FLYING FIRST: AMY JOHNSON

For my film research work on the life of Amy Johnson in the local vicinity I visited the heritage site where Amy Johnson learnt to fly at the London Aerodrome, Stag Lane in NW9. There was also a trip to the RAF Museum, Colindale to view her artefacts and the Airspeed Oxford she piloted in WW2. Being a woman ahead of her time and my interest in storytelling about pioneering adventurous aviatrixes I was inspired to write a poem about her and then to record it at the Mill Hill Music Complex a recording studio, where coincidentally her namesake the singer Amy Winehouse recorded her tracks.



Thanks to Angela Anuforo for the image

1903, the year of flying first pioneering movements. The year Amy Johnson was born, the turn of the century, the time for things to take-off like the first flight by the Wright brothers setting a pathway for Amy to follow in their flight steps. 1903 when Pankhurst founded the Women's Social and Political Union. The suffragettes paved the way for equality for women with window smashing campaigns, stones flying through the air, to wake-up the nation and garner attention for their rights to vote, to participate. The time when women were rising up, time to be seen, time to be heard. And this infant would rise and grow up to be seen and heard, the storm was on its way. In the footsteps of pioneers this headstrong Hull lass, now graduated headed South to find her way in the world.



Image of the plaque by Amanda Epe

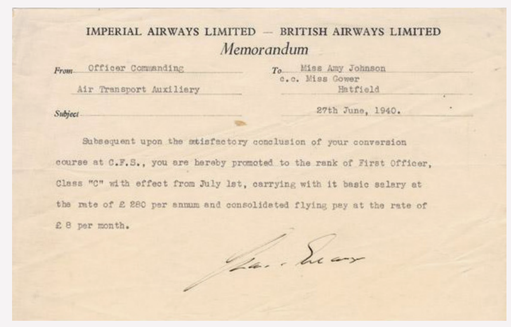
Kingston Upon Hull to Kingsbury, Amy found her place in the world, a place of passion, planes and purpose, in pursuit of pilot studies. Settling into studies at Stag Lane Aerodrome she surmounted the challenges. Wandering through the farmland and fields in Colindale, with a wandering mind, in a quest to learn to fly, she left no stone unturned. Entering the De Havilland grounds she hit gold dust, finding an affordable way to train via the London Aeroplane Club. Still it was a turbulent journey, unwanted and excluded in a man's world, fighting to fit in and going undercover as Johnny, she pioneered the way for women. Trailblazing along the semi beaten path trodden by men alone, she wouldn't throw the spanner in the works, but was on the road to engineering. Prioritising it was fixing, not flying first as who else would fix her aircraft when her place was supposed to be at home. She battled on to be the first British woman to gain the ground engineers licence. In 1929 her pilots licence in her bag, the glass ceiling smashed, she was ready to rise, heading for the skies. The storm was on its way.



Thanks for the new artwork created by Ceci Chan

Her sapphire set eyes dimmed with the blues of melancholy, her loss of a suicidal sibling, sister Irene and a mother forever known to be in despair, her escape was up in the air. Hitting the runway airstrip, like a runaway she left London on 5th May 1930 confined in the cockpit, helmet fixed firmly, lifting the joystick of her beloved Jason, the De-Havilland Gypsy Moth Bi-Plane. Climbing up from Croydon she was on her way to conquer, from waiting in the wings to soaring over the Vienna springs, on landing her flying first stop accomplished. Onwards and upwards windborne ascending and descending through sixteen stops to Darwin. From the onset her Jason engine caused a fret, over oiled, leaking pump, splashing onto Amy's clothing . Close to death hovering over mountains in the thickest of clouds, fear and loneliness overwhelmed her. Sandstorms swept across her face like an exfoliating scrub as the plane plunged in the desert of Baghdad. Still the storm was yet to come. She missioned through the sky in the torrential rain in Calcutta, at the beginning of the Monsoon. Her sunburnt face, the scorching weather, her damaged Jason yet she held herself together, till the bitter end, with feelings of exhaustion, folly and failure of not beating Hinkler's record. Then an outburst of optimism fuelled her once again as she neared her final destination of Darwin. Who could believe, a woman, this young woman could make it, to arrive, alive and alone in nineteen and a half days from London to Australia.

From her flying first record, the first woman to fly from London to Darwin, the nation and the world celebrated her. In her honour 'Amy Wonderful Amy' the song blaring from gramophones in many homes, a popular celebrity. But her work was not done, this time to serve in the war effort, airborne again to ferry planes from one destination to another around the country as an Air Transport Auxiliary staff for the Royal Air Force. Navigating her way into this work in 1940 the battle of the sexes continued, and Amy yet still she rose to first officer. Ferrying a plane taking off from Blackpool on route to Kidlington, near Oxford flying an Airspeed Oxford the storm was yet to come. A. day of bad weather, it was on the 5th January 1941 when an aeroplane and parachute were seen floating in Herne Bay. Found in close proximity, her logbook and personal things, and today archived in Colindale RAF Museum lie her licence certificate and wings.



IMPERIAL AIRWAYS LIMITED — BRITISH AIRWAYS LIMITED

Memorandum

From Officer Commanding, Air Transport Auxiliary — To Miss Amy Johnson, c.o. Miss Gower, Hatfield

Subject — 27th June, 1940.

Subsequent upon the satisfactory conclusion of your conversion course at C.F.S., you are hereby promoted to the rank of First Officer, Class "C" with effect from July 1st, carrying with it basic salary at the rate of £ 280 per annum and consolidated flying pay at the rate of £ 8 per month.



