

# RESEARCH PROJECT



It has been a privilege to be the first person to pull together this incredible story and I invite you to join in the delight of uncovering more.



The Old Town Hall has a wide and varying range of stories. Between January and March 2019, we are looking for a team of 12 to help take the research to another level, supporting the current research and to solve some mysteries.

Having become familiar with the current material, we are hoping that the team will carry out a mix of archival research and capture oral history.

## OUTCOMES

WA are hoping to use the material uncovered to inform its performing arts activities, in order to honour the history of the building. It is also hoped that the information will be used in a publication, and maybe a film. We also hope that the research can be presented in an informal on the final Tuesday. We also hope that this information will help with a future Heritage Lottery Fund bid.



Above, the Grand Imperial Staircase.  
Left, the Council in session in 1952. Note the high proportion of female councillors.

## FILLING IN THE GAPS

We have already engaged in a great deal of research into the history of the Town Hall, but there are some key areas left to be enriched. We are looking for help looking into:

Wartime activities, especially the Home Guard Unit Based at the Town Hall.

Who drew the Wartime graffiti in the bunker and interpretation of the images.

Images of the inside of the building

First person narratives of working in the building

Details of one off public (hired) events.

Details of births, marriages and deaths at the register office.

Hampstead boasts a range of notable public figures who have lived nearby the Town Hall - can we link them?

## ARCHIVE RESEARCH

Archival and library research to be carried out at

- *The London Metropolitan Archive*
- *Camden Archive*
- *British Library*
- *National Archives in Kew*
- *British Newspaper Archive*
- *Imperial War Museum*

PTO





#### A BRIEF HISTORY

Old Hampstead Town Hall opened in 1878 and operated as Hampstead Vestry Hall 1878, it was renamed Hampstead Town Hall in 1900, and renamed Old Hampstead Town Hall in 1965 when the council left. The building was abandoned in 1994.

After campaigning from local residents, the building was saved and in 2000 arts charity Wac Arts moved in and is the current custodian of the building. Wac Arts is committing to include heritage as part of its offer and has been looking into this intriguing and surprising history.

Wac Arts has a long association with U3A, and houses the UK's only physical campus and greatly looks forward to working with its London wide members in uncovering more of this unique story.



**Wac Arts**

Empowering young people  
to change their world  
through the arts



#### AMAZING STORIES

Old Hampstead Town Hall has a unique history. So far we have uncovered:

- 1913 Emmeline Pankhurst at a WSPU meeting
- 1919 George Bernard Shaw speech
- 1915 TS Elliot married in the Council Chamber
- 1916 Lytton Strachey defending himself before the council
- 1936 Lord Haw Haw Fascist Rally
- 1939 – 1945 Home Guard Unit and Civil Defense
- 1963 Spike Milligan Poetry recital
- 1966 Georgie Girl location
- 1978 Suggs first gig with Madness

And there's so much more left to discover.



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**FIRST MEETING 11<sup>TH</sup> DECEMBER AT THE OLD TOWN HALL  
HAVERSTOCK HILL, LONDON, NW3 4QP. FORTNIGHTLY  
MEETINGS AT 11:00 FROM 15<sup>TH</sup> JANUARY.  
REFRESHMENTS WILL BE AVAILABLE AT THE CAFÉ.**

**UNDERGROUND: BELSIZE PARK  
(ZONE 2, NORTHERN LINE)**

**TRAIN: HAMPSTEAD HEATH**

**BUSES:**

**168, C11, 268**

**DISABLED PARKING IS AVAILABLE**



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