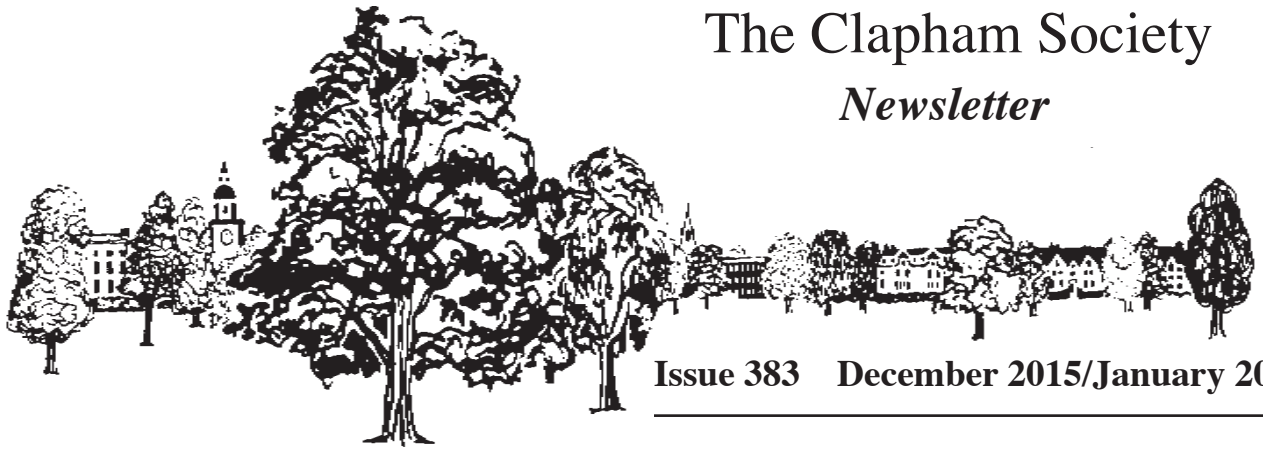


The Clapham Society

Newsletter



Issue 383 December 2015/January 2016

The next newsletter will be the February issue, distributed at the end of January. Happy Christmas to all our readers!

There is no meeting in December.

Our meetings will recommence in January 2016 at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. The bar will be open as in the past from 7 pm, our guest will speak at 8 pm for about 45 minutes, with around 15 minutes for questions and the bar will remain open until late.

The full programme for the year is shown below. We hope you will put the dates in your diary to ensure that you do not miss the meetings.

Clapham Chamber Concerts

On Friday 4 December Amanda Lake (violin) and Jonathan Parkin (clarinet) feature in Prokofiev's *Quintet*, a work adapted by the composer from his circus-themed ballet *Trapeze*. The programme will also include Mozart's *Oboe Quartet* and a new work by Clapham Chamber Concerts' composer-in-residence, David Wallace. The performance starts at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets on the door £12, £10 Friends and concessions, £5 children under 12 years. Full details at claphamchamberconcerts.org.uk.

London's Pop Up King

Saturday 5 December is Small Business Saturday and Clapham Books will celebrate the day with a visit from local chef, Jimmy Garcia, 'London's Pop-up King' (according to *The Sunday Times*). He will be introducing his new book *Social Eats*, and serving canapés and mulled cider made from recipes in the book. Garcia's Clapham pop-up restaurant, The Lodge, inspired by an Alpine ski Lodge, is now open at Clapham North. He will be at Clapham Books, 26 The Pavement, SW4 0JA from 12 noon to 3 pm on 5 December.

Light up a Life

On Thursday 10 December at 6.30 pm the lights on the Christmas tree outside Royal Trinity Hospice will be switched on, and a candlelit procession will leave for Holy Trinity Church, where the carol service will commence at 7.30 pm. The annual Light up a Life service is a celebration of the lives of loved ones who are no longer with us.

Monday 25 January

Clapham Common – The Past Coming Through to the Future. Lambeth's specialist on environmental issues, **Iain Boulton**, whom many will know through his walks on Clapham Common – especially the popular Bat Walk – will talk about the growing interest in working to restore the traditional landscapes of London's commons and open spaces. With special reference to Clapham Common he will look at the challenges and opportunities faced.