Thanks to the RAF Museum Colindale for the images

Her alpha and omega from Hull to Herne Bay, mysteriously her remains washed away, yet this unassuming lass leaves a legacy, having pioneered the pathway. The storms came and she glided over them creating a climate change for females to fly. Amy Johnson- a flying first.



Photo of statue by Amanda Epe

By Amanda Epe

Heritage Fund

SCULPTURES BY BRIAN YALE ON GRAHAME PARK

"What business have we with art at all, if we cannot share it?"
This maxim of William Morris's was one which the artist Brian Yale was fond of. Brian first came to know Grahame Park whilst it was still being built. It was one of his earliest projects as a designer in the Greater London Council architects' department. His role was to create a series of play-structures for the children who would soon be moving into their new homes, a key aspiration of the landscape design team being that the estate would suit its youngest residents.



Brian Yale circa 1970
With Thanks to the Tate Archives

Early Life

Brian Yale was born in Staffordshire, in 1936, into a working-class family – for much of his life his background would set him apart from the vast majority of artists he worked alongside. Before undertaking his first artistic training at Stourbridge College of Art, he spent a brief period playing in an orchestra as part of the peacetime National Service initiative which followed the Second World War. In 1958 he gained a postgraduate scholarship to attend the Royal College of Art in London.

In his memoirs, Brian recalls a conversation he had with his father following his graduation in 1962. His father, who had worked all his life as a joiner, asked him what he planned to do for a living, and Yale responded that he was going to be a part-time art teacher. "Couldn't you get a proper job?" his father responded. When his father learnt that his son would be making £14-a-day for two days of work a week (the average salary in 1962 was £14 a week), he replied: "Well I must admit that's better than working".

Career

From 1962 to 1968 Brian taught at Hornsey College of Art, which he recalls as an exciting time when the art world was changing rapidly. Like many British artists in the post-war period, Brian was a modernist, embracing what Prime Minister Harold Wilson described as "the white heat of modernity" through technological and aesthetic innovation in his art. He was proud of the achievements of the college in terms of education, writing that "we encouraged people to have a positive social outlook and to try to engage across society in their work". He described the thrust of the college's approach to art as being "modernism…with a hint of socialism".

Of the 1960s in general, he described it as a time in which "everything seemed possible, and I don't think that's me being nostalgic, the 70s & 80s were a bleak period". He cites the divisions of the Cold War, in particular those caused by the war in Vietnam, as well as the new politics of Thatcherism as being key causes of the fading sense of possibility. Brian was not, however, outspoken in his political views, and he admits that he avoided getting involved in much of the activism of the period, such as the strikes of May 1968.

Monsters of the City (1971)
Thanks to the Tate



The Monster Maze on Grahame Park
Personal Photo

It was in this year that Brian began his role at the Greater London Council, working on his designs for the Grahame Park estate from 1969-72. Brian designed three types of 'play-sculptures' on the estate, including:

- Concrete playforms (of birds, dogs, and seated people).
- Concrete 'play slabs' (such as the Monster Maze).
- Metal play equipment (including metal figures, although none of these remain on the estate).

Following his work on Grahame Park Yale continued to work for the GLC. In 1973, several of the 'play-sculptures' created for Grahame Park were displayed as part of an exhibition at the Hayward Gallery, on London's South Bank, entitled How to Play the Environment Game. The exhibition highlighted the need for engaging public spaces, and the inclusion of Brian's sculptures demonstrated his influence as an artist on theories about urban environments.

Seated Figure on Grahame Park
Personal photo

Brian continued to work for the GLC until its dissolution in 1986, producing designs for housing estates and infrastructure across the city.

Later Life

In the early 1980s, Brian bought a cottage in Dungeness, Kent, where he began to spend much of his time. He began painting the surrounding landscapes in a more traditional, realist style, as well as creating a sculpture garden, which he encouraged visitors to fill with their own creations, often made from pebbles, sea-glass, and driftwood from the nearby beaches. The garden was a constantly evolving space, and truly embodied the William Morris maxim of which Brian was so fond. Brian lived in Dungeness until his death in 2009 at the age of 73.

Our next panel showcases responses by local residents to Yale's artworks on the estate, highlighting the impact his sculptures have had throughout the history of Grahame Park.

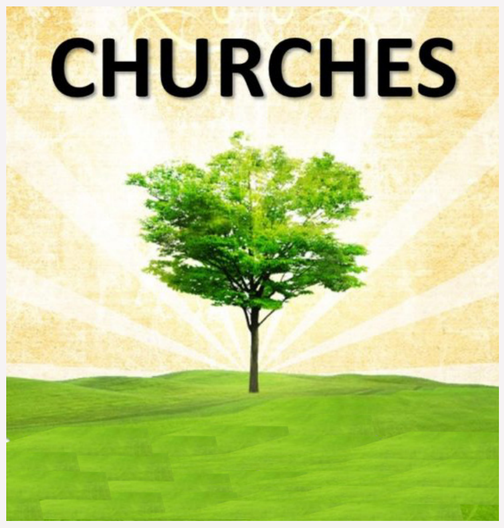


Sculptures on the Grahame Park estate (currently in storage, awaiting re-siting)
Personal photo

By Ben Britton

Heritage Fund

CHURCH PLANTING



It started with the “traditional” Christian denominations (Roman Catholic and Church of England) with bespoke church buildings and over the next 50 years other Christian groups “planted” their own fellowships from a variety of denominations. No new buildings but using existing buildings – the community centre and shop units on the Concourse, a local school, the old Scout Hut and most recently the Barnet Council office building. All committed to providing a local venue for Christian worship in Grahame Park and also to being involved in the local community providing debt counselling and legal advice, foodbanks, a charity shop, café and much more.



