

BLUE HERITAGE PLAQUES IN LOUGHTON

Loughton Town Council has run a heritage plaque scheme, since 1997, commemorating the places where famous and notable people lived or stayed in Loughton, as well as some important landmark buildings.

Listed below is the location of each plaque, the dedication upon the plaque, and a précis on the subject.

Jacob Epstein, Sculptor – Deerhurst, 50 Baldwins Hill, IG10 1SF

Jacob Epstein was born to Polish-Jewish parents on 10 November 1880 in New York City. His early ambition was to be a painter, spending his adolescence sketching the teeming ghetto life of New York. However, faulty eyesight forced him to abandon painting for sculpture. After studying in Paris for two years at the Ecole des Beaux-Arts, Academie Julian, he moved to London in 1905, where he set up a sculpture studio, becoming one of the leading portrait sculptors of the 20th century, despite public scandals caused by the nudity of his so-called Strand Statues (1907–08; destroyed 1937) and the debauched-looking angel on his memorial (1912) for the Irish writer Oscar Wilde. In 1910 Epstein became a British citizen.

In 1913 he became a founding member of the London Group, an association of artists and writers promoting modern art in England.

Jacob Epstein came to Loughton about 1920 and lived at no 49 Baldwins Hill (which he rented). The shed (or its successor) in which he carved the Rima and Visitation is still extant behind this cottage. John Cairns, who lived at Woodcroft adjacent, remembers Epstein blocking the entrance road c1925 with large pieces of stone and sculptures. In about 1933, he moved to Deerhurst (later nos 50 and 52 Baldwins Hill) which are opposite, and lived there till 1950 (he also had a London house). There is a painting by Epstein in the District Museum. Cllr Pond also has one of his paintings on his wall!

Epstein was knighted in 1954. He died on 21 August 1959.

This first plaque was not commissioned by Loughton Town Council. All the following have been.



The Revd Robert Hunter (1823-1897), Lexicographer and naturalist
Forest Villa, 7 Staples Road, IG10 1HP

The Revd Robert Hunter was born on 3 September 1823, in Newburgh, Fife. He was educated at Aberdeen Grammar School, followed by the University of Aberdeen, excelling in Latin, Greek, Mathematics and Natural Science. His early career included tutoring in the Bermudas, he also served as a missionary in Nagpur, India, recording local geology and fossils.

However, he is best known for his lexicography, working on his Encyclopaedic Dictionary, which he produced in seven volumes between 1879 and 1888. He spent the first seven years working alone, later teaming up with Henry Scherren and John Williams, working on this at Forest Retreat – the house he built in 1882 on Staples Road (now known as Forest Villa). The house has views over Epping Forest and the Roding Valley, and is in the hillier part of Loughton known by some as 'Little Cornwall'. Hunter died at the house on 25 February 1897. He is buried in the City of London Cemetery.



José (Josephine) Collins
Music Hall Artiste
Collins Court, 107 High Road, IG10 4JB

Charlotte Josephine Collins was an English actress and singer known by her stage name, José Collins. Born in London on 23 May 1887 to music hall performer and comedian Lottie Collins (who popularized the song "Ta-ra-ra Boom-de-ay!"), who later married her music coach, Stephen Patrick Cooney, and Josie took the name Charlotte Josephine Cooney.

Josie was celebrated for her performances in musical comedies and early motion pictures, having got her start as a child performer. By the age of 17 she had appeared in both pantomime and music hall as a singer and actress, making her West End debut in a principal role in *The Antelope* (1908) and appearing on Broadway, in *Vera Violetta* (1911).

Collins was married three times: firstly, in 1911, to Leslie Chatfield; secondly in 1920 to Lord Robert Innes-Ker (brother of the 8th Duke of Roxburghe) ending in divorce in 1935; and lastly to Dr Gerald Kirkland. Collins had no children from any of her marriages. José Collins died on 6 December 1958 (aged 71) in Epping.

A commemorative plaque was originally erected by the town council in March 1998 at Loughton Park Hotel (formerly St. Olave's Hotel), built on the site where Collins used to live. That building was demolished to make way for a block of apartments, named Collins Court and the developers, Charles Church, installed a new replacement plaque in 2008.



William Wymark Jacobs, Writer of short stories
96 Goldings Road, IG10 2QN
(site of the former Feltham House)

William Wymark Jacobs was born in 1863 at 5, Crombie's Row, Mile End, East London. Jacobs and his siblings were still young when their mother died. Their father then married his housekeeper and had seven more children, including illustrator Helen Jacobs. Jacobs attended a private London school before Birkbeck College now part of the University of London.

In 1879, Jacobs began work as a clerk in the Post Office Savings Bank. By 1885 he had his first short story published, but success came slowly. Although most of his work was humorous, he is best remembered for a macabre tale, the Monkey's Paw, and several other ghost stories. His fiction being described as "in the Dickens tradition".

Jacobs went on to set up home in Loughton, first at the Outlook in Park Hill, and then at Feltham House in Goldings Hill. Loughton is the "Claybury" of some of his stories; Jacobs's love for the local forest scenery features in "Land Of Cockaigne". (Another blue plaque appears on Jacobs's central London residence at 15 Gloucester Gate, Regents Park (later held by the Prince of Wales's Institute of Architecture)).

Jacobs died on 1 September 1943 at Hornsey Lane, Islington, London, at the age of 79. An obituary in *The Times* said of him, "he was quiet, gentle and modest ... not fond of large functions and crowds."



William Bridges Adams & Sarah Fuller Flower Adams

9 Woodbury Hill, IG10 1JB

William Bridges Adams was a railway engineer, known for the Adams Axle (a successful radial axle design) which remained in use on railways in Britain until the end of steam traction in 1968, and the Railway Fishplate invention.

Born in 1797, he grew up in Woore, Shropshire, later moving to London, working initially as a journeyman coachbuilder (in Soho), before becoming a master tradesman. His writings covered all forms of land transport (including *English Pleasure Carriages* (1837) and *Roads and Rails* (1862)). Subsequently, under the pen name *Junius Redivivus*, he became a noted writer on political reform.

On 30 November 1818 he married Elizabeth Place, (daughter of social reformer, Francis Place) at St Martin-in-the-Fields. In 1820 they left for Valparaiso in Chile, to manage Lord Cochrane's estate on a salary of £200 per year. In 1821 they had a son, William Alexander Adams, who later became a mechanical engineer in his own right. The family survived an earthquake in Valparaiso on 19 November 1822, however, Elizabeth died on 8 August 1823, when giving birth to a second child, who also died. Following this tragedy, in 1826, he returned to England with his son, eventually settling in London and taking a position at Hobson & Co, Coachmakers.

Adams married two further times. In 1834, he married Sarah Fuller Flower Adams, and they resided at the now demolished Sunnybank, Woodbury Hill, in Loughton. After Sarah's death in 1848, he remarried to Ellen Kendall, with whom he had one daughter, Hope Bridges Adams.

Adams died on 23/07/1872 (aged 74/75) at Cuthbert House, in Broadstairs (Kent), where he is buried at St Peter's Church.

Sarah Fuller Flower Adams (or **Sally Adams**) was born at Old Harlow, on 22 February 1805. She was an English poet and hymnwriter, her best-known hymn, "Nearer, My God, to Thee", reportedly played by the band as the RMS Titanic sank in 1912.

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Her mother died when she was only five years old. Her elder sister was the composer, Eliza Flower. Initially, they were brought up by their father, a liberal in politics and religion. Following his death in 1825, the sisters became members of the Fox household.

William Johnson Fox, the minister of South Place Unitarian Chapel, London, had been a frequent visitor to the Flowers' home. Fox was one of the founders of the 'Westminster Review', and his Unitarian magazine, the 'Monthly Repository' printed essays, poems and stories by William Bridges Adams, polemicist and railway engineer, whom Sarah met at the house of her friend, the feminist philosopher Harriet Taylor Mill. Sarah and William married in 1834.

Sarah Adams died on 14 August 1848 at the age of 43. She was buried in the Foster Street cemetery near Harlow, beside her sister and parents.

Lopping Hall

187-191 High Road, IG10 4LF

An ancient custom existed in Loughton called 'lopping', whereby inhabitants had a right to go into the forest and lop (cut off) the branches from trees above 6 feet from the ground, between midnight on 11 November and 23 April each year.

The villagers of Loughton upheld the tradition of lopping the trees in the forest, believing that this right had been granted to them by royal charter by Queen Elizabeth I. The lopped wood being used in lieu of coal for domestic fuel.

During the nineteenth century, this right was threatened by the enclosure of common lands by William Whitaker Maitland, Rector of Loughton and also Lord of the Manor. The fight to retain the right to lop was taken up by one Thomas Willingale, who claimed Lopping Rights on behalf of the residents of Loughton. In defiance of Maitland, Willingale continued to lop wood, and he also presented a legal challenge to Maitland.

In 1878 the Epping Forest Act was passed which stopped the practice of enclosure, it also brought an end to the practice of lopping, although grazing rights continued.

Epping Forest was placed in the care of the City of London Corporation and was no longer a royal forest (the Crown's right to venison from the forest also being terminated). The Epping Forest Act stipulated that the Conservators "shall at all times keep Epping Forest unenclosed and unbuilt on as an open space for the recreation and enjoyment of the people." The forest was dedicated "to the use and enjoyment of my people for all time" by Queen Victoria on her visit to Chingford in May 1882.

In compensation for the loss of lopping rights, Loughton Hall was erected as a community building funded by the City of London Corporation. The total given by the City was £7,000: the cost of the building was £3,236, with a further sum forming a capital gift in the creation of a Lopping Hall Endowment Trust.

Lopping Hall was built in 1883 and opened in 1884 to a design by local architect Edmond Egan, and is one of the most important public buildings in Loughton. The terracotta panel which sits above the original entrance to the Hall in Station Road, shows the loppers in action and one of the rooms within the Hall, the Willingale Room, is named in honour of Thomas Willingale.

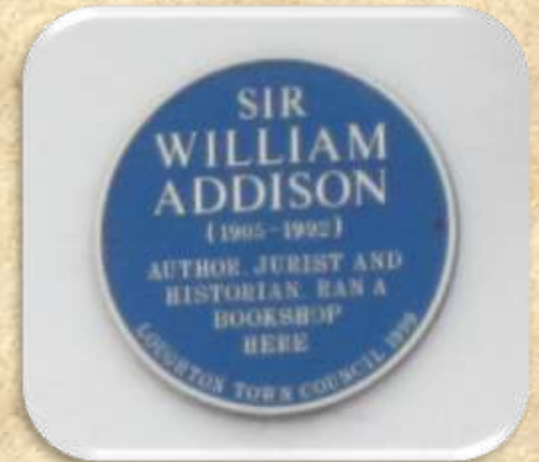


Site of a bookshop run by Sir William Addison, author, jurist and historian
169 High Road, IG10 4LF

Sir William Wilkinson Addison was born on 4 April 1905 at Mitton, (now in the Ribble Valley) Lancashire. He was an English historian, writer and jurist, significant for his research and books, writing some twenty tomes, on historic aspects and prominent people of East Anglia, Essex, and Epping Forest. He also wrote poems from 1936 to his death in his eighty-seventh year.