Monday 22 February

Clapham South Deep Shelter Project. In 2015, Transport for London announced a scheme to open up the Clapham South Deep Shelter for tours with a museum at ground level. **Chris Nix**, Assistant Director: Collections and Engagement at London Transport Museum will talk about the fascinating history of the deep shelters and update us on the progress of the scheme.

Monday 21 March

Conscription and Conscience in Clapham. To mark the centenary of the introduction of conscription in 1916, **Ben Copsey** of Peace Pledge Union will talk about the millions of men around Britain who faced a future in uniform – willing or no. For those engaged in the anti-war movement this was unacceptable, and they registered their opposition to war by becoming Conscientious Objectors. Fifty men from Clapham made this difficult and often dangerous decision. From tribunals to work camps and prison and from Clapham Common to Alexandria, Egypt, the experiences of First World War Conscientious Objectors are a fascinating story of courage, conscience and morality.

Monday 25 April

The race to save the sea. **Charles Clover**, chairman of the Blue Marine Foundation will tell us about the enormous opportunities for grand scale conservation in the British Overseas Territories. As an environment journalist with 30 years' experience, Charles has covered virtually every issue that arises out of man's treatment of nature. His book *The End of The Line* (2004) and the award-winning documentary film that it inspired brought the problems of overfishing and the impact it is having on life in the oceans into public focus. He also co-founded Fish2Fork, an online sustainable restaurant guide.

(continued overleaf)

Monday 23 May

St Mary's Church Spire. **Fergus McCormick** of architects Thomas Ford & Partners, project architect for the recent repairs to the spire of St Mary's Church, Clapham Park Road will talk about the work involved, outlining the problems involved, and describe how they were resolved. He will show some of the many detailed photographs taken of the work in progress, as well as remarkable views from high up the spire. To provide a context for the work a representative of St Mary's Church will summarise the church's history and its link to the community.

Monday 27 June

Lambeth Architecture 1965-1999. One of last year's most popular speakers, **Edmund Bird**, Heritage Advisor to the Mayor of London and former Lambeth Conservation Officer, returns to introduce the fourth book in his series on Lambeth's 20th-century architectural history. This is the first book to assess the work of Ted Hollamby, the borough's chief planner and architect between 1964 and 1981, and his enormous output of council housing, as well as the major GLC estates of the 1960s and 1970s. This was also a boom time in the provision of leisure and community buildings, cradle-to-grave social and health care, construction of new schools and, of course, the completion of the post-war vision of the cultural hub of the South Bank.

Wednesday 6 July

Summer Party in a beautiful garden on Clapham Common West Side.

Monday 26 September

Do No Harm. Neurosurgeon **Henry Marsh**, who was brought up in Clapham and whose family has been associated with the Clapham Society since its founding in 1963 – his father, Norman Marsh played many roles in the Society and was finally President for several years – will talk about his best-selling book, *Do No Harm*. Sub-titled *Stories of Life, Death and Brain surgery*, this is a moving insight into the highs and lows of a life dedicated to operating on the human brain, telling how it feels to hold someone's life in your hands.

Monday 24 October

Annual General Meeting. Guest speaker to be confirmed.

Monday 28 November

Slavery, Commerce and the Hibbert Family. **Dr Katie Donington**, Research Associate on the Antislavery Usable Past project at the University of Nottingham, will explore the Hibbert family and their links to slavery and Clapham. George Hibbert MP was a leading parliamentary pro-slavery advocate, a Chairman of the Society of West India Merchants, Agent for Jamaica and an extensive plantation and slave-owner. He lived in a large house with a renowned garden on Clapham Common North Side. This talk will argue that the profits from slavery were domesticated and remade as the signifiers of civilisation, taste and status.

Brian Bloice

This month we were deeply saddened to hear of the death of Brian Bloice, Chairman of the Streatham Society, a founder member and Chairman of the Southwark and Lambeth Archaeological Society and Chairman of the Lambeth Local History Forum. Brian was a very distinguished local historian, who kept in close contact with the member societies of the Local History Forum to which the Clapham Society belongs. He was a most charming and gentle man, who will be greatly missed.

