown.

Hopefully complementing Tom's presentation, we will be showing some of the work that the Friends of Rickman Hill Park have been undertaking to improve the facilities in the park and in the woodland known as Mother Kitty's Shaw.

### **Your Committee needs You!**

We are always in need of more committee members (or help in running the association, without the formality of the joining the committee). Currently, there are vacancies for secretary, membership secretary, vice-chairman and editor.

**If you feel that you can help out in any way – for instance, being a road steward – please let us know, using the website or emailing, as above.**

We need your input for the AGM to be successful – any questions or issues that you would like us or our local Councillors to address will receive a more complete response if you can advise us in advance.

**We all look forward to seeing you in June,**

**Richard and the Committee.**

## **Exam Grades Inflation? Elizabeth doesn't think so.**

As students prepare for summer exams, the usual comments about lower standards and easier questions will be aired in the news.

I sat three A levels in 1968 – English, French and German; and then over 50 years later, in 2021, I took Italian, thus gaining first-hand experience of old and new exams.

My 1968 courses in French and German included plays by Racine and Lessing, giants of classical European theatre, and difficult for a sixteen year old, dealing with relationships and honour in a courtly setting. There were a further five texts for close literary study.

In 2021, we read just two contemporary novels and studied two films. These also addressed family relationships and honour in present day Sicily.

All the exam papers required analyses of the set texts (or films), choosing from a range of essay titles. In 1968, these were answered in English, in 2021, in Italian. So in 2021, both comprehension, and a good critical vocabulary, were needed to succeed. For the films, this also meant learning cinematographic terms.

At school, we prepared with vocabulary tests and translations of various texts – but nothing very contemporary. For spoken practice, French and German assistants would bring the odd article to discuss. My Italian course was taught entirely by a native Italian speaker and English was barely used. Lessons included discussions about historical events, such as Mussolini's march on Rome in 1922, or the assassination of Judge Falcone by The Mafia in 1992.

In 1968, the ten-minute oral exam was conducted by an external examiner who could ask anything – although the range of subjects was relatively predictable. In 2021, our tutor conducted a ten-minute oral test on a choice of subjects (eg. the rise of Fascism) followed by a longer 'debate' where we had to research some controversial subject and present both sides of the argument. People chose subjects such as immigration or the impact of tourism.

Times have changed. My school courses prepared me for further academic studies of those languages and their literature, but to suggest that the Italian course was easier would be wrong. Whilst less rooted in literature, it was much more relevant to the present day culture. I believe that I worked equally hard in all three subjects, and I am pleased to say that I achieved the same equivalent grades in all of them!

**Elizabeth Greaves.**

## Local History

**Constructed in 1911, The Coulsdon Methodist Church** in the Brighton Road occupies an impressive, listed building. Here is a brief history of the church.

By 1900 the hamlet of Smitham Bottom was growing, and houses were built on what is now Downs Road. Into one of these houses moved Thomas Bond and his family, who seems to have founded the Methodist Society in Coulsdon. In 1907, a small group was meeting there, and by September 1908, a larger meeting place was needed for the Society. All that could be found was the Working Men's Club in Lion Green Road. Margaret Joan Gedye recalls: "A large room with billiard tables at the back and a few rows of chairs at the front. There was a small platform, with a piano in the hall just below. Mother was both pianist and choirmaster, and Mr. Harold Bond was the lead tenor. We had visits from ministers from the Croydon circuit."

The first service was held there in February 1909, and later that year there were 19 members. The Rev. William Gouldie, of Croydon, took many of the services; he was a highly regarded, inspirational preacher, whose enthusiasm grew the congregation.

In March 1910, a site for a church was sought and in June, Harold Bond (son of Thomas) found the Brighton Road plot. He was a founder of Bond and Sherwell Estate Agents and lived opposite the site. At about the same time Sir Horace Brooks Marshall had moved to Shabden Manor in Chipstead and "heard of the services being held in the club room and members' houses." He was so impressed, that he offered to double whatever money was raised during the following three years, on condition that the building should be 'fit for a man to worship in, not a temporary or unworthy structure.'

The first donation was "an anonymous gift of one shilling (5p) from a passenger on the 8.35 train to London." Small donations ranged from 6d (2 ½p) from 'MJG' (probably Margaret Joan Gedye, to five guineas (£5.25). The average was three pounds and seven shillings (£3.35). (For reference, these are some average annual wages for the time: a general labourer, £74; a skilled building tradesman, £105; a clergyman, £206; and a solicitor, £1,343.) Sir Horace and friends gave £4,540. The entire project, including land, building and all the fittings, cost £7,835, having been estimated at £8,000!