Following his marriage in 1929 to Phoebe Dean, the couple moved to Suffolk and then Buckhurst Hill on the edge of Epping Forest. Addison bought a bookshop in the neighbouring town of Loughton, and began his lifelong association with Epping Forest. He became an elected Verderer of the forest from 1954 to 1984 and chaired history organizations including the Essex Archaeological and Historical Congress and Waltham Abbey Historical Society. He was a founder member of the Friends of Essex Churches, and later its president, and was vice president of the Association of Genealogists and Record Agents (1985-1988), and the Council for the Protection of Rural England (from 1984). Addison was chairman of the Editorial and County Committee for the Victoria County History of Essex.

A magistrate for more than twenty-five years, Addison became a Justice of the Peace in 1949. He was Chairman of the Epping Petty Sessions, and the Epping and Ongar Petty Sessions in 1955. From 1959 he advised and sat on the Council of the Magistrates' Association, later becoming its chairman from 1970 to 1976. In 1973 Addison was appointed a Deputy Lieutenant of Essex and was knighted in 1974 for services to public life.



John Strevens, Artist
8 Lower Park Road, IG10 4NA

John Frederick Lloyd Strevens was a British artist who regularly exhibited at the Royal Academy, the Royal Society of British Artists, the Royal Society of Portrait Painters and the Paris Salon.

Strevens was born in London in 1902. He was largely a self-taught painter, although he did study at Heatherley's School of Fine Art. His early life in Edwardian England inspired his work, regularly using his wife and daughters as models for his paintings. His first one-man show in 1947 featured "The Three Princesses" which depicted his daughters Josephine, Victoria and Virginia. In the 1960s he became particularly known for his oil paintings of children and flowers and was a successful portrait artist. Many of his paintings, of children and flowers, being made into prints.

Following the death of his first wife he married Julia Marzo, a native of Barcelona, and they had a daughter, Bridget. He died in 1990.

Two of Strevens' paintings are in the collection of the British Council. Twenty years after his death two of his paintings were donated by his daughter to his local hospital, St Margaret's in Epping, where he had been treated in later life for Parkinson's disease.



Captain Richard Stannard, VC
33 The Avenue, IG10 4PX

Capt. Richard Been Stannard, VC, DSO, RD was born on 21 August 1902 in Blyth, Northumberland. Stannard served in the Royal Navy from 1929 to 1954. Before and after the war he settled in Essex, later emigrating to Australia.

Stannard was 37 years old, and a lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve during the Second World War when he was awarded the highest award for gallantry in the face of the enemy that can be awarded to British and Commonwealth forces, the Victoria Cross (VC).

From 28 April to 2 May 1940 at Namsos, Norway, HMT *Arab* survived 31 bombing attacks in five days. On one occasion during this period Lieutenant Stannard and two of his crew tackled for two hours a fire on the jetty caused by a bomb igniting ammunition. Part of the jetty was saved, which proved invaluable at the subsequent evacuation. Later feats included the destruction of an enemy bomber whose pilot, thinking that he had HMT *Arab* at his mercy, ordered that she be steered into captivity.

This was the first VC awarded to a member of the RNR in the Second World War.

'Admiralty, Whitehall, 16th August, 1940:

The KING has been graciously pleased to approve the grant of the Victoria Cross to Lieutenant Richard Been Stannard, R.N.R., H.M.S. *Arab*, for outstanding valour and signal devotion to duty at Namsos. When enemy bombing attacks had set on fire many tons of hand grenades on Namsos wharf, with no shore water supply available, Lieutenant Stannard ran *Arab's* bows against the wharf and held her there. Sending all but two of his crew aft, he then endeavoured for two hours to extinguish the fire with hoses from the forecastle. He persisted in this work till he had to give up the attempt as hopeless.

After helping other ships against air attacks, he placed his own damaged vessel under shelter of a cliff, landed his crew and those of two other trawlers, and established an armed camp. Here those off duty could rest while he attacked enemy aircraft which approached by day, and kept anti-submarine watch during the night.

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When another trawler near-by was hit and set on fire by a bomb, he, with two others, boarded *Arab* and moved her 100 yards before the other vessel blew up. Finally, when leaving the fjord, he was attacked by a German bomber which ordered him to steer East or be sunk. He held on his course, reserved his fire till the enemy was within 800 yards, and then brought the aircraft down.

Throughout a period of five days *Arab* was subjected to 31 bombing attacks and the camp and Lewis gun positions ashore were repeatedly machine-gunned and bombed; yet the defensive position was so well planned that only one man was wounded.

Lieutenant Stannard ultimately brought his damaged ship back to an English port. His continuous gallantry in the presence of the enemy was magnificent, and his enterprise and resource not only caused losses to the Germans but saved his ship and many lives.'

—*The London Gazette*, 16 August 1940

In the *London Gazette* of 5 December 1944, Stannard was Mentioned in Despatches for distinguished "services while ...(Commanding) H.M. Ship ... Peacock ... in the protection of convoys to North Russia in the face of attacks by U-boats."

In 1999 a multi-use building on Bridge Street, in Blyth, Northumberland, (his birth town) was named Richard Stannard House, and a blue plaque is displayed there too.

Stannard died in Sydney, Australia, on 22 July 1977, aged 74.

**Loughton County High School for Girls opened 1908
& Winifred Darch (1884-1960) – Children's Author**

This plaque commemorates the site of **Loughton County High School for Girls** opened in 1908 (now the site of Roding Valley High School). It also honours children's author, **Winifred Darch**, who taught there until 1935.

Darch was born in Brighton, on 7 February 1884, the daughter of schoolmaster, and then solicitor, William Darch, and his wife Florence. She was educated at Leytonstone High School, then enrolled in the teacher training program at the Cheltenham Ladies' College (being without sufficient funds to attend university).

In addition to teaching English, French, Greek history and scripture at the school, she edited the school magazine, produced and often wrote the annual school play, organised the Shakespeare Reading Group, ran the Guide company, accompanied school trips and became housemistress.

No doubt drawing on her own experiences, Winifred Darch wrote more than 20 girls' school stories between 1920 and 1939.

From 1906-1935 she worked as a teacher and housemistress at the High School for Girls at Loughton, before taking early retirement in order to care for her parents. She lived in the family home in Ashington, Sussex, until her death on 8 October 1960.



Private Sidney Godley VC
164 Torrington Drive, IG10 3TD

Sidney Frank Godley was born at North End, East Grinstead, Sussex on 14th August 1889. The correct spelling of his surname was Godly but a clerical error on his enlistment led to Godley.

At the age of 7 when his mother died, he and his siblings (a brother and two sisters) moved to Willesden, North London to live with an aunt and uncle. In 1899 his father remarried Elizabeth (Lizzy) Keenan at Marylebone. Sidney had two more brothers and five sisters following his father's second marriage. He was educated at Henry Street School, St John's Wood, then following a family move, at Sidcup National School until 1904.

Sidney began working as a plumber in an ironmonger's shop in Kilburn High Street before he enlisted on 13 December 1909. He was stationed with the 4th Battalion, Royal Fusiliers, and was noted as an excellent all-round sportsman.

On the outbreak of the First World War his Battalion were part of the 9th Brigade, 3rd Division, of the British Expeditionary Force, one of the first regiments to embark for France, arriving in Le Havre on 13 August 1914.

On 22 August the Battalion reached the village of Nimy to the north of Mons, Belgium. 'Y' company were tasked with defending the Nimy railway crossing over the Mons-Conde canal, and to prevent German troops entering France. At dawn on Sunday, August 23, German artillery fired the opening salvoes of the Battle of Mons. Thus began the first action of British troops on the continent of Europe since Waterloo.

At 9am, German infantry advanced against British positions in the Obourg/Nimy area, intending to seize the four bridges over the Canal. 'Y' Company had two platoons at each bridge with Company HQ at the railway bridge. Godley's Company were positioned to defend the most dangerous part of the bridge, on an exposed salient in the canal.

Lieutenant Dease set up his two machine guns either side of the railway bridge. 'Y' Company's strength would have been approximately 120 men, while the attacking German Battalion being in the order of 1,000.

By midday, the Germans were very close to the canal, and Dease was badly wounded, and about to be carried out of the action. Lieutenant Steele, the platoon commander, realised that both guns were about to fall silent and asked for volunteers who knew how to operate them. Sidney immediately came forward.



Despite having already being wounded, he had supplied ammunition to the guns throughout the morning. (There are conflicting reports of what happened next – one states he cleared the left emplacement of three bodies and brought the gun back into action, but others state he manned the right gun.) Under Steele's command, he manned the gun for two more hours.

By the afternoon, the British position was becoming untenable, and the order to withdraw was received at 1.10pm. Again reports differ on what happened to Sidney next, Steele stated that he remained firing under his command until hit in the head and the gun was irreparably damaged; and he was allowed to go to the rear. In other versions, Godley continued to man the gun, whilst the rest of the Company withdrew. Godley was reputedly the last man on the bridge, except for dead and wounded, having suffered over 20 wounds in all, he began to crawl back to the main road, where two civilians carried him to the hospital in Mons. He was taken prisoner at the hospital, and underwent extensive surgery and skin grafts in Berlin for bullet wounds received.

The Regimental War Diary states that both Godley and Lt Dease earned the Victoria Cross at around 9.10am, and that Dease died of his wounds at around 11am. The entry was written between 11am and 1.40pm when the next entry notes the order to withdraw was given. Therefore it is deemed that Godley and Dease were the joint 1st Victoria Crosses of the Great War. His citation read: "*This afternoon Private Godley showed particular heroism in his management of the machine guns, Lieutenant Dease having been severely wounded, and each machine gunner in turn shot. Under extremely heavy fire he had to remove three dead bodies to get to the gun.*"

He was held at Doberitz POW Camp and later at Dyrotz from April 1915. He was informed of his VC and was congratulated by the German Commandant, who allowed a parade in Sidney's honour. He was also allowed to dine with the German Officers at Christmas.

When the guards abandoned the camp during the Berlin Revolution, he and five others jumped a train to the Danish border. He returned to England in December 1918 and his VC was presented to him by King George V at Buckingham Palace on 15 February 1919. He was officially welcomed home by the Mayor of Lewisham on 26 February 1919 and presented with 50 guineas and a copy of the Lewisham Roll of Honour. He was discharged from the Army on 21 May and transferred into the Section B Reserve on 3 June 1921. His brother, Percival Henry had been killed in action on 4 October 1916, serving with the 32nd Royal Fusiliers.