Brian at the opening ceremony of Lambeth Heritage Festival at Morley College in September 2015

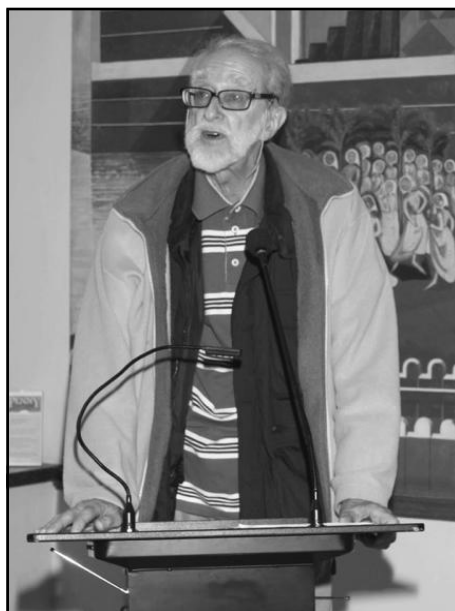


Photo: Alan Robertson

Black Georgians

The present exhibition at Black Cultural Archives, entitled *Black Georgians: The Shock of the Familiar*, reveals the everyday lives of black people from 1714 to 1830 and presents a surprising, sometimes shocking, and inspiring picture of Georgian Britain. It's an opportunity to challenge perspectives on the past and how it shaped the Britain we live in today. The exhibition continues until April 2016.

If you have not yet been there, it is well worth visiting the beautifully restored former Raleigh Hall and adjoining modern building which are the new home of Black Cultural Archives, 1 Windrush Square, Brixton, SW2 1EF. Tel. 020 3757 8500. Open Tuesday to Saturday 10 am to 6 pm.

Green and Ethical Christmas Fayre

On **Saturday 5 December** from 11 am to 4 pm, Holy Trinity Church will be hosting its fifth Green and Ethical Christmas Fayre. There will be stalls selling fairly traded, green, and ethical gifts and food. You can listen to festive music as you browse, refresh yourself in the Green Café and join in activities including visiting Father Christmas' grotto and beeswax candle-making. There will also be the City Farm Nativity – animals from Vauxhall City Farm will be visiting – complete with stable and costumes for you to wear for a special Christmas photo! Entrance to the nativity included with the Fayre ticket (£2 adults, children free). Holy Trinity Environment Group is holding the fair to raise awareness of environmental issues within our community and to raise funds for work to improve energy efficiency in the Church. You can also buy your British Christmas tree in the churchyard from the Macaulay School Christmas Tree sale.

The Amazing World of MC Escher

Most people are familiar with at least some of the puzzling and intricate drawings of Escher, even though only one is owned by a public collection in this country, and this is his first major exhibition in the UK. Generally more popular with mathematicians than art historians, his meticulous draughtsmanship merits detailed attention. Don't miss this exhibition which runs at Dulwich Picture Gallery until 17 January 2016. Pre-book timed tickets on line at dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk.

Healthy and sustainable food on our doorstep

Did you know we have edible play-grounds, edible tube stations and community food-growing hubs all on our doorstep?

Our food is transported over hundreds and sometimes thousands of miles to feed the 8 million people who live in London. All the more reason why we should take steps to work together to reconnect people with how crops are produced and to use food-growing as a way to connect and create vibrant, healthy and caring communities.

Incredible Edible Lambeth (IEL) recently hosted an event at Lambeth College to celebrate local food growers, cooks, and eaters. While we enjoyed delicious canapés prepared by the catering students at the college, Pam Warhurst, founder of the Incredible Edible movement in her home town of Todmorden, Lancashire, shared her stories of developing edible routes to connect people and encourage friendships and conversations.

Pam and Rosie Boycott, Chair of the London Food Board, highlighted three initiatives around Clapham which form the Incredible Edible Clapham Route. First, pupils of Heathbrook Primary School have regular lessons in their garden where the children learn how to use tools, develop horticultural skills and nurture the flora and fauna – and they are even selling produce to the parents. What better way to engage the next generation in sustainable food production.

