



EC SOSA

Edmonton County School Old Scholars' Association
 Website www.ecsosa.org.uk
 Newsletter - March 2026



A New Town' is planned at Crews Hill in north London. Here's what you need to know.

The Government recently produced a shortlist of places it might consider building a 'New Town', part of its efforts to address the housing shortage. Two of those places are in London. Thamesmead is one, but let's have a closer look at the other, larger option, Crews Hill.



What's the plan?

Up to 21,000 new homes are proposed for the Crews Hill area, complete with new schools, GP surgeries, shops and all the other amenities. The plans also include Vicarage Farm, south of Crews Hill, which if developed will go by the name of Chase Park. It really is a town-sized development, the scale of which we haven't seen in London for a long time.

The area has a small existing population of about 500 people. Oh, and London's most northerly pub, in the welcoming shape of The Plough.

So, 500 people live there now, and 21,000 families could be moving in. That's a big deal

Most of the area is garden centres and nurseries, with some limited amounts of housing and lots of fields. The new development will radically change this landscape.

This may well affect our use of The Plough for quarterly lunches, if any of us are still around, if it goes ahead,

Extracted from "The Londonist"

During a recent visit the UK to a class reunion (reported in December issue), from their home in Canada where they have lived for 60 years, Roy Smith's wife Sally had a fall that resulted in Hospital treatment. Roy offers the following on the NHS and USA systems. Without prejudice.

"Some years ago, while visiting the USA for a model aircraft contest, I injured myself quite badly by getting my right hand caught in the propeller of the model aircraft I was attempting to fly. I received about a dozen stitches in the hand. This was all done in an emergency treatment setting and I got a bill for \$250.

By contrast, after her fall, Sally was in the A&E Dept in the UK for 30 hours and then admitted to the hospital. Within a few hours of her arrival at A&E she had been X-rayed and it was determined that she had a fracture of her right humerus and needed a "Collar & Cuff" sling. Eventually, on the third day, after we had reminded them several times, the sling was finally applied. A CT Scan was done on her head, because she had hit it on the pavement but no brain bleed was found. However, she was exhibiting clear signs of suffering from concussion, which was never treated. Upon her discharge she was presented with a Discharge Summary that was inaccurate in many important aspects. Later, in the



mail, we received a bill for \$30,000 and in the weeks since we have received several threatening letters, despite the hospital having been aware, from the beginning, that we were covered by travel insurance. Nothing in any of the documentation received so far indicates why she was admitted with a

simple broken arm.

Our experience with the UK's system has not been a pleasant one. I should leaven that statement slightly, to note that, earlier in our visit to the UK, Sally had to attend another A&E Dept, in Norwich. It turned out that there was nothing seriously wrong - she simply needed to change the dose of her diuretic and she was fine. On that occasion the UK system treated her well - both professionally and personally.

*I have no wish to defend the USA's medical system - which is one rule for the rich and no help for the poor - but our recent experience with the UK's health care system has not been a pleasant one, either medically, personally, or financially. **Roy**"*

A Prank Revealed. (or the great Cupola Caper)
Roy E. Smith, 1951-59

At ECS, one morning in the late Spring of 1958 or 1959, an Unidentified Non-Flying Object was observed. Atop the small ‘belfry’ (or cupola) on the roof of the building is a pineapple. The pineapple's symbolic significance in classical architecture is rooted in its association with hospitality and welcome. Why that should have been added as decoration to a school is a matter for some conjecture. On that particular morning, however, the pineapple wore a hat! – in the form of an upside-down wastepaper basket. How it got there has remained a mystery – until now.

Before the big ‘reveal’, however, let me reminisce a little about the saga that followed the discovery of this affront to the dignity of the school. The first step taken by the headmaster (Mr. R. L. Hudson) was to delegate the school’s well-liked janitor to knock the offending object from its perch. This was no easy task but, later that day, he could be seen waving a very long stick at the basket, from a stance on the peak of the roof. This attempt was quickly abandoned when it became apparent just how precarious the situation was – and that the basket wasn’t to be dislodged quite that easily. I believe that other minds were set the task of determining how the offending object was to be removed – it being a wicker basket, and thus not too subject to wind forces, and it being clear that it was firmly lodged, there was little chance that it would simply blow down from its paramount position. It was eventually decided that, as the school was going to be due some repainting in the not-too-distant future, the part of the work that encompassed the ‘belfry’ could be brought forward. The required scaffolding was thus erected and the wastebasket was finally removed.

I shall not reveal who the culprits were, there are conflicting memories about who actually did what. Suffice it to say that, during preparations for a performance on the school stage, some enterprising students discovered that, by climbing into the upper reaches of the stage area, access could be gained into the roof space of the school. This discovery quickly revealed it was possible to get into the cupola and – wonder of wonders – the cupola had windows that could be opened, allowing access to the roof. Several minds went to work on what kind of ‘prank’ we could pull off with this information. This was an age when students were enacting pranks of various sorts almost as a rite of passage. I can recall an Austin Seven appearing overnight on the roof of a building and a huge group of students erecting a brick wall across a road in London in minutes – in a well-rehearsed demonstration of teamwork. I did not have anything quite that ambitious in mind, but I thought we could make our own mark in less spectacular fashion. I proposed that one night we should enter the school under the cover of darkness, climb out onto the roof, and plant a wastepaper basket over the top of the pineapple. It was agreed that this would be our project.