On 2 August 1919 he married Helen Eliza Norman, a housemaid, (a friend of one of his sisters) at St Mark's, Harlesden. There were claims they were married by Reverend Edward Mellish VC, but this is unconfirmed (Mellish lived in a nearby parish and could have attended the wedding).

Sidney and Helen went on to have two children, Stanley Sidney, born on 13 May 1920 and Eileen Elizabeth, born in 1922.

He resumed trading as a plumber, upon his return to civilian life, then worked as a school caretaker for 30 years at Cranbrook School, Bethnal Green, East London. He also worked for military charities receiving many awards and honours. Following retirement, he and his wife moved several times, finally residing at 164 Torrington Drive, in Debden.

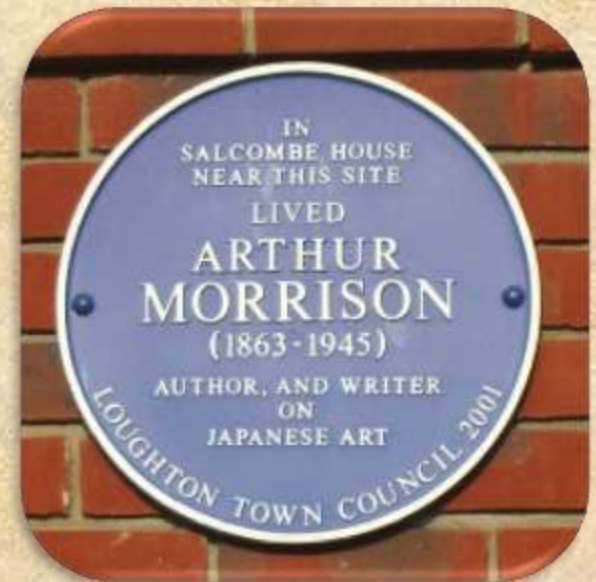
Sidney died at St Margaret's Hospital in Epping on 29 June 1957. He was buried in Loughton Cemetery, with full honours, where Reverend Edward Noel Mellish VC assisted at the funeral.

In addition to his VC, Sidney received the 1914 Star with Mons clasp, British War Medal of 1914-20, Victory Medal 1914-19 with Mentioned in Despatches oak leaf, George VI Coronation Medal of 1937 and Elizabeth II Coronation Medal of 1953. His medals were owned for a number of years by his grandson, Colin Godley, but were sold at a Spinks auction on 19 July 2012 to an anonymous collector for £230,000.

Arthur Morrison, Local Author and Writer on Japanese Art
70 High Road, IG10 4QU

Arthur Morrison was born in London in 1863 but moved to Salcombe House in Loughton, which was at the back of the High Road site, after 1896. He wrote a number of books including *To London Town* which was partly set in Loughton, detective books with the character Martin Hewitt, and *Child of Jago*. He was also a writer on Japanese art.

Mr Morrison was also in charge of the special constables in Waltham Abbey during the First World War and is believed to have sighted the first Zeppelin raid in London. He was married to Eliza. They had a son, Guy, who died aged 28; in 1930 they moved from High Beach, where they had lived since 1914 to Chalfont-St.-Peter. Arthur Morrison died there in 1945 but was buried at High Beach Church, as was the rest of his family.



William Chapman Waller, Local Historian
11 Wallers Hoppet, IG10 1SP

A blue heritage plaque was erected on 11 Wallers Hoppett to Mr **William Chapman Waller**, who died in 1917. Mr Waller came to live in Loughton with his family in 1874 and lived at Ash Green; Wallers Hoppett was part of the garden. He researched court rolls and charters linked to the town and Essex. Waller wrote a history of Loughton from its origins as a village at the time of Edward the Confessor to the Victorian era. This was made into a book in 1900 and given to the British Museum and Oxford and Cambridge University libraries.

Mr Waller was an active member of the Essex Field Club, a JP, Loughton Horticultural Society chairman and first honorary librarian at Lopping Hall.



John Finlaison, Local Government Actuary
97 High Road, IG10 4JD

John Finlaison who was born in Caithness in 1783 and lived in the 1840s and 1850s in Algers House. Algers House was a 17th century house situated between The Crescent and Algers Road. The frontage of the house was developed from about 1880, and the old house itself demolished in the 1960s.

John Finlaison's official title was Actuary and Principal Accountant of the Check Department of the National Debt Office. He served from 1822 to 1851. He was the first actuary in government and forerunner to the official Government Actuary post created in 1917.

John Finlaison also served as first President of the Institute of Actuaries from its foundation in 1848 for 12 years and he was the figurehead for the new profession.



George Granville Barker, Poet
116 Forest Road, IG10 1EQ

A blue heritage plaque was installed in honour of poet **George Granville Barker** who was born on 26 February 1913 at 116 Forest Road, Loughton.

George Barker was a prolific poet “of outstanding gifts, an enchanter of souls, a verbal magician with a pot of gold beneath his tongue”. His highly dramatic poems were often concerned with themes of remorse and pain. Barker’s published works include *30 Preliminary Poems* (1933), *Eros in Dogma* (1944), *News of the World* (1950), *The True Confession of George Barker* (1950), *The View From a Blind I* (1962), *Thurgarton Church* (1969), *The Alphabetical Zoo* (1972), and *Collected Poems* (1987). He continued to write and publish poetry throughout his life, although his reputation declined after the mid-1950’s. Unusually, he made his living writing poetry, only occasionally supplementing this with some teaching work.

His private life was unconventional and his relationships with men and women often convoluted. He travelled and taught in Japan and America.

A full scale biography entitled *The Chameleon Poet*, the life of George Barker by Robert Fraser was published by Cape in February 2002.



Marine William Sparks DSM
47 Poundfield Road, IG10 3JN

Marine Bill Sparks was the last of the “Cockleshell heroes” who raided the German-occupied French port of Bordeaux by kayak to attack enemy shipping in 1942. Bill Sparks received the distinguished service medal for his part in the raid.

Corporal Sparks (1922-2002) of the Royal Marines was one of the 12 men chosen for one of the most daring and dangerous special operations of the Second World War.

Under cover of darkness in December 1942, six two-man kayaks were launched from a submarine off the coast of south west France. One was irreparably damaged at launch, three capsized on the way and two reached the harbour.

The four occupants put on diving gear and set about attaching time-delayed limpet mines to various ships before paddling away. Several hours later explosions could be heard, signalling that the plan had worked. The four made their escape across occupied France, two were captured and shot, but Bill Sparks and his canoeing partner, Major Blondie Hasler, made it back to Britain.

After the raid, he served in Burma, Africa and Italy. In 1946 he joined London Transport as a driver, taking a year's break in 1952 to work as a lieutenant in the Malayan police during the insurgency there.

He later became an adviser for the film *Cockleshell Heroes* and published *The Last of the Cockleshell Heroes* (1992) and *Cockleshell Commander* (2002).

The Royal Naval Association organized a short ceremony to unveil the plaque outside 47 Poundfield Road on 1 November.



Muriel Lester and her sister Doris
47/49 Baldwins Hill, IG10 1SF

Muriel Lester (1885-1968) was a socialist reformer and pacifist. She was a non-conformist (Baptist/Quaker) and a member of the Union Church.

With her sister, **Doris** (1886-1965) Muriel lived in The Grange, High Road/Upper Park in their early years with their parents, Henry, a shipbuilder, and Rachel Lester, and they later moved to 47/49 Baldwins Hill.

The Lesters were practical social reformers, interested in equal rights, decolonization and the peace movement.

Muriel, born in Leytonstone, was president of Kingsley Hall and a friend of Gandhi, who stayed with her at Bow or possibly Loughton when in Britain in the 1930s.

She was interned in Trinidad in World War II.

Muriel and Doris lived at 49 Baldwin Hill after the sculptor and artist Sir Jacob Epstein had moved out. They used number 47 as a holiday cottage for poor children, who overflowed into Epstein's shed behind number 49.

Among a wide range of notable visitors were Clement Attlee, Lansbury, Dame Sybil Thorndike and many more.



George Pearson, Headmaster and Film Producer
Staples Road Junior School, Staples Rd, IG10 1HR

Loughton Town Council erected a blue heritage plaque on the outside of Staples Road Junior School in honour of George Pearson. **George Pearson** was the Headmaster of what was then Staples Road Boys' School between 1908 – 13. He was educated at Oxford and perhaps the most successful film producer before World War II.

He went into filmmaking for educational purposes in 1912, and made popular feature films returning to documentaries in World War II (GPO film unit). He was perhaps the foremost British filmmaker of the inter-war years.

His autobiography: Flashback, the Autobiography of a British filmmaker was published in 1957.



Thomas Willingale, Lopper
Wall of St John's churchyard, Church Lane IG10 1RZ

Thomas Willingale was one of the prime movers in the fight to save Epping Forest. He was born at Stanford Rivers, but came to Loughton when a child. An illiterate labourer, he made a living by cutting wood (lopping) in the Forest and selling it to richer neighbours for fuel. In 1864, the Lord of the Manor, Maitland, enclosed all 1300 acres of forest in Loughton, and set about parcelling it out as building land. Willingale and his sons broke down the fences and lopped as usual, for which they were prosecuted, and the sons imprisoned. The Commons Society backed Willingale, and started a legal action against Maitland, which was never finally decided, as Thomas died before it was complete. This, however, led to a stay of execution for the open Forest, and eventually it was saved by the Corporation of London's legal action about commoning cattle.

Willingale is buried in an unmarked grave in St John's churchyard. The Town Council together with the Willingale Family Society determined 134 years after his death that he should be commemorated. The memorial comes shortly after Thomas was commemorated by an entry written by Town Mayor, Chris Pond, in the Oxford Dictionary of National Biography.

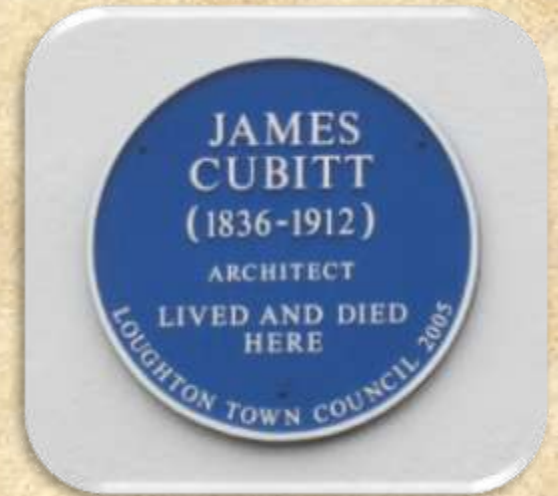


James Cubitt, Architect

311 High Road (the former site of Monghyr Cottage, 2 Traps Hill)

James Cubitt was an architect, renowned for chapels. His best known buildings were Emanuel Church, Cambridge, Union Chapel, Islington, and the Welsh Church, Charing Cross Rd. In Loughton, he designed Southbank, Sunnybank, additions to Ash Green for W C Waller and Staples Road schools, and Loughton School (now demolished). He was an associate and relative of the Vivians (Loughton Union Church pastor). He had a wide nonconformist clientele.