Next, the Clapham BID (Business Improvement District) is discovering the value of community-based sustainable food growing for helping to generate an interesting, vibrant and safe environment for the local community. Next time you are passing through Clapham North station take a look at how the BID is working with The Edible Bus Stop, TfL and the station staff who are growing plants in the entrance, making it the first stop on Clapham's Edible Food Route.

Finally, Bandstand Beds was highlighted as a community food-growing hub, developed out of a reclaimed corner of Clapham Common's green-waste site on Windmill Drive. Members and volunteers come together to support other groups and individuals and will produce seedlings and plants in the polytunnel for community growing projects. The garden is a place where people of any age or background can connect and be inspired by the joys of food-growing, cooking, eating and sharing home-grown fruit and veg.

Minutes of The Annual General Meeting

The 52nd Annual General Meeting of the Society was held at 8 pm on 19 October 2015 at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4. The Society's President, Martin Drury, took the chair and 73 members were present.

1. The Secretary had received apologies for absence from Derrick and Janet Johnson, Sue and Barry Keegan, Maev Sullivan, and Jill Cramphorn. The Minutes of the previous Annual General Meeting (15 September 2014), which had been previously circulated, were unanimously approved.
2. The Chairman of the Society, Annabel Allott, presented the Annual Report, which had been circulated with the October newsletter (No. 381). She reiterated her thanks, made in the report, to all those who help with the running of the Society and especially to John Adams and Jenny Cobley who were retiring from the Committee. The Report was unanimously adopted.
3. The Treasurer, David Brown, presented the Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2015. He explained that the Society was running at a deficit as there had been increased expenditure on legal fees and the website. Legal fees had been incurred for challenging use of Clapham Common for commercial events. Expenditure on the website had increased due to use of Facebook and Twitter and this could be reduced if a member of the Society could take on this work. He said that the Society would be pleased to accept donations to support the work done in Clapham including donations to the legal fund. The Accounts were then unanimously adopted.
4. The following were elected as officers for the year 2015-2016:
Chairman Annabel Allott **Solicitor** Daniel Dovar
Vice Chairman Maev Sullivan **Treasurer** David Brown
Membership Secretary Jennifer Everett
Also elected as **Committee Members** were: Christine Armstrong, Philip Ashford, Heather Binney, Bill Emmett, Mark Leffler, Ebuni Okolo and Alyson Wilson.
5. Anna Long FCA was thanked for her work during the last year and reappointed as **Independent Examiner**.
6. There was no other business.

Following the formal part of the meeting, in response to questions from the Chairman Annabel Allott, Edward Stourton gave an entertaining, anecdotal account of his life as journalist, television and radio presenter and author.

Following a degree in English Literature from Trinity College, Cambridge he joined the fledgling ITV as a graduate trainee, moving on to be a founder member of Channel 4 News in 1982. He later moved to the BBC, first television and then radio, where he was a presenter of the *Today* programme for many years, and is now a regular contributor to current affairs programmes. He had a fund of amusing stories about his experiences reporting from the Gulf War, Beirut and Serbia to interviewing world leaders including President Reagan and François Mitterand. He admitted that he admired the courage of the present journalists in war zones which are now far more dangerous.

Edward noted the different tactics adopted by politicians to avoid answering difficult questions – commenting that David Cameron successfully gave the impression of engaging with the question, while Boris Johnson and Kenneth Clarke often confused the interviewer by actually answering the question! He expressed a preference for radio over TV on the basis that the listener can engage more with radio, and has a feeling of ownership. Asked about the future of journalism, he said that while newspapers may be in trouble, radio and TV benefit from the ability to choose the time to listen or watch.

Moving on to the subject of his books, Edward had some valuable advice for authors – criticism of the Royal Family is not good for sales, but anything to do with dogs is. He added that his book, *Diary of a Dog-Walker*, paid for his daughter's wedding!

By joining up creative endeavours like these, Incredible Edible Lambeth is helping to make this city and the people who live here part of the solution for developing a sustainable, healthy food system for us today, and future generations.