One of the obstacles to be overcome was access to the locked school after dark. Looking at the school as it was then, from the front, the boys’ side was to the right and the girls’ to the left. At the far ends were the changing rooms. At the centre were self locking doors



that were rarely used. A bar on the inside opened them when pushed but, once they were closed, there was no means on the outside for opening them. No key was thus required to open them, once access to the inside had been gained.

It was decided that we should arrange access by having one of the changing room windows left unlatched at the left end of the school. I don’t remember whether we persuaded one of the girls to unlatch the window or whether one of our number ventured into that forbidden area, after all girls had left. In the dark of night, one of our number climbed through that window, closing and latching it behind him, and then came to the centre doors to let the rest of us in. We had torches with us, of course, and we made our way stealthily into the stage area and thus up into the cupola. We had commandeered a wastebasket from one of the classrooms and I had set about ‘preparing’ it. I felt that it wasn’t sufficient to just upend the basket over the pineapple – it might very well simply fall off. I lashed four short sticks to four of the wicker uprights equi-spaced around the inside of the basket, pointing at an angle towards the bottom of the basket. Once over the pineapple they would spring inwards, facing up towards the underside of the pineapple feature, thus holding the basket firmly in place.

I had intended to be the one to go out onto the roof to place the basket but it became clear that, being the shortest in the group, if I got out of the window I wouldn’t be able to get back in again. One of the others – I really don’t recall which – as I really don’t remember clearly who all the members of that intrepid group were – but one who was much taller than me, went out onto the roof and successfully placed the basket. He got back in with no difficulty. Mission accomplished, we crept back through the building, out through the centre doors, closing them behind us, thus leaving no trace of having been there.

I must say that, as I cycled down the hill towards the school the next morning, to see Mr. Hudson staring up and scratching his head, I had a feeling of great satisfaction.

ED Story edited due to lack of room with apologies to Roy and thanks to the teaching of Mr Doubleday.

ED. Those of earlier ilk may recall the “Saga of Sagger’s Leg.”

Obituary

Peter Batchelor ECS 1944-51

Reported by his wife Barbara
Peter died on the 9th November 2025 aged 93
He was a dedicated member of ECSOSA and was a regular at The Plough Lunches until a couple of years ago.
He was a member of the school football team and athletics as this photo from 1948.



Peter at a lunch in 2014



Obituary

Joan Negus (Ivanoff) ECS 1946 - 53



23rd March 1935 - 15th October 2025



Joan died in October 2025 after a short illness.
Her funeral took place on 15th October at Enfield Crematorium followed by the wake at Bush Hill Golf Club.

Should you wish to make a charitable donation in memory of Joan, these are gratefully received in favour of The Alzheimer's Society and can be made by visiting www.alzheimers.org.uk

Obituary

Beryl Cushion (nee Levett) ECS 1943-51

Beryl represented the school at hockey and tennis and in 1951 became Head Girl. On leaving school she enrolled in the Royal Navy as a wireless artificer.



She was our ECSOSA archivist for many years and rescued many files relegated to the “cupboard under the stairs” consigned there by a previous head teacher. She amassed volumes of information that she used to compile a

history of ECSOSA and Edmonton County School.

This culminated in the “Potted History” of the school to celebrate its centenary 1919 to 2019.



Advancing years limited her ability to continue as archivist and she eventually gave up the task. The records that she acquired have been donated to Enfield Local Archives at the Dugdale Centre and are available for examination on request.

Her funeral took place on the 12th February at Christchurch, Radlett, Hertfordshire, where she lived for many years.

(Information from her daughter Susie Branigan)

ANNUAL LUNCHEON



The proposed date and venue is Saturday May 23rd 12.30 for 1.00 at The Goffs Oak, Cheshunt as before. We have found this a convenient location, excellent food and atmosphere, easy parking and above all, outside the dreaded ULEZ Zone. We have decided that instead of making an up-front charge we will leave it to members to choose a la carte and pay individually.

Please let Dave Day know if you wish to attend asap so that we can give the management an idea of numbers and book sufficient room. In the event of lack of interest the event will be cancelled.

dddyl1cg@gmail.com - 07743 479752

DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Lunch at The Plough

Wed March 11th 2026 12.30

Wed June 10th 2026 12.30

Joint Presidents - Dr Susan Tranter, Cliff Wilkins
Chairman/Secretary/Treasurer - David Day
Email - secretary@ecsosa.org.uk
Website Co-ordinator - Graham Johnson
email - Webmaster@ecsosa.org.uk
Committee - Jean & Dennis Patten, Carol Coates.
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