James Cubitt lived at Brook Villas and Cotsall Eaton Villas, all in the High Road, now demolished; and Monghyr Cottage, 2 Traps Hill, where he died. Born in Suffolk, he was a long term Loughton resident circa 1880 – 1912. He was buried in an unmarked grave in Loughton Cemetery.



Samuel Hazzledine Warren, Palaeontologist and Geologist
49 Forest View Road, IG10 4DY

Samuel Hazzledine Warren was an antiquary and archaeologist, a "prehistorian of international repute" (The Times). He lived at Sherwood, 49 Forest View Road, an Arts and Crafts/vernacular style house built in about 1905. After the death of his wife in 1937 he had a smaller house built in the garden. Sherwood was effectively operated as a geological museum open to students from all over the world.



Millais Culpin, Medical Psychologist
Meads, 77 Church Hill, IG10 1QP

Millais Culpin was a medical doctor, who became a psychiatrist. He lived at Slyder's Gate, Church Hill (owned by the Wallers) just after his marriage in 1913, and then bought Meads, 77 Church Hill.

Culpin was attached to the London Hospital. He was an associate of Major Greenwood, who lived in Loughton opposite, and Sir Leonard and Austin Bradford Hill, who also lived in Loughton. Culpin was a leading psychiatrist, and an early proponent of occupational health and well-being. His study of telegraphists' cramp in 1927 foreshadowed modern research on Repetitive Strain Injury.



Ron Greenwood, Football Manager

22 Brooklyn Avenue, IG10 IBL

Ron Greenwood was born in Burnley on 11 November 1921, he moved to London in 1931 during the depression.

Ron Greenwood first signed for Chelsea FC in 1940. After service in the Royal Air Force during the Second World War, he continued his playing career with Chelsea, Brentford and Fulham ending his football career at the close of the 1955/56 season.

He was appointed manager of West Ham FC in 1961 and stayed with the club for the next 16 years. Renowned for his tactical innovation and player development, he led West Ham United to their first major trophies, including the 1964 FA Cup and 1965 European Cup Winners' Cup, nurturing stars like Bobby Moore, Geoff Hurst, and Martin Peters (all members of the 1966 England World Cup winning team).

In 1977 Ron Greenwood became the England Manager and held this important position until after the 1982 World Cup. Qualifying the team for Euro 1980 and the 1982 FIFA World Cup, emphasizing possession-based, attacking football.

He was inducted into the English Football Hall of Fame in 2006, and is credited with shaping the 'West Ham Way'.

The plaque was unveiled by Sir Trevor Brooking, The Football Association's Director of Football Development, assisted by the Town Mayor, Cllr Chris Pond.

Sir Trevor spoke fondly of his memories of playing for West Ham United for 19 years during which time Ron Greenwood was the Manager. Sir Trevor also had the honour of playing for England under Ron Greenwood. He described Ron as one of the best coaches this country ever produced and acknowledged the key role that he played in his own football career with both West Ham and England.

Ron Greenwood died in Suffolk on 9 February 2006.



Everard Richard Calthrop, Engineer and Pioneer of the Parachute
Goldings, Clays Lane, IG10 2RZ

Everard Calthrop was borne in Bourne, Lincolnshire in 1857. He was educated at Uppingham School and after a brief spell with George Stephenson & Co., and the Great Western Railway, he left Britain in 1882 to work on the railways of India. He was a keen advocate of light railways and designed locomotives and rolling stock as well as rail networks. On his return to Britain he continued to promote light railways and the Leek & Manifold Railway, completed in Staffordshire in 1904, was one of his finest achievements, bringing public transport to a poor and remote part of the Peak District.

After he retired, Everard Calthrop continued his interest in many engineering issues, and was fascinated by the new technology of flight. He designed the 'Guardian Angel' parachute which was successfully tested in 1917.

Calthrop settled in Loughton on his return from India and was one of many inventors and scientific pioneers who chose to make Loughton their home. He died on 30 March 1927.



Mrs Gladys Mills, Pianist
43 Barncroft Close, IG10 3EU

Mrs Gladys Mills, the popular pianist better known as “Mrs Mills” was honoured by Loughton Town Council with a blue plaque.

Mrs Mills made frequent television appearances in the 1960s and 1970s including guest spots with the Billy Cotton Band Show and the Morecambe and Wise Show. She sold records by the million and was renowned for her blend of cockney fun and musical talent. Performing with her own ensemble, the Astoreans with their big-band sound, she was a familiar presence at local venues such as the Roebuck Hotel and Woodford Golf Club.

Gladys Jordan had moved to Loughton with her family in 1934 to a newly built house on the Roding Estate and joined the Civil Service as a typist. Her father, Samuel Jordan, a sergeant in the police force, was seriously injured in the blitz, losing part of his arm when a bomb exploded outside Loughton police station in 1940. Gladys did her bit for the war effort by entertaining troops around Essex with a concert party based around her own inimitable piano playing.

In 1947 Gladys married Gilbert Mills who worked for London Transport and the newly-weds moved to Barncroft Close.

Mrs Mills finally moved to Penn in Buckinghamshire and died in Beaconsfield on 24 February 1978.



Dr Fred Stoker, Doctor & Horticulturalist

83 Baldwins Hill, IG10 1SN

Dr Fred Stoker was a surgeon, who came to live in Loughton around 1920 having moved from Northumberland. He first lived at Oak Lodge in Baldwins Hill, later buying five acres of land between Baldwins and Goldings Hill, which he developed into a garden of national renown.

At the time of purchase he described the land as “covered by hollies, crabs and hawthorns, clumps of gorse, thickets of sloe, tangles of bramble which defied penetration by an animal”. With a particular interest in science and the study of plants he was drawn to the collection of wildflowers growing on the site which included harebells, thyme, sorrel and hawkweed. While at Oak Lodge he spent years observing his own patch of flora from which he was able to write his influential book, *Shrubs for the Rock Garden*.

In 1927, with his wife, Mary, they built a house on the north-eastern side of the plot, naming it *The Summit*. During his time there he developed a particular attachment to lilies, growing them with great success, subsequently becoming one of the original members of the Lily Committee of the Royal Horticultural Society, which awarded him its Victoria Medal of Honour in 1937.

Among his creations at *The Summit* were a sandstone rock garden and a plot created from 20 tons of Westmorland limestone especially brought down to the site by lorry. He created six allotment beds each allocated a certain type of soil for growing plants from various parts of the world and also filled in a nearby bog with “several hundred cartloads of soil”. A network of greenhouses was set up to house rare specimens and a gardener’s cottage built to house a permanent member of staff to tend the plants.

By 1932 Dr Stoker was described as the most successful amateur at the Royal Horticultural Society’s annual show, and in 1933 he gave a series of talks for the BBC. He continued to write about his passion for gardening throughout his life, with articles published in various papers including *The Times*.

Dr Stoker died in 1943, but his wife continued to live at *The Summit* until her death in 1964 when she left the garden to the National Trust. However, the National Trust declined the offer of the land and in 1971 it was put up for sale with 41 houses subsequently built on the plot. Making way for the new estate, *The Summit* was demolished, but a number of its larger trees still survive and offer an enduring legacy to this day.



Mary Anne Clarke, Royal Mistress

Loughton Lodge, Steeds Way, IG10 1HX

Mary Anne Clarke (nee **Thompson**) was born on 3 April 1776 in Hoxton, London, the daughter of a humble tradesman. Attractive and intelligent, she was married at the age of 16, to a man named Joseph Clarke, who worked as a stonemason. However, shortly after the marriage, her husband went bankrupt, resulting in Mary Anne Clarke leaving him in February 1802. They had four children.

In 1803 she became the mistress of Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany, while he was Commander-in-Chief of the army. In 1809, a national scandal arose when Clarke testified before the House of Commons that she had sold army commissions with the Duke of York's knowledge. The scandal was the subject of much humour and mockery, especially by caricaturists such as Isaac Cruikshank who created multiple graphics making fun of the scandal. Cruikshank combined mockery of the scandal while also satirizing Napoleon, portraying him and his generals reading four of his caricatures of the Prince Frederick, Duke of York and Albany and Mary. She was the subject of a portrait by Adam Buck, and a caricature by Isaac Cruikshank; ten days after the latter's publication, the Duke resigned from his post as Commander of the British Army, though he was later reinstated.

During this time the Duke of York cut all ties to Clarke, paying her a considerable sum to prevent her from publishing letters he had written to her during their relationship. When the scandal forced Clarke to leave London, she took a tenancy of Loughton Lodge, Loughton, Essex. Later in 1809, she wrote her memoirs which were published.

In 1811, she commissioned Irish sculptor Lawrence Gahagan to sculpt a marble bust of her; which is now housed in the National Portrait Gallery, London.

Through her daughter Ellen, who married Louis-Mathurin Busson du Maurier, Clarke was a great-great-grandmother of author Daphne du Maurier, who wrote the novel *Mary Anne* about her life.

Clarke was prosecuted for libel in 1813 and imprisoned for nine months. On her release from prison, she went to live in France. She died in Boulogne-sur-Mer on 21 June 1852.



Ethel Haslam, Suffragette
3 Sparelease Hill, IG10 1BS

Ethel Clarice Haslam was born in Essex in 1881. She was a renowned militant suffragette, who was imprisoned in Holloway for her actions.

By 1910, Ethel had engaged in a programme of speechmaking in Forest Gate, Ilford and the local area. She dressed as Queen Boedicea as a member of the Ilford branch of the WSPU for the Hyde Park demonstration of 23 July 1910. In 1910 she was arrested twice, firstly on 18 November for “obstructing the police in the execution of their duty”, and then on 22 November for throwing a stone at the house of the MP John Burns. In March 1912 she was sentenced again with two months’ hard labour for “maliciously damaging two windows at 10-12 Coventry Street”. Whilst serving time in Holloway, she had to do several weeks’ solitary confinement and remission of her sentence was revoked, for refusing to carry out the work allotted and declining to wear the prison uniform. She was also force-fed, following several days’ hunger strike.