Margaret Clitherow was born in 1554, grew up in York as a Protestant, converted to Catholicism in 1574 and was martyred in 1584, aged just 30. This Roman Catholic church was the first church to be built in the new Grahame Park estate in 1973 and is part of the Diocese of Westminster. Activities include prayer, social action, sacramental preparation, youth work and the support of others in the life of the church and community.

Augustine of Canterbury had been sent by the then Pope to evangelise Britain and became the first Archbishop of Canterbury, dying in 604. Built in Grahame Park close to the Concourse in 1975 as part of the outreach from St Alphage in Burnt Oak, a Church of England church in the Catholic Anglican traditions and overseen by the See of Fulham. Activities include mental health provision, lunch club, coffee mornings in the Beaufort pub, art & history exhibitions, young musician concerts, emergency food bank, visiting sick and elderly and the Rugrats nursery.



The first “non-established” fellowship to spring up in Grahame Park in 1978, meeting in the old youth club premises and more recently at 7 The Concourse. Part of the Foursquare Gospel Church movement. A strong presence on the Concourse over many years and with a vision to serve the local community. Activities include provision of the Food Share foodbank, training, advice and advocacy. Also runs training in “Sowing Stitches” in 6 The Concourse, support for children and young people through the Zone 7 Youth Club. Pastor Hope Yoloye has been at the centre since the very start.





Birthed out of Woodcroft Evangelical Church in Burnt Oak (now named International Gospel Church), PCF was a vibrant addition to the Grahame Park community in 1982. Meeting in the Community Centre and renting 20 The Concourse (now the NHG Business Hub but then renamed 3:16 after the famous Bible verse in John’s gospel as a charity and community shop providing good quality low-cost goods and a place to chat and drink coffee. Provided Sunday lunches in the Community Centre after morning services. Events included open air worship, fashion shows and Christmas and Easter processions including donkeys and sheep! Closed its doors in 1994 and now back part of International Gospel Church.



With origins in the New Frontiers churches network, North West church started in St James’ Catholic School in 2003, moved to Finchley, renamed as Trinity Church, came back to the area and took over the old Scout hut in Grahame Park Way. While this remains a centre for the church’s activities, Sunday worship is back at St James’ School. Activities over the years have included hosting Barnet Refugee Service, Resources for Autism, Colindale foodbank, a Legal Aid centre, a debt counselling centre, a night shelter and a community garden.



The most recent addition to the area since 2020, planted from St Barnabas in North Finchley, previously met in the Hub in Montrose Park but currently meeting in the Barnet Council offices. A Charismatic Anglican church meeting Sunday mornings and at other times during the week. Hub groups, Alpha courses and open-air worship are just some of the activities.



Churches have always been more than just buildings and places of worship. As well as meeting the needs of their own congregations, churches are also about being “salt and light” in the local community and the churches included here are no exception providing resource and comfort to the whole Grahame Park community these last 50 years, regardless of religion, denomination, creed or colour. While carrying out research into this project I have been really impressed and inspired by the commitment each of these fellowships have to the community in which they are based and would encourage you to check them out!

Acknowledgements

Steve Nicola; (Notting Hill Genesis) Photos 2,3,4 & 6

Chris Smith; Photos 5 & 7

Images using Bing; Photos 1 & 8

Rev’d Dr Joseph Gabor; Spending time talking about St Augustine’s Church

Duncan Hanton; Spending time talking about Trinity Church

By Chris Smith

Heritage Fund

ARRIVALS TO GRAHAME PARK

Jan Brennan

My arrival to Grahame Park was in 1991 and I stayed for 15 years. I lived in Hudson block with my family and we have the best memories of happy times within a great community. I am now lucky enough to work here and continue to be part of this fantastic place.

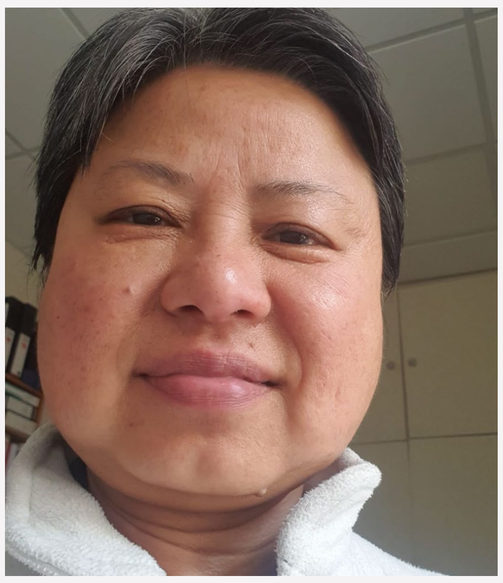
The London / Hendon Aerodrome & RAF base had many arrivals to this piece of land in NW London over the years. Then the aeroplanes left. The community in Grahame Park estate has been welcoming new arrivals ever since. Let's meet some of the new arrivals to the old aerodrome.



Yvonne Daniels

Moved to Grahame Park 23 years ago, born and raised in White City and moved here from Burnt Oak. Worked in Gordon's Bakery on the estate in the mid 70s. Lives in Ratier and has been very happy. Yvonne loves her flat. Over the years she has made many friends and took part in all the activities. In later years Yvonne would buy a cup of tea and have a chat with the staff and customers at Gordon's bakery. Nowadays Yvonne loves the estate, and comes to bingo, coffee morning and the exercise group She loves the fish and chip shop and laughs, "it is now my second home, I go there every day".