Jane Clark

New members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: Emma and Lewis Burnet, Camilla Gordon, Sarah James and Julie Hobbs, Heather and David Kay, Carole Mander and Valerie Timlin, Susan Roberts, Alison Skilbeck and Tim Hardy, and Mallory and Louise Wise.

Omnibus Membership Scheme

2015 has been an incredible year at Omnibus. We have welcomed so many wonderful artists and audiences into our arts centre, and seen many local schools benefit from our education programme. Making an arts centre financially viable is a constant challenge, so we are reliant on the support of those who would like to play a vital role in the arts. We have a range of Membership options, starting at £25. Go to omnibus-clapham.org/get-involved/memberships to find out more.

Marie McCarthy, Artistic Director

December Highlights at Omnibus

Tuesday 1 December to Sunday 13 December (excluding 7 December) at 11 am and 2 pm. *The Nutcracker*. A colourful new adaptation of an old favourite, packed full of festive magic and wonder, produced by the award-winning Story Pocket Theatre Company. It's Christmas and when Clara is given a wooden nutcracker in the shape of a handsome Prince, little does she know that she and her brother Fritz are about to be drawn into the adventure of their lives. Tickets £10, £8 concessions and children.

Saturday 5 December at 7.30 pm. *Last Christmas*. Judy Flynn along with Alison Steadman, Morwenna Banks and fellow actors will debut a collection of short stories all about love – requited, unrequited and always unpredictable. Judy penned all the stories in her spare time between acting jobs over the course of the last few years. Tickets £15, £12 concessions.

Thursday 10 December at 7.30 pm. *So This is What Happened*. The next instalment of the Omnibus storytelling club. This monthly event is a celebration of the power of words, voices and first hand experience, where people of all ages and from all walks of life will deliver their 10-minute true stories. Tickets £5.

Sunday 13 December from 4 pm to 6 pm and again at 9 pm. *Festive Light Ride*. This is a Clapham first and the theme ties in with 2015 international Year of Light, a yearlong celebration of the impact that light has on science, technology, arts, culture and everyday life.

For one-night only, riders of all ages and backgrounds, will have a wonderful opportunity to get on their bikes for some seasonal fun around local landmarks, guided by marshals from Lambeth's Cycle Confident. The entertainment and installations along the route are organised and curated by Omnibus, and include fireworks, music, singers and travelling soundscapes.

A game of bicycle polo will also take place in Grafton Square. At the end all participants will be given a present for taking part. £3 adults, children free. Book a place at lambethlightsride.eventbrite.co.uk. If you don't have a bike email cycling@lambeth.gov.uk for options. Start and finish at The Polygon, SW4 0JG.

Christmas Market

Venn Street will be in Christmas mode for the first three Saturdays in December, and then closed until **Saturday 9 January**. A stall selling Christmas trees, flowers and wreaths will join the regular independent and artisan food stalls from **Saturday 5 December**.

A Clapham Christmas present

Why not give a local friend a book about Clapham this Christmas? Recently published *Clapham through Time* will interest those who have lived in Clapham for many years as well as newcomers. Each page of this book has a picture of Clapham in the past alongside the same view taken today, with a short descriptive text for each pair. Some views show Clapham over 100 years ago, while others are only about ten years old. The changes even in recent years are striking.

Discovering Clapham gives an excellent brief history and introduction to the area. Both are available at Clapham Books.

Or what about a gift membership to the Clapham Society? Go to our website (claphamsociety.com) to check all the benefits of membership or contact the Membership Secretary for details. New members receive a useful welcome pack.

Wandsworth Historian

The 100th issue of the journal of the Wandsworth Historical Society is now available and contains the usual selection of interesting information. This includes extracts from three local newspapers when they reached this milestone themselves (in the 19th and early 20th centuries) and more on the debate about the birthplace of Battersea MP, John Burns. Contact Neil Robson, ngrobson@tiscali.co.uk.

If you have any queries about **The Clapham Society** or have news of local events, please contact the appropriate person below:

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Details of meetings, activities and a full list of our publications are on our website at claphamsociety.com