She lived for a time from 1939 at 3 Sparelease Hill with her friends, Mr and Mrs Jacob. Pat Heron, author of “The Life of Ethel Haslam an Ilford Suffragette”, reports that during the 1914-1918 war, she was a VAD (Voluntary Aid Detachment) nurse caring for wounded soldiers. She twice stood unsuccessfully for Ilford Council and then became a guardian of the Romford Union Workhouse. Throughout the 1950s, meetings of the peace movement were held at the house in Sparelease Hill, with Miss Haslam and friends in attendance.

Ethel died on 8 December 1961 in Chadwell Heath Hospital (with little being known about the last 30 years of her life). She is now one of the “famous women” of Abney Park Cemetery, where she rests with her beloved parents.



Sir Rowland Hill and Francis Worrall Stevens, Pioneers of the Postage Stamp

The Hollies, 11 Albion Hill, IG10 4RA.

Sir Rowland Hill was born on 3 December 1795 in Kidderminster, Worcs. He was an English teacher, inventor and social reformer. He campaigned for a comprehensive reform of the postal system, based on the concept of Uniform Penny Post, with pre-payment, allowing the safe, speedy and cheap sending of letters. Later serving as a government postal official, he is credited with originating the basic concepts of the modern postal service, including the invention of the postage stamp. He proposed the use of an adhesive stamp to show pre-payment of postage – with the first being the Penny Black in 1840, by 1860, 90 countries across the world adopted the use of postage stamps. The Uniform Penny Post continued in the UK into the 20th century.

Hill was made Secretary to the Postmaster General, and then Secretary to the Post Office from 1854 until 1864. For his services, Hill was knighted in 1860.

For the last 30 years of his life Hill lived at Bartram House on Hampstead Green, where he died in 1879. He is buried in Westminster Abbey.

Francis Worrall Stevens, in 1877, from his then home in Dunedin, New Zealand, sent a petition to HM Queen Victoria, disputing Hill as the Inventor and Originator of the “adhesive and universal Penny Postage Stamp”, claiming he had previously submitted (*c.1833, during William the Fourth's reign*), to Lord Althorp, then Chancellor of the Exchequer, the important measure of a universal penny postage stamp (to include an image of the Royal Coat of Arms) with payment being made in advance.

Stevens was the youngest of eight children, born to William Seaman Stevens and Mary Foot. William Stevens was a landed proprietor and farmer in Hampshire, of high classical intellect, who later opened a school at Stanstead, which then moved to Albion House, Loughton. The school subsequently being taken over by Francis Stevens in 1827.

Around 1833/34, Francis Stevens claimed he appointed Rowland Hill as an assistant at his school in Loughton (for a period of approximately five months). During this time they built up a companionship sharing anecdotes and details of their interests and pursuits. Stevens showing



Hill copies of his letters written to the Lord Chancellor on the subject of the universal Penny Postage Stamp. Hill requested that he write a pamphlet on this which Stevens initially declined, later relenting, handing over his correspondence on the subject, with Hill offering the proviso that Stevens could sanction or reject the pamphlet.

Following the end of school term, Hill left and did not return. No pamphlet was forthcoming to Stevens, and his letters were not returned. Stevens forgot about the matter, until reading in the paper c.1840 that '*his*' Penny Postage Stamp was to be adopted, with the slight amendment from his design, to include a likeness of the Queen, rather than his proposed Royal Coat of Arms. Then in 1876 he became aware that Rowland Hill had been rewarded as the originator of the Penny Postage Stamp, resulting in his said petition to HM Queen Victoria.

**Rupert Arnold Brabner, DSO, DSC, MP (1911-1945), Commander, Fleet Air Arm & Government Minister
and**

**Jean Gwenneth Brabner, Hospital Doctor
47 Spareleaze Hill, IG10 1BS**

Rupert Arnold Brabner was born on 29 October 1911 in Loughton. Educated at Felstead School and St Catharine's College, Cambridge, he was employed as a banker and director of Singer & Friedlander, Merchant Bank in the City of London.

In 1937 Brabner became a member of London County Council for West Lewisham, he was elected as MP for Hythe in Kent, in 1939 until his death in 1945, being appointed as a government whip. In 1944 he was appointed Joint Parliamentary Under-Secretary of State for Air.

He served in the Royal Navy, as a pilot, and was an air ace with five confirmed destroyed enemy aircraft, one shared destroyed, and one probable. Brabner commanded 801 Naval Air Squadron from 1941-42, and was awarded the DSO and DSC (Distinguished Service Order and Distinguished Service Cross).

Commander Brabner died on 27 March 1945 (aged 33) when the Liberator Aircraft taking him to Canada was lost off the Azores.

Brabner's sister **Jean Gwenneth**, was born in 1913 in Epping, having served as a surgeon at St. Giles Hospital, she was also killed in World War II, in a German V-1 rocket attack on London. Her name is inscribed on the Loughton's Civilian WW2 plaque, found on the wall of Loughton Police Station in Forest Road.



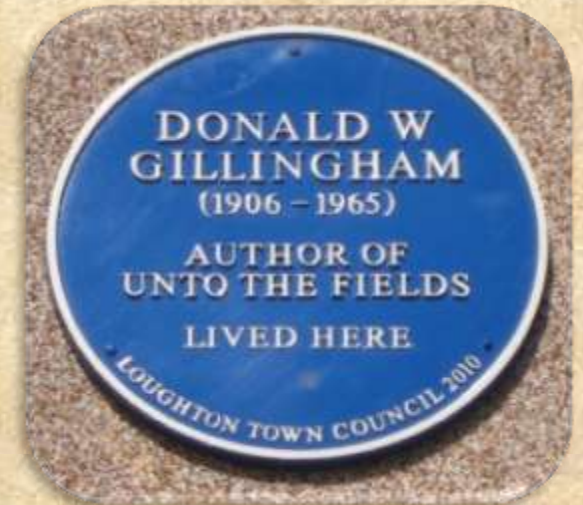
Donald W Gillingham, Author
28 Roding Road, IG10 3ED

Donald W Gillingham was a naturalist, born in Essex, who grew up in Canada. The family returned from the Dominion in 1934. "We had to move, he said, to another house in a new offshoot of cheap red roofs...hastily and not very well chosen. But at least we had at our front door a green field and a row of tall elms.... and at our back door we had a broad sky over an allotment and the unspoilt country beyond, where larks sang and the sun would rise clean from the earth like a great flower".

Gillingham was the chronicler of the transformation of Loughton that occurred after Maitland sold 650 acres to the LCC (London County Council) for the building of the Debden Estate. He records how the wildlife was driven out, and gangs of men with machinery began to throw up roads and houses with incredible speed; how concrete mixers replaced cows, and the howl of the bulldozer the cry of the vixen.

He wrote only one major book, but what a book *Unto the Fields* is, and what a contribution it makes to our knowledge of the changes that Loughton encountered sixty years ago. It is superbly crafted, with elegiac language and poetry in its imagery." I came to love England", he said "... there is such beauty in her countryside as the rest of the world can but dream of". And the part of England he wrote of was in our own back yard. Though not famous, his evocation of post-war Loughton is remarkable.

The footpath linking Roding Road to Loughton station is named after him.



Sir Frank BAINES, KCVO, Architect
41 The Uplands, IG10 1NQ

Sir Frank Baines was born in East London, Stepney in 1877. He was educated at the People's Palace School and later under architect and designer Charles Ashbee.

Baines went on to become a distinguished architect and architectural preservationist, serving as the Chief Architect at the British Office of Works from 1920 to 1927. His most famous works being Thames House (now the HQ of MI5 the British Security Service) and neighbouring Imperial Chemical House (HQ to ICI) in London. He was also known for his work in preservation of old buildings, including several Abbeys (Tintern, Bylands, Jedburgh, Melrose and Dryburgh). Alongside, this he was a key figure in the restoration of Westminster Hall, Eltham Palace Hall and Caernarfon Castle – during the investiture of the Prince of Wales, later Edward VIII.

His architectural styles, particularly the Arts and Crafts style, influenced housing estates in Eltham, Roe Green, Kingsbury and Camberwell in the mid-20th century. Later his works included designing new houses for his brother, Hubert, and himself in Loughton in The Uplands.



Sir Hugh Cairns, Neurosurgeon and Advocate of the Crash Helmet

Woodcroft School, Whitakers Way, IG10 1SQ

Sir Hugh Cairns was born on 26 June 1896 in South Australia. He attended university in Adelaide joining the Australian Imperial Force as a private in the Australian Army Medical Corps in 1915. He saw active service during the First World War including a period in France during 1918. He lived at Woodcroft following his marriage in the 1920s.

After the war, Sir Hugh studied medicine at Balliol College, Oxford; a keen oarsman, he rowed as bow in the University Boat Race.

When in Loughton, he was a genito-urinary surgeon at the London Hospital, but while he lived here, he was offered a Rockefeller Scholarship to study the new discipline of neurosurgery in the USA, and thereafter, that was his metier.

He returned to the London Hospital but then persuaded Lord Nuffield to set up a special neurosurgery unit at Oxford, where he could concentrate on this developing field, which he made his own. This, of course, meant the family left Loughton.

In 1935, Hugh Cairns attended Lawrence of Arabia (whose Epping Forest cottage, by the way, stands neglected in a corner of Loughton, at The Warren) after the motorcycle accident that caused his death. This and his observations about the loss of life through motorcycling head injuries resulted in the introduction of crash helmets for army motorcyclists, made compulsory in 1941. This was after 2400 people had been killed on motorcycles in the first two years of the War.

In 1938, Cairns had formulated the idea of a special hospital for head injuries at Oxford. St Hugh's College was requisitioned and the Military Hospital for Head Injuries, was created. It was known as 'The Nutcrackers Suite'

He died in the Radcliffe Infirmary, Oxford, on 18 July 1952, leaving a widow, two sons, and two daughters.



William Brown Macdougall, Artist, and his wife Margaret Armour, Author
Elm Cottage, Debden Road, IG10 2NY

William Brown Macdougall was born in Glasgow on 16 December 1868. He was an artist, engraver, etcher and illustrator. His wife, **Margaret Armour**, born in Scotland on 10 September 1860, was a novelist, poet, translator, playwright and illustrator.

The couple lived at 62 The Uplands and latterly Elm Cottage, Debden Green, home at the time to a noted artistic and scientific community. They were members of the influential New English Arts Club, collaborating with Aubrey Beardsley on many projects.

Macdougall's artwork tended to be somewhat sombre and was clearly influenced by Aubrey Beardsley and William Morris. He provided a frontispiece portrait of Robert Louis Stevenson for Margaret's first book, and illustrations for her books of poetry as well as her translations from medieval German. He only illustrated for a very brief period between 1896 and 1898, but contributed greatly to this form of art – his decorative vignettes seen in "The Fall of the Nibelungs", "Isabella, or the Pot of Basil" and "The Blessed Damozel" owe much to Art Nouveau and Arts and Crafts Movement motifs.