Jan Nee Wan

Moved to Grahame Park 20 years ago. Born and raised in Malaysia and loved moving into her home on Douglas Bader estate with her husband and baby. Jan Nee took advantage of the opportunities living in Grahame Park offered her and would take her children to Wingfield Children's Centre, where she could learn new skills such as first aid and baby massage. Jan Nee has become an active member of the community and has done voluntary work with CCT and is part of the Community Facepainting team. "I love the community here, I love getting involved, it is a nice community".



Sharon Evans

Arrived in Grahame Park in 1977 and has lived here for 47 years. Born on the Caribbean Island of St Lucia, Sharon came to London in 1969, aged 16, for school and work. When Sharon arrived in Grahame Park, she lived in a 1 bed flat in Mitchell. Her flat was only 4 years old. "It was great, I felt safe, and we could leave our doors open". Sharon has happy memories of that time; she would go to the Hind & Hart pub with her friends. "The shops were lovely, there were 2 greengrocers, a butcher, 2 supermarkets, a DIY shop, a launderette and a shoe shop". In 2007 Sharon moved to a new flat in Ruby Way. Over the years Sharon has made a lot of friends. "Grahame Park is my home. I'm 70 now and would love to spend the rest of my life here. It would be amazing if there was some sheltered accommodation on the estate for older people".

Grahame Park was the birthplace of British Aviation. The Aerodrome brought many arrivals to the area for work, to see the spectacular displays or those who wanted to try the new skill of flying. Since the mid-1970s we have seen more arrivals. New residents from different backgrounds and different countries. Some have stayed here from the beginning, bringing up children and grandchildren and have made lifelong connections and friends. Some have just arrived. They are all part of our community. We are all happy to celebrate Grahame Park and call it home.



Alexandra

Arrived in Grahame Park as a Guardian tenant 8 years ago and has lived in Noel, Napier and is now a Barnet Homes tenant in Nardini. Alexandra had lived all over London in many different Guardian properties and had never heard of Grahame Park. In Noel block she loved the flat and enjoyed the view from her window, looking out towards the church and a small, grassed courtyard area. Alexandra learnt about the poor reputation of Grahame Park and encountered anti-social behaviour when she moved into Napier block but was happy when this was resolved. Since then, Alexandra has felt more safe and secure. She likes living in Grahame Park and has received support from the CCT and has joined some local classes. Alexandra has found her classes very rewarding and has got to know some nice people. "I feel part of a community".

Ramona Tomescu

Moved to Grahame Park 9 years ago. Born and raised in Romania. Has 3 children. Was so happy to be offered her flat in Grahame Park. She loves Grahame Park, she feels safe and has lovely neighbours. Ramona loves the convenience of living in Grahame Park, close to schools, Underground, shops and buses. Romana discovered a spiritual family at St Augustine's church and has felt welcome and part of this community. Her children have been confirmed and have completed their Holy Communion with the church. Romana and her children enjoy using the play park at Trinity Gardens and make good use of Unitas Youth Zone in Montrose Park. Ramona is feeling sad as she will have to leave her flat because of the regeneration and hopes she can be housed locally. "Romania is not my home now, my home is Grahame Park. My life in Grahame Park has been the most beautiful years for me and a great opportunity to raise my children".



By Jan Brennan

Heritage Fund

CLAUDE GRAHAME-WHITE: PIONEER, AND INFLUENCER

Who put Hendon Aerodrome on the world map 1909-1919? An imagined interview with a real historical aviation pioneer, based on facts and my research for the Heritage Lottery Project.

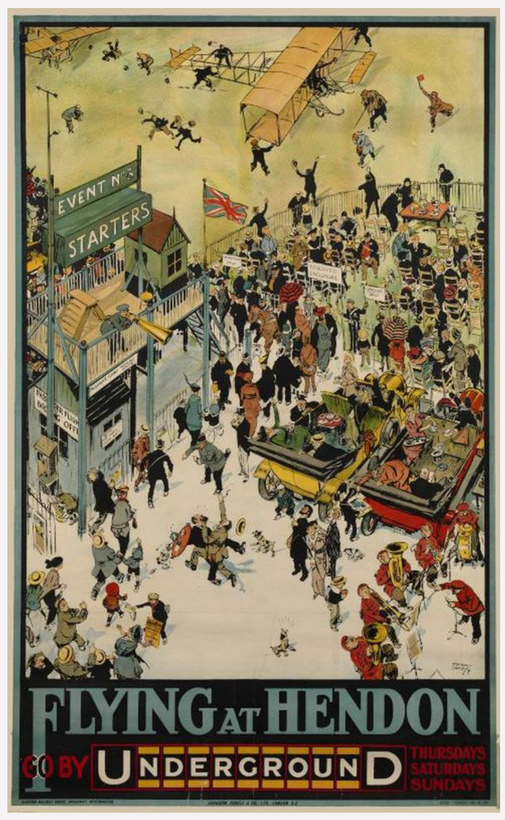
Mr Claude Grahame-White, how lovely to meet you.
Call me Claudie.
We're here, the site of Hendon Aerodrome. Anything you recognise from your day?
Not a thing. Tall buildings, modern flats. Progress I call it. Exactly how it should be.
You championed new technology, won numerous races and a fortune in prizes. England's first qualified pilot. We might call you the Fast and Furious: Entrepreneur, Innovator, Celebrity, Influencer. How on earth did you end up



Smithsonian Glamour Boy article 7 Sept 2010- photo 1910 online

here?
Desperate to find land for my new venture. Convinced AVIATION was the future. Knew I could make money! Then, astonishing news, Louis Bleriot flew the English Channel! Tracked him to France. Insisted he give me flying lessons. Saw lots of places to buy land, set upon here, perfect! Near London, the Edgware Road and Railway.

