

STEPPING BACK IN WANSTEAD

With its deep heritage, open space and excellent transport links, Wanstead continues to draw hordes of new residents and businesses

The green and leafy suburb of London East 11 is a true transition area between Essex and East London. The area has become a lively, cosmopolitan centre of mainly traditional homes whilst also boasting a myriad of restaurants and bars, plus its many small traditional retailers are a treasure trove for visitors and locals in search of the smaller, specialist shops, but you are never far away from a large green space.

The area has associations with a number of influential figures from the past. There are the obvious and very well known ones in the form of Sir Winston Churchill who was the

member of parliament for Wanstead and Woodford and of course Prime Minister in 1940-45 and 1951-52, and there are the not so famous but equally influential in the shape of Stanley Morison. Morrison, whilst not being a name known to many, his work is read around the world every hour of the day

THE TIMES

because in 1931 The Times of London commissioned Mr Morison and his typography design team at the Monotype Corporation to design a newspaper typeface (above). Morison is quoted as saying "The Times is a newspaper in a class by itself, needing not a general trade type, however good, but a face whose strength of line, firmness of contour, and economy of space

fulfilled the specific editorial needs of The Times". The Result was Times New Roman, a typeface which caught on in the publishing world and one which is used by nearly every newspaper the world over every day.

Wanstead, mentioned in the Domesday Book as a manor previously held by St Paul (later known as St Paul's Cathedral) is still deeply proud of its heritage and there are many monuments highlighting this still standing today. Many people sit at the traffic lights opposite Wanstead underground station and wonder what the monument is. Well the answer is a drinking fountain. Built in the last years of the reign of Queen Victoria, the fountain used to stand in the middle of the road junction and was a focal point of the village. Road developments forced the moving of the fountain. The



sculpture of Queen Victoria on the north side of the fountain and she is facing her grandfather George III.

The area can also be proud that during the Second World War it did its bit to ensure that we were victorious, as underneath where the fountain now stands alongside the green, there used to be a factory involved in important war work. This came about as the tunnels for the Central Line had been dug as far as Gants Hill, but no track had been laid and so when the then Plessey works in Ilford were bombed, the production line for radio parts was moved into the tunnels for safety. The size of the operation was such that at times more than 2000 people worked there underground, and it was equipped with a canteen seating 600.

Wanstead House dominated the area for centuries, but there were many other manor houses and estates, the greatest of which,

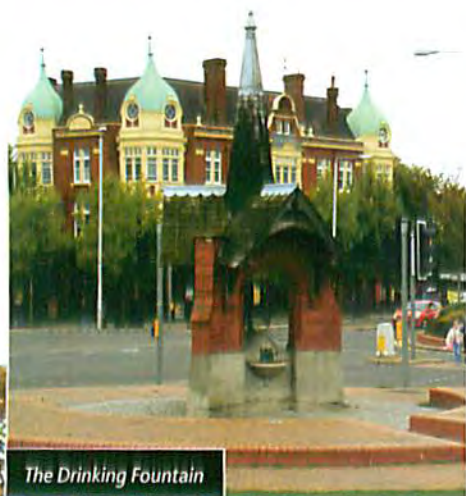
Wanstead Grove, covered much of the land between the High Street and the River Roding. It's most striking feature was a 400m long man-made lake which lead to a Temple Grotto

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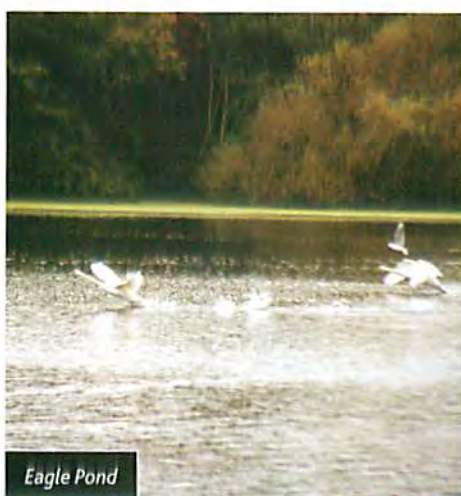
which is still standing and currently a listed building. The bulk of this land was sold at the end of the 19th century and developed to become the Counties Estate that we know today.

With such a rich history, Wanstead's residents are understandably concerned about the preservation of their community and have decided to strive to maintain Wanstead as an idyllic suburb. Residents in the Counties Estate area have just formed The Counties Residents' Association (CRA) with the main concern of its members is the loss of the neighbourhood to obtrusive developments.

The CRA, like many similar groups in Wanstead, represents its members' interests by closely liaising with the Redbridge Planning Department during the application stage for new developments. Although a new group it has been busy building links at both local and central government levels in an effort to modify the planning process to favour residents. One of its long term aims of the CRA is to secure for its area some form of conservation status as this already exists in other parts of Wanstead. **wel**



The Drinking Fountain



Eagle Pond



Cafe Culture on the High Road



Snaresbrook Crown Court