Macdougall's artwork is currently exhibited in several galleries throughout the UK with both his and Margaret's literary works still widely sought.

Following Macdougall's death on 20 April 1936 in Debden Green, Armour returned to Edinburgh, where she died in 1943.



“Braeside”
1 Connaught Avenue, IG10 4DP

“Braeside” was the site of the former Red Cross Military Hospital set up in the town during World War I.

In December 1914, the large empty property at 1 Connaught Avenue, close to the High Road, and then known as “Braeside” was taken over to serve as an auxiliary military hospital for the duration of the war. The Braeside V.A.D. Hospital opened in January 1915, run mainly by volunteer members of the Essex/36 Volunteer Aid Detachment (VAD). It was affiliated with the Colchester Military Hospital, finally closing in 1919.

Despite the unexpected blanket of snow on Wednesday 5 December 2012, a small crowd gathered to witness Loughton Town Mayor, Stephen Pewsey, officially unveil this plaque. His speech reminded everyone that *“although the trenches of the First World War were far away, Loughton – then just a small village – still felt the effects. The young women of Loughton volunteered to train as unpaid nurses, and worked at Braeside night and day throughout World War I, looking after our wounded servicemen. While the First World War always evokes images of Flanders Fields, this plaque is a reminder of the selfless devotion of the women of our town during that terrible conflict.”*

The ceremony was also attended by other guests including representatives from the British Red Cross, the Loughton Branch of the Royal British Legion and the Loughton & District Historical Society.

From 1919 until 1923 the building became an annexe for the Loughton County High School for Girls while an extension was built on the main site of the School.



Ralph Russell, Leading Western Urdu Scholar
6 Queens Road, IG10 1RS

Ralph Russell was born on 21 May 1918 in Hammerton, West Riding, Yorks. He was widely considered the most eminent western scholar and translator of Urdu literature. He is best known for his translations of Urdu's most famous poet, Ghalib, (19th century), who is to Urdu speakers what Shakespeare is to the English. His books are valued wherever there is an interest in Urdu.

Ralph lived at Roseley, no 6 Queens Road, from 1925 (aged 7) to 1940 and attended Staples Road School. He was awarded scholarships first to Chigwell School and then studied at St John's College, Cambridge in 1937, graduating in 1940.

His first contact with India was during the war when he was sent there by the army. A classics scholar, he became proficient in Urdu because he wanted to be able to talk to the sepoys (Indian soldiers) in his unit, not just to issue orders. This experience was formative, and he decided after the war to study Urdu at SOAS (School of Oriental and African Studies, University of London). For over 30 years he headed the Urdu department at SOAS, influencing generations of students.

A member of the Communist Party of Great Britain for much of his life, he was awarded the Sitara-e-Imtiaz by the Government of Pakistan for his contributions to Urdu language and literature.

Russell died, aged 90, on 14 September 2008.



Ken Campbell, Actor, Director and Playwright
(Formerly Swiss Cottage) 40 Baldwins Hill, IG10 1SF

Ken Campbell, distinguished British actor, director and playwright, was born in Ilford, Essex, on 10 December 1941. He lived at Swiss Cottage, 40 Baldwins Hill, Loughton IG10 1SP.

Ken was educated at Chigwell School (where he won the Drama prize), then trained at RADA (Royal Academy of Dramatic Art) in London, before joining Colchester Repertory theatre, where he was understudy to Warren Mitchell. He was renowned for his original work in British theatre, with *The Times* labelling him 'a one-man whirlwind of comic and surreal performance'.

He lived for some years at Swiss Cottage, with his three dogs and a parrot called Doris. The subsequent owner reportedly had to remove a series of chicken wire tunnels from inside the property, which had allowed the parrot to follow Ken from room to room inside the cottage.

At the dedication ceremony in January 2014, Cllr Chris Pond, vice chairman of the town council's Environment and Heritage Committee said, "*The Swiss Cottage is supposed to be an import from Switzerland of the mid-nineteenth century, and in kit form; but evidence for this is lacking. It was certainly there by 1872, when the first large scale map of Loughton was published by the Ordnance Survey. All sorts of fanciful accounts of its origin have been heard, but so far, it must be a matter for conjecture*".

He continued, "*The cottage has been a distinctive feature of the landscape of upper Loughton for many decades. At first, it may have been a gardener's cottage; later it became associated with the rose nursery that lay behind it (named Rose Cottage) and was inhabited by one George Thompson. In 1949, when the owner was George Winnington, it was extended, and further so in 1979 and 1983. Later on it became Keeper's Cottage*".

Campbell died on 31 August 2008, aged 66. His funeral was a woodland burial in Epping Forest.



Margaret Walker and Joan Littlewood

East 15 Acting School, Hatfields, Rectory Lane, Loughton IG10 3RY

Margaret Walker (Margaret Bury-Walker, nee Greenwood) was born in 1922. In 1946, she joined Joan Littlewood's Theatre Workshop at Ormesby Hall in Middlesborough. In 1961 she started East 15 Acting School, which grew from the work of Joan Littlewood's famed Theatre Workshop, based at the Theatre Royal, Stratford, with its postal district of E15. She was principal of the school for four decades. Margaret died in 2013.

Tales of East 15 and its alumni successes over the last 50 years are legendary. The school now offers undergraduate and postgraduate programmes, and has taken its place on the global stage, boasting students and staff from some 25 countries. It is currently ranked no 1 in the UK for Drama – Guardian University Guide 2026 (as part of the University of Essex).

Joan Littlewood, (1914–2002), had the centenary of her birth celebrated across the country when this plaque was installed, with special performances of her work, and a First Class postage stamp being just some of the many ways in which she and her legacy were remembered.

Margaret Walker was the member of Theatre Workshop that Joan tasked with establishing an acting school to promote the study of the, then, revolutionary techniques employed by the company. Margaret was not only key to establishing East 15 but, for almost the entire time she ran the school, also lived there.

Theatre Workshop broke new ground, re-interpreting the classics for a modern age, commissioning new plays from socially committed writers, and creating an ensemble capable of inventing new work, such as the now legendary *Oh! What a Lovely War*.

The blue plaque was unveiled, in January 2015, at a University of Essex 50th birthday celebration event following a talk given by Philip Hedley, CBE, Joan Littlewood's assistant at the Theatre Royal Stratford East and a member of the first graduate year of students from East 15.

LTC are grateful to East 15 Acting School for supporting this scheme.



Ruth Rendell, Author
45 Millsmead Way, IG10 1LR

Ruth Barbara Rendell (nee Grasemann) was born on 17 February 1930 in South Woodford. She was educated at County High School for Girls in Loughton. She lived at this address from 1951. It was here that she began her illustrious writing career publishing over sixty novels and creating well known characters including Inspector Wexford.

Ruth Rendell was awarded a Commander of the Order of the British Empire (CBE) in the 1996 Birthday Honours and made a life peer as Baroness Rendell of Babergh. She was also later known as Barbara Vine.

An unveiling ceremony of this blue plaque was held on 24 February 2016, led by Loughton Town Mayor, Cllr Judy Jennings, with other local dignitaries. Members of Ms Rendell's family attended the celebrations.



Home of the former Loughton Bus garage 1923 – 1953

140 Church Hill, IG10 1LJ (Currently Lidl)

The **London General Omnibus Company** (LGOC), who had first run buses to Loughton in 1915, decided to buy land at the country end of their routes on which to build garages, it being much cheaper than in inner London. Harwaters house and land were bought in 1922, and the new garage built amid fields in 1923. The garage (whose code was 'L') covered just over a quarter-acre, had room for some 20 buses, and a petrol tank for 4,000 gallons of fuel. The noted architects Wallis Gilbert and Partners did much work for the LGOC, but it is uncertain if they designed 'L'.

18 acres of the estate was left, and the old house demolished sometime in the 20s. The LGOC hung onto the land, and only when they were absorbed into the London Passenger Transport Board (LPTB) was it sold for development. Rectory Court, Harwater Drive, Millsmead Way, and Sedley Rise were built (with associated shops on the main road) by Gale Estates from 1934.

The garage remained in use till 1953, when it was replaced by a much larger building opposite. It became the LCS central bakery, then Sankey's builder's merchants, then Texas, then Homebase. The new garage was demolished after privatisation of its routes in 1986. *[The site is now occupied by Lidl].*

But the old garage remains, and when the centenary of the first bus in Loughton was marked in 2015, the enthusiasts who participated suggested to the then Mayor, Sharon Weston, that a blue plaque be installed. This took place on 11 July 2017. The old garage is the only Loughton building for which you can buy a kit (advertisement below) in OO model railway scale!



The Oriolet Fruitarian Hospital & its Director Dr Josiah Oldfield
91 Staples Road, IG10 1HR

Josiah Oldfield, whilst studying law, shared an apartment with Mahatma Mohandas K Gandhi and discovered they also shared an interest, passion even, for vegetarianism. In 1888 they joined the London Vegetarian Society, of which Dr Arnold Hill was president.

In 1895 **The Oriolet Hospital and Convalescent Home** was opened by Dr Hill, as a centre of treatment for sick vegetarians, and Josiah Oldfield, who had taken up a second career as a doctor, was made its Warden. Surgical, medical and convalescent cases were admitted without payment or letters of referral. Those suffering from early cancers took priority for admission. Medical records were kept as to the effect of the dietetic treatment (it was said that patients who self-referred themselves from other hospitals were cured).

During the First World War, Lieutenant Colonel Oldfield, raised and commanded a Casualty Clearing Station on the Western Front and was Mentioned in Despatches. He was invalided out of the army in 1918. Dr Oldfield became a prolific writer on health issues related to the vegetarian and humanitarian cause. In 1901 he founded the Society for the Abolition of Capital Punishment.



Lord Murray of Epping Forest
29 The Crescent, Loughton, IG10 4PY

Lionel 'Len' Murray was most widely known for his trade union work and in particular for his service as General Secretary of the Trades Union Congress from 1973 until his retirement in 1984.

Lord Murray was born in Shropshire in 1922 and attended Wellington Grammar School. He read English at London University but left early owing to the emphasis on Anglo-Saxon language. After a short period as a schoolteacher he served as a lieutenant in the Shropshire Regiment during the Second World War, taking part in the Normandy D-Day landings. After being invalided out of the army Len gained a place at New College, Oxford, where he graduated with a first in philosophy, politics and economics after just two years' study.

In 1945 Len married Heather Woolf, and they had two sons and two daughters. He began his career in the TUC in 1947 as an assistant in the Economics Department, becoming General Secretary in 1973. In 1966 he was appointed an OBE and made a member of the Privy Council in 1976. In 1985 he was elevated to the peerage of Lord Murray of Epping Forest.