Why flying machines? Hardly anyone knew about them, let alone seen one? Only the impossibly rich could dream of actually flying.
My first passion - Fast Cars! Arrested once for dangerous driving 16mph ! Bought luxury cars - only the rich could afford this invention – then taught women and men to drive them. Same with planes. Launched a flying school here. Taught women and men to fly. Two week course £75 (today:£10k). Next, the Women's Aero Club. High profile rich women - suffragists Emmeline and Christobel Pankhurst - enrolled. Flying was tricky and dangerous but the interest - incredible !
You famously lobbied the government. Country-wide 'Wake Up England' flying campaign promoting air defence investment.
Fell on deaf ears. Extremely frustrating. They didn't have a high opinion of me. However, pushing on - created the Grahame-White Aviation Company then the The Grahame White Factory. Very successful indeed. Technology



Flying at Hendon, Tony Sarg 1914 LT Museum Poster

advanced at a pace. Built more than 30 types of planes between 1909 -1919 !
You promoted dramatic airplane displays.
Yes, extremely popular indeed. 1912 Aerial Derby sold 45,000 tickets, heard 500,000 spectators actually saw it. Cars absolutely rammed into this Aerodrome.

How on earth did you finance it ?
Big prize money. Competitions. Record-breaking races! Drummed up publicity, especially in America. Landed my plane next to the White House 1910, wasn't arrested, crowds were thrilled. Instantly famous! Met my wife there. Not everyone was convinced about aviation. Tried for years to persuade the Admiralty that planes were our best attack and defence. Luckily, by the war 1914, Government placed aircraft orders. Companies sprung up all over this area. Absolute centre of the aviation world!



Joan Fry, Wimbledon finalist London Country Club champion. Source Mary Evans Prints Online

I read the RAF treated you quite badly.
Not true, not the RAF. 1914-18 the Government requisitioned my airfield and factories. Many businesses, factories, buildings taken over during the war years, we all did our bit.

Built planes for the war effort, employed a thousand workers. Built workers' housing, Aeroville (Booth Rd).
War over, very long legal battle ensued, Finally Treasury paid me back. Cost my mental health dearly. London Country Club (1919), over there (Colindale Gardens, the former Police College).

Top of the London and Country Social Scene: Balls, Music, Bands, Valentine dances, Fundraisers and the like. Huge grounds. Eight tennis courts hosting the Mens' and Womens' Lawn Tennis tournaments. Stars of Wimbledon. Players from around the world.

But you turned your back on it all. Why?
Yes, young talent comes through. My aerodrome was completely captive during the legal case. Aircraft contracts stopped after the war 1918. War to end all wars you see. Maintained hangar space for private flyers, including the Prince of Wales (later King Edward VIII), a good friend. Years later, the new blood, Amy Johnson and her husband Jim Mollison, persuaded me to do a flight for the cameras. Was rusty but I did take off and fly. It's captured on film somewhere .

Scan me!

Nothing here from my day. RAF did a great job creating a museum. Moved to France, left all this, became a successful property developer.

Claudie, you know you said there is nothing left here.nYour Factory, Watchtower, Your office, they're all preserved. Thousands of people visit them each year. This housing estate behind you is called Grahame Park Estate, after YOU
Really? That is marvellous !!

It was fascinating to learn about Claude Grahame-White and his achievements during the period 1909 – 1919 marking the beginnings of Hendon Aerodrome and Grahame Park Estate. His seemingly endless quest for innovation and passion for new technology is worthy of a TV period drama. The exploits were indeed dramatic involving danger,



Katherine Wilkinson looking towards the former site of the Hendon Aerodrome 2024

By Katherine Wilkinson

Heritage Fund

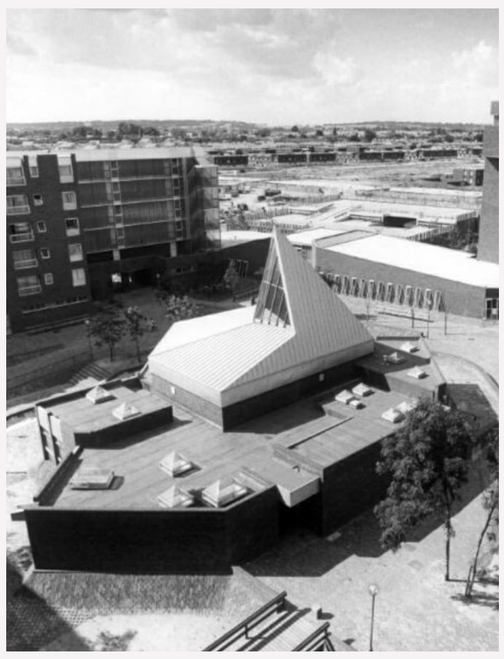
MEMORIES OF THE CONCOURSE

Bricks! Brown bricks as far as the eye could see! That was our first impression of the Concourse on Grahame Park. The buildings, the walls, even the pathways! We had no idea about Modern Brutalist Architecture in those days, and joked that the Council must have had a job lot of bricks to use up.



Thanks to London Picture Archive

There was a sunken playground at one end. Sunken being the operative word, as it used to fill with water after heavy rain unlike the Moat at the other end around the Community Centre, which constantly leaked, making the bridge across it slightly redundant.