The church had been designed, and building was about to commence in April 1911, when the Croydon Advertiser reported... "The stone laying in the middle of a blinding snowstorm and arctic wind... says much for the enthusiasm of the Methodist ladies... who bravely stood their ground."



## Coulsdon Methodist Church (cont)

On 1st November 1911 the building was dedicated and services held. "The new church is indeed a handsome flint building with heavy stone facings and square tower... Lady Marshall was presented with a key by the architects, she then opened the door and the company passed in."

Sadly Thomas Bond had died in late 1909, and so never saw the completed church.

In 1914, a new hall was opened, which included a kitchen and choir vestry. Many additions and modernisations have since taken place.

From the initial 19 members in 1909 the membership grew steadily, helped by the extensive house building in the area, and reached 200 in 1932.

As well as the society classes for bible study, there were groups for sewing, discussions and prayer. There was also a lively social scene, including tennis, amateur dramatics, garden fêtes and afternoon teas.

In 2023, the church is still worshipping together. It has been transformed in recent years to cater for other activities, as well as worship, and is regularly used as a polling station, as well as housing exhibitions. Over a hundred years on from our humble beginnings we continue to serve the local community as best we can.

The Church – that is the people – meet for worship each Sunday at 10am, with provision for all ages. We seek to be an open and inclusive community, where everyone can feel at home.

In brief, the declared mission of Coulsdon Methodist Church is to:

- serve God;

- serve the people of the neighbourhood;

- be a vibrant, open, broadly based Christian community, caring for all ages and meeting together for worship, fellowship and learning;

- and encourage others to explore the Christian faith based on the message and person of Jesus.

The church also opens every Thursday from 11.00 am giving an opportunity for anyone to pop in for a friendly chat and share in prayer time at 11.45.

For further information, please visit [www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org](http://www.coulsdonmethodistchurch.org)

**Georgina Inwards**

## From the Chair

First off, I would like to thank everyone who sent in articles for the newsletter. If you would like to contribute, an ideal article size is about 370 words, which is about one page in this format. If your article didn't appear in this edition, rest assured that it will appear in a later newsletter.

A lot has happened since November, when our previous newsletter came out; here are some highlights:

- 14 missing names were added to the Marlpit Lane Memorial, and there was a short and moving service of dedication on Armistice day. This was the culmination of several year's effort by many people and interested parties, ably marshalled by Charlie King MBE of ECRA.
- Various businesses and individuals got together to form the Coulsdon Community Partnership – initially to look at providing a Christmas community day (in the wake of 'Yulefest') – but by becoming a registered charity, it acts as an umbrella and focal point for community-based activities, like the Hive Community Garden (behind the library). With Eleanor Richardson at the helm, last year's **Yuletide Magic** was a great success. I missed the Easter Bunny day, but I'll be joining in the **Big Lunch Party on 7th May**. Have a look at their website: <https://coulsdonpartnership.org/>
- Last year, Keith Watkins of CWRA organised a crowd-funding campaign to raise money for a new defibrillator; this was finally installed before Christmas. It is now up and running, and it lives on the outside wall of the Smugglers Inn on Chipstead Valley Road. If you are with someone who suffers cardiac arrest, call 999 and start CPR (Cardio-Pulmonary Resuscitation or 'kiss of life') and get someone to go to the pub, look for the bright yellow box on the wall, and follow the instructions. With ambulance response times now being measured in hours, this device can seriously prolong your life, by raising survival rates to over 50%. **It is foolproof - not only are the instructions embedded in the device, which reads them to you, but it cannot give a shock unless the patient needs it.** What you can all do now, is to Google CPR, and learn how to do it in 15 minutes! **It might save a life.**
- **Just a reminder that in any future local or national elections in the UK, you will need an approved ID document to cast a vote in person.**

Other than the Lunch Party mentioned above, there are many other Coronation dining experiences being advertised in the area. I hope that you enjoy the Royal Bank Holiday Weekend somewhere or other, and I look forward to meeting you at the AGM on 8th June.

Cheers,

Richard.



## Public Transport Report (source: Charles King)

**Trains:** Not many local changes are expected in the new May timetable: some improvements to late night services on the Oxted line; Coulsdon South - Sunday service will be 'regularised' with the withdrawal of the Horsham to Peterborough service. This will be replaced with a half-hourly Three Bridges to Bedford service with one train per hour extended to Horsham.