Locally, Len was a member of the Loughton Methodist Church and Loughton and District Historical Society, and a supporter of many charities. The Town Council's Murray Hall in Borders Lane, which opened in 2006, was named in his honour.

Lord Murray lived in Loughton from 1954 residing at 29 The Crescent from 1967 until his death in 2004. The dedication ceremony was led by then Town Mayor, Cllr Stephen Murray, one of Lord Murray's four children, who was joined by other family members and representatives from local groups including the Loughton Methodist Church, the Epping Forest Heritage Trust (successor organisation to the Friends of Epping Forest) and the Christian Drama Resource Centre.



Rev'd William Dawson
The Loughton Club, 8 Station Road, IG10 4NX

This plaque was installed to commemorate the **Reverend William Dawson**, who gave The Loughton Club to the people of Loughton in 1901.

Cllr Chris Pond, Chairman of the Environment and Heritage Committee, informed those present at the dedication ceremony in 2020 of Reverend Dawson's life and connection to the town.

William Dawson was the son of the vicar of East Harling in Norfolk. He was sent to Harrow School and then to Exeter College, Oxford. Oxford in the 1850s was not noted for academic excellence, most didn't take a degree, but William got honours 1st class in Law. He might have ended up a Judge, but his vocation was with the Church of England, he was ordained, and in 1870 became Rector of St John Church, Clerkenwell.

This was a poor parish, with the church situated near to Farringdon Station. One of the troubles, William wrote, was that *"few of those that work here live here, and few of those who dwell here work here"*. In his 23 years at Clerkenwell he caused the clear up of St John's burial ground and conversion to a public park (which is still there today), and wrote the history of the parish.

He came to Loughton in about 1892 and built a house for himself, Susancroft, in Upper Park, on what had once been the yard of the Crown Inn, before it moved. He assisted, unpaid, at St Mary's Church and continued working as Warden of the Finsbury & East London Polytechnic.

Dawson was an anti-drink campaigner. He said that the men and youths of Loughton in their leisure time had nothing to do bar go to the pub. So he gave to Loughton a building where men and boys could gather, in a dry building, at minimal cost, for games and recreation. He was always ready to put his money where his mouth was. In 1901, he arranged for the present clubhouse to be built, and supported it for the rest of his life.

William Dawson died at Susancroft on 1 November 1927. He is commemorated by the large oil painting in the stairwell of the club. He is one of Loughton's great benefactors and it's entirely appropriate that this plaque to his memory has been provided by Loughton Town Council, to remind passers-by of this man and his gifts.



Barbara Harmer – First Female Supersonic Pilot

91 Staples Road, Loughton IG10 1HR

The latest plaque to be installed is in honour of **Barbara Harmer**, the first female supersonic pilot.

The plaque is installed at 91 Staples Road, where Barbara Harmer was born in 1953. Her family moved to West Sussex when she was five years old. At 15 years of age Barbara left school and became a hairdresser. Five years later, in search of a challenge, she achieved a trainee position as an air traffic controller at Gatwick Airport. Meanwhile, with the initial intention of gaining a law degree, she began studying for A-levels, by herself with no tuition.

However, being surrounded by aircraft her intentions changed, and she wanted to take to the air herself. Along with her £5,000 savings and a £10,000 loan she paid for her own flying lessons and earned herself a pilot's licence, taking control of an aircraft for the first time in December 1975.

Following a new job as a flying instructor at Goodwood Airport, Barbara spent the next two years studying by correspondence course for her commercial pilot's licence, passing in 1982. Achieving her ambition of becoming a civil aviation pilot proved more difficult than envisioned. After submitting more than 100 applications, she was finally offered a post with Genair, a small commuter airline.

In 1984, she moved onto British Caledonian and had her first experience of jet airliners. Four years later Caledonian merged with British Airways and in 1992 Barbara (one of just 40 women, among 3,000 pilots) was selected for an intensive six-month conversion course for Concorde, costing £100,000, fortunately this time paid by her employer! Barbara succeeded in her training aided by the invaluable notes of her colleague and friend, Capt Phil Benson, who had undergone training for Concorde a few years earlier when the training was given by the engineers who had designed the aircraft. Apparently, flying Concorde was 2-3 times more difficult than usual aircraft.

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On 25 March 1993, Barbara made history flying as first officer on a BA Concorde from London's Heathrow to New York's JFK airport. In 2001, an Air France pilot, Béatrice Vialle, became the second female to pilot Concorde before the service was finally withdrawn in 2003. Only one other woman flew the aircraft, during its development phase, French test pilot, Jacqueline Auriol. After Concorde, Barbara retrained to fly Boeing 777s and finally took redundancy from BA in 2009.

Barbara's passions didn't stop at flying, she was also a qualified offshore yacht master with plans to take part in a transatlantic event in 2013 with her partner Andy Hewitt. Sadly, in 2009 she was diagnosed with ovarian cancer and died at St Wilfrid's Hospice in Chichester on 20 February 2011, aged 57, having married her partner shortly before her death.

Not long after she began piloting Concorde, during an interview Barbara said "...there's nothing else like it. Even pilots stop and stare, it has an aura about it." Hopefully, people will stop and stare at this plaque in recognition of a remarkably determined and successful woman.

We are grateful to the property owners Deborah and Paul Davis for supporting this scheme. In fact, this is actually the second plaque adorning their home, which is also on the site of the former Oriole Fruitarian Hospital (1895-1903).



© BA Press Office

The above photograph shows Barbara Harmer waving from the cockpit of Concorde.

Rudyard Kipling (his sister Alice) and Stanley Baldwin
Goldings Manor Cottage, 3 Stanmore Way, Loughton IG10 2SA

The 44th blue heritage plaque was installed to commemorate the '*summer idyll*' spent by **Rudyard Kipling, his sister Alice (Trix) and cousin Stanley Baldwin** at Goldings Hill Farm, in 1877.

The plaque has been installed on the site at Goldings Manor Cottage, 3 Stanmore Way.

A new book detailing this event, researched by Janice Lingley, a member of the Kipling Society who made a contribution towards the cost of this plaque, is available through Loughton library or bookshop (price £6.50).

This was one of two plaques commissioned and was being cast when the Coronavirus lockdown was instigated.

The book centres on the time when as children, Rudyard Kipling, his sister, Trix, and cousin, Stanley Baldwin, spent the summer of 1877 in Loughton. They had the run of the open Forest and of Goldings Farm, owned by the avuncular John Dalley.

The freedoms and friendships of the children's stay were highly important in the development and future careers of the writer and of the Prime Minister; the Nobel laureate and the politician both remembered it with huge affection whenever they met as famous men years onward.



Peter Abrahams, Author and Journalist
37 Jessel Drive, Loughton IG10 2EX

Loughton Town Council installed a plaque at 37 Jessel Green in recognition of **Peter Abrahams**, the South African journalist and 'freedom' writer, as part of its blue heritage plaque scheme, which aims to raise awareness of Loughton's rich history.

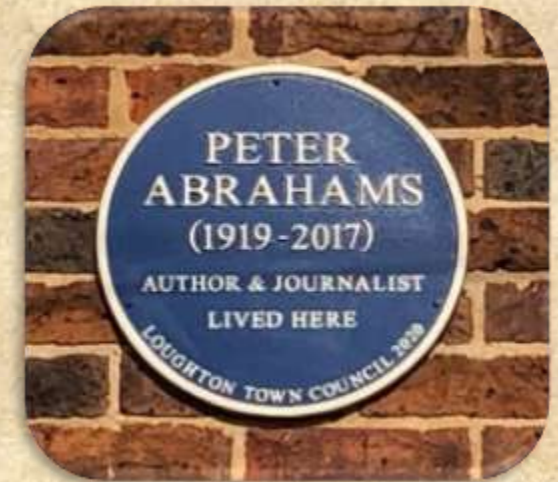
Peter Abrahams was born in 1919, in Vrededorp, a suburb of Johannesburg, South Africa. He was a writer whose journalism and novels explored, with sensitivity and passion, the injustices of apartheid and the complexities of racial politics. *Mine Boy* (published: 1946) and his memoir *Tell Freedom* (published: 1954) dealt in part with apartheid. *A Wreath for Udomo* (1956) is a none-too-hopeful look at the African independence that was then forthcoming.

In 1939 he left South Africa and worked first as a sailor, then as a journalist in London. While working in London, he lived latterly with his wife, Daphne, in Loughton, here and in London he met several leading black activists and writers including George Padmore: a leading figure in the Pan-African Community; along with Kwame Nkrumah of the Gold Coast, and Jomo Kenyatta of Kenya (both of whom later became Heads of their respective nations).

Abrahams had had early hopes of becoming a writer but faced considerable challenges as a South African. In 1942, despite a manuscript reader's recommendation, Allen & Unwin published his *Dark Testament* (made up of pieces he had carried with him from South Africa). Other works published included, in 1945: *Song of the City* and 1946: *Mine Boy* (which became the first African novel written in English to attract international attention). More publications followed in both the UK and USA.

In 1956 he moved to Jamaica, where he settled, and was awarded the Musgrave Gold Medal for writing & journalism by the Institute of Jamaica in 1994.

In January 2017, Abrahams was found dead (aged 97) at his home in Jamaica, a forensic examination showed he had been the victim of foul play. A local 61-year-old man, Norman Tomlinson, was charged with murder. On 7 October 2018, Tomlinson pleaded guilty to manslaughter, he was jailed for seven years.



Arthur Bacot, Medical Entomologist

19 York Hill, IG10 1RL

Arthur William Bacot lived at 19 York Hill. He was born in North London on 28 April 1866. He left school at 16, having missed a considerable amount of time due to poor health in childhood, to work in the City of London. However, as a keen butterfly collector, between 1893 and 1909, he produced over fifty papers on lepidoptera (butterflies and moths).

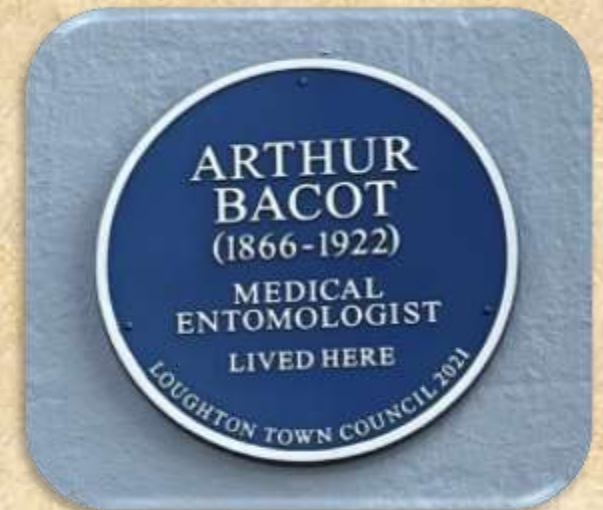
Following an interest in the study of the form and structure of animals and plants (morphology) and genetic research, he developed breeding experiments of moths, resulting in a presentation to the London Hospital Medical School In 1908.