Thanks to London Picture Archive

But they were attractively linked by a covered awning running the length of the Concourse, with benches beneath.



Thanks to London Picture Archive

My husband and I first came to Grahame Park in 1974, looking for a new venture that would also provide accommodation.

We had hoped to open a hardware shop, but when we arrived there already was one, run by a lovely couple, Bill and Clare Elsley, with whom we soon became friends.

In those days the Concourse was like a village high street and had most shops you would expect to find.

There was Dewhursts, the butchers, John, the greengrocer, with, surprisingly, another directly opposite, run by an older man. I went to John's though, as he was always up for a chat and a laugh.

Next door was, amazingly, a travel agent, run by David Murford, a guy with a keen interest in flying who had salvaged and rebuilt a small plane that he frequently flew across to Le Touquet for Sunday lunch, even taking my husband on one occasion. Sadly the plane crashed one day when he was taking his daughter across the Channel for her 14th birthday and they were both killed. Such a tragedy.

Then there was the Post Office run by Vinay with his mum and dad. It was always busy but no one minded waiting in the queue as he was always joking and making us laugh and everyone was chatting and friendly.

I believe the last shop on that side sold curtains and wool.

At the end of the row was the pub, The Hind and Hart, and opposite William Hill's, the bookmakers, naturally! Always handy to place a bet on Ascot or the Derby.

Coming next on that side was Beba's Hairdressing Salon. Beba was Yugoslavian, and her sister Anna had trained with Vidal Sassoon, a very fashionable name back then. She always gave you a great cut. Also in there was Mary, very popular with the older ladies having their hair permed.

Then there was the launderette. Always warm. And a great place for a gossip.

MacParland's, the chemist, processed our prescriptions and sold makeup and other sundry items. Behind the counter was the ever friendly and welcoming June.

I believe the off-licence came next, but that, along with the pub, caused a few problems with some local lads sitting outside drinking all day, so that eventually the benches and awning were removed.

There was a drycleaners on that side too.

Then the Express Dairy, with its nice fresh delicatessen, right next door to the aforementioned second greengrocers.

A very popular shop was Martin's the newsagents. A large double fronted shop that sold toys as well. The couple who ran it had an old doddery Dalmatian that would sleep the day away outside.

And then the only shop that has survived to this day. The Ocean Bar Chinese takeaway and fish and chip shop. So good that people still come from far away to buy there.

A bit further down was Woodleys, a fairly large supermarket that later became a Londis and then a Spar.

Opposite, by the playground, was Gordon's Bakery. Lovely fresh bread and cakes baked on the premises. Ooh, I can still smell it now! Delicious!

Up the steps was an optician's and the dentist, Mr Zul Paliwalla, a kindly gentle man, who kept our teeth in check.

A few empty shops were still available alongside the Citizens Advice Bureau. But what could we offer that wasn't already there? My husband came up with the idea that families always needed shoes and repairs, and thus our shop, The Shoe Tree came into being.



Thanks to Ceci Chan for the creation of this artwork

We had five happy years there, with our baby daughter happily playing in her playpen at the back, and making many friends. But sadly, the lack of passing trade and the recession of the 80s forced us to give up.

All that's left now is a faded wooden sign above the back door.



Photo by Linda Baker taken at the back of the Old Shop

However, I wouldn't have changed that part of my life for the world and still see some of the old faces around the Estate. Happy memories!

After leaving the shop Linda continued to live nearby and worked for thirty years in the local primary school. She continues to support the many events and activities run by CCT.



Photo by Linda Baker of herself near the location of the Old Shoe Shop

By Linda Baker

Heritage Fund

THE ORIGINS OF GRAHAME PARK ESTATE AND COLINDALE

The Grahame Park Estate was built on the site of the Hendon Aerodrome and named after its founder Claude Grahame-White. Going further back, what was here before the aerodrome? Initially, lots of countryside!

Colindale, now in London, used to be in the county of Middlesex and most of Middlesex was covered by the Great Forest of Middlesex, an ancient woodland. We are not sure if Grahame Park was within the forest but it seems likely.



How Colindale got its name
The name Colindale comes from a family called Collyn, who were tenants of All Souls College, Oxford during Tudor times. Then Colindale was called Collyndene because a dene is a wooded valley with a stream running through it. After the woods were cleared, the name changed to Colindale – a dale being an open valley with a river - the Silkstream.

Roman and Medieval Colindale
The roman road Watling St, which was one of the major roman roads in Britain ran through the forest. This linked Dover and London with St Albans and then Wroxeter. Modern day Edgware Road is part of this roman road.

In medieval times, the road was used by pilgrims going on pilgrimage to St Albans and the forest became the hunting ground of the Norman monarchs from William the Conqueror (1066) so it became the Royal Forest of Middlesex. Packhorse routes ran through the forest. It was deforested in 1218 by King Henry III and ceased to be a royal forest.

The Battle of Barnet
Near Colindale, the Battle of Barnet on Easter Sunday 14 April 1471 was fought between King Edward IV and the Earl of Warwick, known as the kingmaker, who had previously deposed Henry VI and put Edward IV on the throne. They then fell out and Warwick put Henry VI back on the throne. Edward IV defeated Warwick, who was killed. A factor in Edward IV's victory was that it was a foggy day and in the fog some of Warwick's troops mistook the badge of an ally (a star with streams of light) for that of the badge of Edward IV (the sun with rays) and so fought against their own side.

The 19th Century – Colindale at last!
In the 1840s, more woods were cleared and then Collyndene became Colindale. At that time, there were four buildings there: Rose Cottage, Colindale Cottage, Colindale Lodge and Colindale Farm with 25 inhabitants in total, except at haymaking.