There are no proposed improvements on the Tattenham Corner line.

The strikes are still ongoing; the Rail companies have made what they call their final offer which no longer includes the requirement for driver only operation, but still includes closure or repurposing Booking Offices.

Train fares rose by about 6% in March.

**Buses:** Croydon Council are playing with streets in central Croydon.

Katharine Street has become one-way westbound, rather than eastbound, losing all of the existing bus stops. A new northbound stop will be situated in St George's Walk. Southbound buses no longer have meander around the Fairfield Halls roundabout and the old stops in the High Street, just north of the flyover have reopened.

Abellio bus strikes continue; the only local buses affected by the strikes are the 109, 367, 407, 433, N68 and N109.

The London Mayor, the Government and the GLA have now come to an agreement over funding of TfL. This will allow the proposed cuts to bus services in central London to be substantially reduced and will now only affect 18 routes instead of 70.

<https://tfl.gov.uk/info-for/media/press-releases/2022/november/new-funding-from-the-mayor-saves-vast-majority-of-london-s-buses>

The proposed Croydon and Sutton bus changes are still on hold.

General changes: all TfL fares have increased in line with National Rail fares, ie. 6%, so for buses this is a rise from £1.65 to £1.75.

The restriction on the Freedom Pass will remain at 9am on TfL services and 9.30am on National Rail services on Mondays to Fridays. I am pleased to say that the 60plus Oyster that was under threat will now continue. This costs £20 initially, and there is now a £10 yearly check fee. More information can be found on the TfL web site:

<https://tfl.gov.uk/fares/free-and-discounted-travel/60-plus-oyster-photocard>

**Steam Trains:** At the time of writing there are only a few provisional steam trains advertised:

Belmont Orient Express Friday 17th March, 14th April & 28th April 2023. (No times have been released yet.) They normally pass Coulsdon South between 3pm and 3.30pm.

The following web site provides information of steam services:

[www.railadvent.co.uk/steam-locomotives-on-the-mainline](http://www.railadvent.co.uk/steam-locomotives-on-the-mainline)

On the day timings can be checked on the Real Time Trains website:

[www.realtimetrains.co.uk/search/detailed/gb-nr:CDS?](http://www.realtimetrains.co.uk/search/detailed/gb-nr:CDS?)

## Planning Report – a welcome change!

Since last May, many of the out-of-place/out-of-scale planning proposals are being rejected. This is good news for Coulsdon, but keep alert!

Recent objections that I have been asked to contribute to are listed below. The codes are the serial numbers allocated by Croydon Council to the applications, full details of which can be seen on the Council's planning website.

|              |   |
|--------------|---|
| 22/02125/FUL | Rear of 3-7 Julien Road, Coulsdon. CR5 2DN<br>Not Decided – gone to appeal. |
| 22/02586/FUL | Land adjacent to 185 Brighton Road, Coulsdon, CR5 2NH<br>Rejected**.        |
| 22/03444/FUL | 76 Rickman Hill Coulsdon CR5 3DP<br>Not yet decided.                        |
| 22/04053/FUL | 1A Smitham Downs Road. CR8 4NH<br>Rejected                                  |
| 22/04337/FUL | 27 Woodfield Hill, Coulsdon. CR5 3ED<br>Not yet decided.                    |
| 22/04563/FUL | 7 Bramley Avenue, Coulsdon. CR5 2DR<br>Rejected, gone to appeal.            |
| 22/05118/FUL | 12 Woodcote Grove Road. CR5 2AB<br>Rejected.                                |
| 23/00380/FUL | 3 South Drive, Coulsdon. CR5 2BJ<br>Rejected.                               |

\*\* I made my maiden speech in the town hall on this one. I was somewhat apprehensive, but the vote went our way. It would have badly impacted the residents of the terrace in Station Approach, a designated Heritage Area.

Currently, there are too many applications for the Council do deal with in the statutory time-frame (up to 12 weeks). In such cases, some applications are closed 'Not Decided'. Typically, the developer then appeals, and the Council submits reasons for refusal.

Get in touch if you have an issue with a planning application near you.

See our planning notes on the website, including submitting an objection:

<https://www.thecwra.co.uk/planning.html>

Richard.