This culminated in Bacot at the age of 43, being invited by Professor Greenwood of the Advisory Committee for Plague Investigation, to study the breeding habits of the rat flea and how it passed on the plague virus. The research was undertaken in his spare time for just a small fee plus expenses. Proving a success, this resulted in him joining the Lister Institute of Preventive Medicine as an entomologist. During the First World War, in 1914, he went to Sierra Leone to study Yellow Fever. In 1917, together with Joseph Arkwright, he went to France to investigate the cause and prevention of trench fever, which was afflicting the British forces. Here he discovered the relationship of lice with both typhus and trench fever (a disease he suffered the effects of himself).

Following a request from the Egyptian government, to carry out a study into typhus, Bacot and Arkwright went to Cairo in 1922, where unfortunately they both caught the disease from lice. Arkwright survived following a long illness, but sadly Bacot died, aged 56.

Bacot was remembered by his friends Arkwright & Greenwood as '*a man who was greater than his work. Entomology was his hobby; the problems connected with the study of insects and ingenious methods for solving them were his pastime. The harnessing of entomology to the use and advance of human society was to him a great achievement - his ideal of human aim. He believed any credit due should be given to him as a member of the staff of the Lister Institute rather than as an individual. Any scientific man tempted to measure his own services against their rewards in income or fame, may pause to think how little made this man happy.*'

This plaque was installed during the Covid pandemic in April 2021, it seemed most appropriate that Loughton's latest Blue Plaque should honour the entomologist.



Sir Leonard Hill & Sir Austin Bradford Hill

(Gate Pier) Nafferton Rise, IG10 1UB (*former site of Osborne House*)

Sir Leonard Hill was born on 2 June 1866, in Bruce Castle, Tottenham, (where his father, George Birkbeck Hill, a famous scholar and commentator on the works of Samuel Johnson was Headmaster). Leonard had wanted to become a farmer, but coming from a distinguished family, his parents 'decided' he should enter the medical profession, and he became a physiologist.

His work on blood pressure led him to believe "arterial pressure could be taken in man as rapidly, simply, and accurately as temperature could be taken with the clinical thermometer". This work developed into the Hill's sign. He later performed research into decompression sickness, oxygen toxicity, and the effects of carbon dioxide in diving; supporting linear or uniform decompression profiles. This type of decompression is used today by saturation divers.

Sir Leonard was also a distinguished watercolourist and wrote children's stories. Being fond of the outdoor life, he went every day to bathe in a pond in Epping Forest. He was knighted in 1930 and died in his 86th year on 30 March 1952.

One of Sir Leonard's sons, **Austin Bradford Hill** (known as Tony), was born in London on 8 July 1897. As a child he lived at the family home, Osborne House, Loughton and was educated at Chigwell School.

From childhood, Austin had wanted to be a doctor. Following the outbreak of the first world war in 1916 he volunteered for training as a pilot in the Royal Navy Air Service, and was posted to the Greek islands to support the attack on the Dardanelles. In November 1917 he developed pulmonary tuberculosis and was sent home to die. Two years in hospital and two years of convalescence put a medical qualification out of the question and he took a degree in economics by correspondence at London University.

Advised and encouraged by Major Greenwood, he developed a career in medical statistics, first at the Medical Research Council and subsequently at the London School of Hygiene and Tropical Medicine.

As an epidemiologist and statistician, he pioneered the randomised clinical trial and, together with Richard Doll, demonstrated the connection between cigarette smoking and lung cancer. Hill is widely known for pioneering the "Bradford Hill" criteria for determining a causal association. He was knighted in 1961. On his death in 1991, it was written "*to anyone involved in medical statistics, epidemiology or public health, Bradford Hill was quite simply the world's leading medical statistician*".



Millican Dalton, Environmentalist and 'Professor of Adventure'
Walnut Cottage, 18 Stony Path, IG10 1SJ

Millican Dalton was born to a Quaker family in Nenthead, Alston, Cumberland, on 20 April 1867. At age 7 his family relocated to Essex, where he enjoyed being out in the wild, experiencing adventures. As a young man he worked in the City as an insurance clerk, and lived at Walnut Cottage, although apparently spent much of his time sleeping under canvas in the garden.

Aged 36, Millican found the lure of the wild - or the tedium of the office - too much and decided to leave Loughton and head off to Borrowdale in the Lake District in pursuit of his life of adventure. It was here that he enjoyed his simpler life of self-sufficiency, living in a cave during the warmer months, located on the eastern flank of Castle Crag, known locally now as *Millican Dalton's Cave*, (but retreating to a wooden hut in Buckinghamshire during the winter).

Somewhat ahead of his time, he was a vegetarian, pacifist and teetotaller, who offered his services as a climbing guide to earn a small income to live off and adopted the self-styled moniker "Professor of Adventure". He lived in his cave for almost fifty years, carving into it his epitaph, which reads 'Don't waste words, jump to conclusions.'

In the winter of 1946-47 Dalton's hut, in Bucks, burnt down whereby he resorted to living in a tent. Sadly this proved too much for a man of his age and frailty, and he contracted pneumonia from which he died in Amersham Hospital on 5 February 1947, aged 79.



Charles Christopher Clark, Industrialist & Philanthropist
8 Connaught Avenue, Loughton IG10 4DP

Charles Frederick Clark was born on 15 November 1876, in Knaresborough, North Yorkshire. In 1911 he moved from Yorkshire East Riding to Leyton, opening his Caribonum factory in 1918 where he derived his fortune from the manufacture of carbon paper and typewriter ribbons; he was known as the "carbon paper king".

The name *Caribonum* on carbons and typewriter ribbons carried the prestige of one of the finest global products; with the company's experimental and research laboratories acknowledged as the most advanced in the world.

Clark later moved to Loughton, one of his residences being 8 Connaught Avenue. He also had built for him by the distinguished architects, Wallis Gilbert and Partners 'Limber' in Church Lane and 'Ripley Grange', Debden Green.

Following a two-year search, in 1928, he purchased 40 acres of farmland in Loughton, where he had built 'Ripley Grange', the house he regarded as "*the crowning success of his life*". The house was set in 18 acres of spectacular gardens which Clark opened up to the public for free. As the number of visitors grew, he had seven thatched summer houses built. During the Second World War, Clark had the grounds ploughed up in order to grow vast quantities of vegetables that were sent to the Voluntary Hospitals and other charitable institutions free of charge.

On 1 January 1945, at the age of 68, having returned to his home county, Charles Clark died in Selby, Yorkshire.



Diana Kennedy (Nee Southwood), Mexicanist

19 York Hill, IG10 1RL

Diana Kennedy, Mexicanist, was an authority on everything Mexican, in particular on Mexican cuisine, having written nine books on the subject. They were based on her fifty years of travelling in Mexico, interviewing and learning from several types of cooks from virtually every region of the nation. Due to her style of work, she was referred to as a "culinary anthropologist" and self-identified as an "ethno-gastronomer".

Diana Kennedy (nee Southwood) was born in Loughton on 3 March 1923, living at 19 York Hill. Her father was a salesman, and her mother was a schoolteacher who loved nature and wanted to live quietly in the countryside.

Diana attended South Hampstead High School, but following the outbreak of World War II, was unable to go on to university and in 1941, aged 19, she joined the Women's Timber Corps, a division of the Land Army.

In 1953 she emigrated to Canada, where she lived for three years. In 1957 on a last minute trip to Haiti, she met her husband, Paul Kennedy, a correspondent for The New York Times in Mexico, Central America and the Caribbean. They moved to Mexico and married sometime later.

While living there she fell in love with the local food and dedicated her subsequent career to its preservation and promotion. She visited every state in Mexico, using diverse forms of transportation, from buses, to donkeys, to her Nissan pickup truck, travelling to many isolated areas of Mexico visiting markets and cooks to ask about cooking ingredients and methods.

After settling in Zitácuaro, Michoacán, she built what might be termed an eco-house, and established a centre of research, teaching and sustainable living. She kept pigs, goats and chickens, growing much of her own food organically. All the water used on the property was from tanks that collect wastewater, with a patch of land serving as a filter for wastewater. Much of the energy was solar.

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Her interest in the environment was related to food in the sense that when the environment is destroyed, foods disappear. It also had roots in her mother's love for nature and experience with scarcity in wartime England.

She established the Diana Kennedy Foundation to have tax-free status with the Mexican government, and to work on projects focusing on the environment as well as food.

Kennedy received numerous awards for her work, including the Order of the Aztec Eagle from the Mexican government, which is the highest honour awarded to foreigners in the country. She was also appointed a Member of the Order of the British Empire.

She died on 24 July 2022 (aged 99) in Zitácuaro, Michoacán, Mexico.

PERCY THOMPSON, Historian of Loughton

62 The Uplands, IG10 1NL

Percival George Thompson was born in Rotherhithe in 1866. He trained originally as a draughtsman then as an architect and later became a Town Planner. He moved to Loughton in 1893, becoming an enthusiastic local historian and naturalist, and serving as Chairman of Loughton Urban District Council, 1918-1920. Thompson's publications included *The Story of the Parish Church of Loughton, Essex* (1946) and contributions to nature journals. He was Curator of Queen Elizabeth's Lodge Museum, Chingford from 1917-1948.

Research by Percy Thompson focused on the history of the parish and topography of Loughton, including the churches, chapels, schools, local government, cricket club and notable buildings; maps; plans; transcripts of records and monumental inscriptions; copies of souvenir programmes; and photographs.

Thompson became a member of the EFC, a voluntary organisation founded in 1880, (with Charles Darwin and Alfred Russel Wallace among its founder members). It is the leading society for wildlife and geology enthusiasts in Essex, promoting the Study of Natural History, Geology and Pre-historic Archaeology in the County of Essex and its borderlands. He served as curator and secretary of the society, taking over as curator just after the war. Living through both World Wars, he continued to look after the EFC during those periods, with some of the meetings actually being held at this residence. He was a prolific curator of records, a polymath, a great man. His collection is still held at the headquarters at Wat Tyler Country Park in Pitsea, Basildon.

It is believed that Thompson actually designed 62 The Uplands, built between 1904 and 1908, where he lived until his health began to deteriorate, moving to Buckinghamshire in 1951 to be looked after by his daughter. The Cox family who lived at the house following Thompson, sold off part of the garden to the side of the house to build the existing neighbouring property. During their residence they found many artefacts, believed to have been buried by Thompson for safe keeping in the garden, including a marble bowl, sundials, flints and axe heads, some of which remain with the Cox family today.

Thompson died in 1953 and is buried in Loughton Cemetery.