More farms proliferated, including: Tithe



Personal photo by Maureen Beesley



Farm, the nearest farm to the aerodrome and Goldbeaters Farm, which covered most of the land east of Edgware Road. In the 1860s, the Midland Railway was built.

20th Century
In 1900, Colindale Hospital was opened (this was bombed in World War 2). Hendon Aerodrome and a flying school at were set up by Claude Grahame-White. By 1914, the site was 207 acres and was also occupied by companies set up by Grahame-White, who also planned a housing estate for aircraft workers on the west side of the aerodrome. Only one square was built (in 1918-19) called Aeroville.

Two hangars were built in 1915, which are now part of the RAF Museum (opened in 1973). The aerodrome was in use during World War I (1914-1918) and from 1918,



the RAF was in control of the aerodrome. After the war, Grahame-White was forced to sell the site to the government. Aerial displays resumed in 1919 and in 1920 the first RAF pageant was held. These were popular and continued until 1937.
The aerodrome was easier to get to after the extension to the Northern line from Golders Green to Edgware with stations at Colindale and Burnt Oak in 1924.
The Watling Estate was built on 500 acres of farmland, immediately west of the aerodrome.

In World War II (1939-45), fighter aircraft were located at the aerodrome until 1940 and then it became a communications base.



The surrounding area became more built up and the aerodrome became unsuitable for flying and was closed for flying in 1957, though Hendon was the location of the RAF Supply Control Centre till1988.
The land of the aerodrome was used for the RAF Museum, the Hendon Police College and the Grahame Park Estate.
The Grahame Park Estate was built in the 1970s by the LCC and Barnet Council in modern brutalist style, in direct contrast to the Watling Estate, which was built in traditional garden city style. The first



family moved in on 23 Oct 1971.

The names of the streets in the Grahame Park Estate relate to its agricultural background and the buildings to its aeronautical past.

Conclusion
There have been many changes in Colindale over the different eras from forest to agriculture to aerodrome and to our own Grahame Park Estate.

By Maureen Beesley

Heritage Fund

ART WITH ARCHITECTURE



Artwork designed by Waldemar Pranckiewicz based on sculptures of Brian Yale

My name is Waldemar Pranckiewicz and I lived in Grahame Park until recently. I studied art back in Poland and I have always really connected to municipal art which is shared with communities such as the work of Brian Yale. Through this project I was introduced to his amazing sculptures on the estate and this interest was further developed by our visit to the Tate to look at the archival materials which they had in their collection.

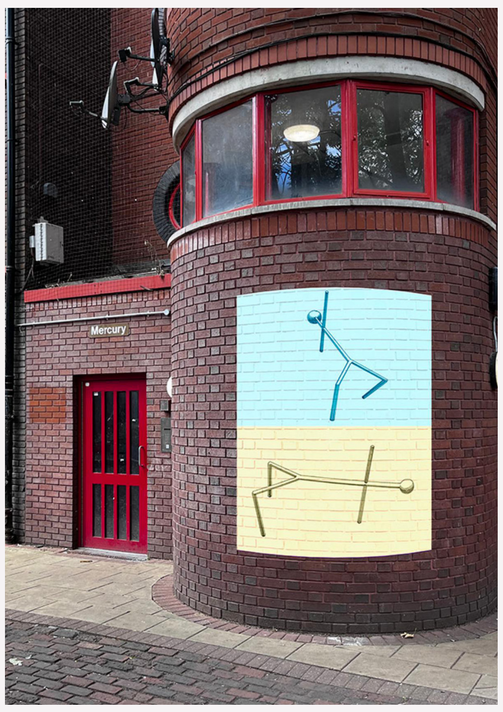


Tate visit with heritage volunteers photo courtesy of Steve Nicola

How did I respond as an artist to Brian Yale's body of work? The sculptures around Grahame Park Estate had me thinking about the form and the function of art when it's combined with architecture. Artworks on the estate (Dogs, birds, sitters) are interactive - they allow you to rest or lean on them, but additionally they are in configuration with themselves and the buildings around them.

For me each object is grounded, has a fixed direction and it is intertwined with others, together they are constellations, and each location can be seen as a variant of the same simple subject of a docile animal or a semi-abstract figure.

Photographic documentation of the estate from the 1970s captures other no-longer existing arrangements made of concrete and steel. All of these modernist playgrounds were transcribed into my drawings and poster concepts. By making my own reproductions and variants of those objects I wanted to reintroduce or rather reinstall mutations of play structures into the estate.



Proposed location for new artwork-bringing to life the platforms which existed previously on the estate designed by Waldemar Pranckiewicz



Grahame Park's Play Structures from the 1970's-artwork designed by Waldemar Pranckiewicz





Other designs and artwork in other proposed locations on the estate and Concourse by Waldemar Pranckiewicz

Drawing and posters are intended to be a modular form, open to replication and compiling into a string of patterns, composition with a high saturation and a very strong mood.

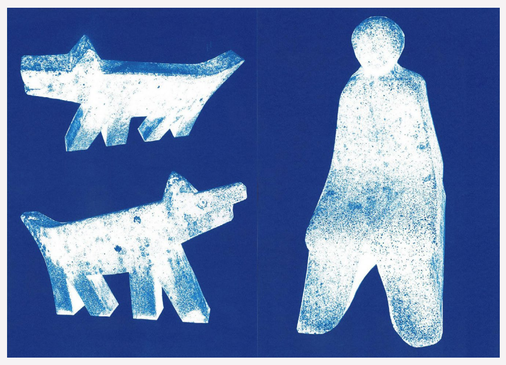
For me a dull scenery of estate buildings should be contacted by colourful images; each building has their own visual identity. Their own variant of abstract or fragmented figures but with potential of reassembling into something bigger and more complex.