## Increasing local NHS capacity by our man in Westminster

The winter is always challenging for the NHS, and it is particularly challenging this year because flu is in high circulation. It has therefore never been more important to get people out of hospital on time – to benefit patients and help our fantastic NHS staff make space for those who need urgent care.

That's why I am delighted that Croydon is one of just six areas in the country selected to benefit from a trial of new innovative solutions to free up hospital beds, making sure patients are getting the right care at the right time and allowing ambulances to get back on the road quicker.

In total, over £14bn more will be invested by government over the next two years to improve urgent and emergency care and tackle the NHS backlog– the highest NHS spend on record.

This is great news for local residents and adds to the work I have been doing with NHS leaders to get extra capacity provided locally. In Coulsdon, I have been in discussions about developing the old CALAT site (between Malcolm Road and Chipstead Valley Road) into medical facilities. I am pleased Epsom & St Helier Trust are now developing a kidney dialysis centre there, due to open soon.

There is also an ongoing plan to establish a large GP surgery on another part of the site, but there are currently some slight delays here. Coulsdon Councillors and I are determined to see a new GP centre open and are working with local NHS leaders to find ways of resolving issues.

With 2023 now in full swing, I look forward to working to secure further progress across the issues that matter most to you.

Chris Philp  
Member of Parliament for Croydon South

Editor's note: Chris also had a few paragraphs about planning in his statement, but that is already addressed elsewhere in this newsletter.

Our Councillors have monthly surgeries outside Aldi; the next one is 27th May. The Councillors work with the four Coulsdon Residents' Associations to bring benefit to Coulsdon.

Recent activity includes:

- Potholes, Parking, Planning, Flooding;
- Irresponsible drivers around our schools;
- Mystery of the missing trees in Coulsdon Town Centre!

## A Fuel Such as I

Pardon me if I'm sentimental...is how Elvis' famous song begins, and I must admit to that because I am very old school and used to my grandchildren explaining new technology to me (unsuccessfully).

The fuel to which the title refers is electricity for cars, or EVs as we must call them. I have been studying the progress of their adoption and in particular, the issue of recharging, which car magazines identify as the main cause of doubt for would-be owners - I believe with good reason.

At existing fuel stations, I am confronted with a black (for diesel) and green (for petrol) nozzle. I choose to pay at the pump or the kiosk. I put the fuel into the tank, take my receipt and leave. Without a queue, the whole operation takes less than 5 minutes. Apart from self-service and card payments, this has been the 'experience' for over 50 years at most garages, and is the norm for any drivers refuelling mid-journey.

HM Government's carbon strategy says we must go electric, and has set a (random?) deadline of 2030. Car manufacturers have proceeded to develop a range of EVs. The Mayor of London and local authorities invited "expressions of interest" from charging point providers and they have begun installing a whole plethora of facilities from the basic one (7kW) you can get installed for around £600 if you have off-street parking at home, through to "hubs" with high rates of charge and encouraging names like rapid, ultra, supercalifragilistic etc.

At this point I will not dwell on the government's record of privatising utilities. Just keep in mind that the private sector is not in it for love.

We need to protect the planet and Mr K ("the Green Messiah") wants to clean up London's air. On that point, I haven't seen any monitoring data to demonstrate that his clean-air gospels (St Congestion and St ULEZ) are working? So far he has been Dick Turpin and has more plans for daylight robberies, but I digress.

My EV car tells me "Houston we have a problem... your battery is low." Not to worry, I will find a recharging station. I don't even have to choose between black and green nozzles any more (err...be careful what you wish for).

"Morning sir. Come 'ere to charge up 'ave you? Well just a few preliminary questions. What's the useable capacity of your battery and its range? How much charge do you want? How fast do you want to be charged? Is your cable Mode 2 or Mode 3, CHAdeMO or a CSS? Is your connector Type 1 or Type 2? If we were in France you would need a Type 2. 'Ave you downloaded our App? Internet can be dodgy round 'ere I know. We 'ad a bloke turn up the other day in one of those fancy Tussle cars. I told 'im we can't charge that one 'ere. Sent 'im to the special one in Ambersham."

Oh, don't worry, you won't be talking to a real person. There will be a help desk phone number to call up high on a sign. Don't count on getting through too quickly though. From the car there comes a frantic cry "Dad, Tommy's been sick."

Oh! Where are your beloved black and green nozzles when you need them? Fear not, just remember that this is progress and you are helping to save the planet. Have a nice day.

**Yours, Julian Rochet.**