

The Manor of Salisbury Hall

Following the closure and sale of the *Walthamstow Stadium* site, archeologists have seized a window of opportunity, given to them by the availability of the vacant car park site, to carry out excavations to the manor house of *Salisbury Hall* that once occupied the site.



Above: Aerial view of the site taken using a drone that show the excavations. Walthamstow Stadium is at back L/H side.

A Brief History Of Salisbury Hall

Salisbury Hall, also known as Walthamstow Sarum, was one of five local Manor Estates in the Walthamstow area. It was a large estate with the manor-house being sited on what later became the Walthamstow Stadium Car Park Site

The manor stood south of the Ching brook on the west side of Chingford Road. A new manor-house was built on the same site in the late 16th century. It was timber-framed and of two storeys, with

projecting gabled porches and tiled roof in two ridges. In 1768, it was described as old and mean, in 1817 as a commodious farm-house and in 1904 as a comfortable residence.

On the 1777 Chapman and Andre map, Salisbury Hall is shown as a cluster of 4 buildings surrounding a formal garden. In 1786 it had an open ended north courtyard with a range of buildings to the south. In 1843, Salisbury Hall farm comprised 224 acres. The last 141 acres of Salisbury Hall were sold for building in 1904.

By 1939 there had been considerable demolition of the buildings on the Stadium Car Park area. The timber framed hall suffered from war damage and was demolished by the Council in 1952.

The 1955 ordinance survey map shows two large buildings on the site.

Walthamstow Antiquary Society carried out excavations in 1953-1955 on the car park site and their excavation revealed the medieval foundations.

Roger Ascham

Salisbury Hall's most notable resident was Roger Ascham. He was a sixteenth century celebrity who was much in demand by the rich as a tutor to their children. He was a secretary to King Edward VI and then Queen Mary I before he became tutor to Princess Elizabeth in 1548 .

When she came to the throne in 1558 as Queen Elizabeth I, Roger Ascham moved to Walthamstow and took up residence in Salisbury Hall Manor and rented the property from the Crown for £20 per year. In 1568, at the age of 52, he died of an unidentified illness. On hearing the news Queen Elizabeth was said to remark: "I would rather have cast ten thousand pounds in the sea than be parted from my Ascham."

Roger Ascham is remembered in Waltham Forest today in the name of a Walthamstow Primary school and in the name of Waltham Forest's property management company.

The Future

A Planned Bus Depot & Learning Centre

HCT Group is a social enterprise in the transport industry that started over thirty years ago with formation of *Hackney Community Transport* to provide low cost minibuses for local community groups.

Today, the *HCT* Group is a social enterprise provider in the transport industry that safely provides over 17 million passenger trips on their buses every year. They deliver a range of transport services that include: London red buses, Social Services transport, school transport, Park and Ride, community transport, education and training. They reinvest the profits from commercial work into further transport services or projects in the communities that they serve.

Their plans relate to about a third of the car park area at the edge of the North Circular side of the site. HCT's intention is to construct a bus depot, from which it will run buses and community transport vehicles, and a training centre for unemployed people on the site. Their plans also incorporate adequate parking for staff and visitors, eliminating the need to park in nearby residential streets and all HCT bus drivers are provided with a bus and tube pass for travel to work.

From March next year, there will be between 150 and 170 jobs at the depot and up to 270 over time. The training centre will enable *HCT* to train up to 100 local unemployed people every year. The company believes that its planned activities will have a very positive impact on the local economy. They will also ensure that surpluses generated from the operation of local bus services are re-invested to benefit local people.

HCT has been operating in Waltham Forest since 2004, and currently transports over 500 children with special educational needs between home and school every day. It also operates a coach and bus hire service for local community groups of up to 70 people, and the 212, W12 and W13 red bus routes.

Bill Bayliss

July 2014

Resources

The principal sources for the above are:

<http://www.eventbrite.co.uk/e/archaeological-open-days-at-salisbury-hall-excavations-walthamstow-tickets-12045896601>

<http://www.british-history.ac.uk/report.aspx?compid=42778>

<http://stowresidents.btck.co.uk/History>

http://hctgroup.org/about_us/hct_group_news/181/Planned%20bus%20depot%20and%20learning%20centre%20in%20Walthamstow