Another image of my proposed artwork for the estate with a fragmented figure-Artwork by Waldemar Pranckiewicz

The way I think about transformation of the estate by images, objects, graphic design is in itself a half modernist concept. In the sense that it's not a dream for a better place, a dream which often goes into deterioration, dismantling and misuse, but rather it's a dream of processing decayed modernism into a puzzle. A module to connect to other parts or leave it as it is.

For me, the mistreatment of the modernistic artefacts and architecture creates an aura of sadness and an unwelcoming environment. Run down modernist buildings became a noir cityscape, where a half-burned dog becomes a smooth version of Anubis. Paradoxically a decayed matter of concrete has its own charm. Able to survive a lot of challenging outdoor conditions it becomes monumental, a majestic shell slowly collapsing.





A collage of other images by Waldemar Pranckiewicz

This project has enabled me to connect to modernism and the artist Brian Yale and explore his work to look at ways his artwork can add colour and connect to the past of Grahame Park and all of the people who have called this estate home. Included in that list is myself and I do hope that the connections to modernism and Brian Yale are part of the plans for the future of Grahame Park.

By Waldemar Pranckiewicz

Heritage Fund

CREATIVE RESPONSE TO BRIAN YALE

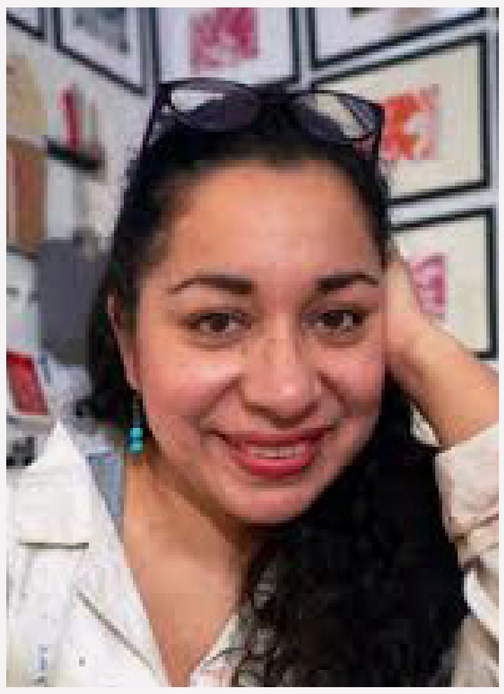


Photo by Graham Land Photography

As an artist I have lived in Grahame Park for over 20 years now. My journey as an artist actually began in the old library on Grahame Park looking through the art books on Kandinsky recommended to me by the local GP at the time. His work really ignited something powerful for me as an artist. Wassily Wassilyevich Kandinsky was a Russian painter and art theorist. Kandinsky is generally credited as one of the pioneers of abstraction in western art. Born in Moscow, he spent his childhood in Odessa, where he graduated from Odessa Art School. His work is a real inspiration to my body of work:



Thanks to Guggenheim Museum website for image

I have a studio in Grahame Park, and I have shown my artwork in a variety of national and international settings. I was intrigued when John and Ben told me about Brian Yale as although I have lived on the estate, I had not realised the amazing work of his was situated throughout Grahame Park estate. It is interesting the things you don't notice, and I was intrigued to explore Brian Yale and his municipal art situated across the estate. As part of the Heritage Lottery project, we had a visit to the Tate archives which was so informative. It was an amazing experience to be given a backroom tour of the reading rooms and archives at the Tate. I discussed my heritage project with Adrian Glew who was really helpful, and I was signposted to the prints section of the Tate Collection. The space is an amazing repository of various artists' prints and I never realised until I was involved in this project that this was accessible to all members of the public when you book a timeslot.

Experiencing Brian Yale's printing at Tate Britain had an influence in my approach to linocut printmaking. His compositions inspired me to explore new dimensions within my own practice. I think that as an artist I never stop learning about new techniques and new points of view.

Yale's prints expressed narrative through his use of colour and form, inspiring me to



Photo courtesy of Steve Nicola

explore their depth. Exploring his artistic journey revealed valuable insights into the creative process and the importance of community, particularly through collaborations with fellow artists and printmakers.



Patricia Bidi, Memories of Grahame Park

My visit to Tate Britain's Prints and Drawings Rooms not only exposed me to Yale's work but also provided a learning environment where I could explore a diverse range of printmaking styles and traditions. Immersed in the museum's collection, I gained a deeper appreciation for the history of printmaking and its continued relevance in contemporary art. This knowledge I used within my new artwork I have created on Grahame Park. The influence of Brian Yale's screen printing extends far beyond the walls of Tate Britain, connecting with my own experiences living in Grahame Park and near the Royal Air Force Museum. These environments have served as a source of inspiration, infusing my own artistic practice with a profound sense of place and history.



Patricia Bidi, The Energy of Enigma

In addition, walking among Brian Yale's sculptures placed throughout my community ignited my imagination and broadened my understanding of his multifaceted artistic vision.

As I reflect on my experience, I am reminded of the transformative power of art to inspire, challenge, and connect us across time and space. Moving forward, I am eager to continue pushing the boundaries of my own creative expression, fuelled by the inspiration I gained from encountering Yale's work at Tate Britain and on Grahame Park estate.



Patricia Bidi, Where is Home

By Patricia Bidi

Heritage Fund