

The Clapham Society

Newsletter



Issue 319 July/August 2009

Common Voices – Past and Present

The oral history project, funded by the Heritage Lottery Fund, about which we gave some details in our May newsletter is now nearing completion. The project, which compares growing up around Clapham Common between 1948 and 1960 with 2009, was undertaken by the Year 6 children at Bonneville School and local volunteers. A short film has been made of the project by Big Up Films. There will be a **free private** screening of this film for all participants and their partners at Clapham Picture House in Venn Street on **Thursday 16 July** at 10.30 am, followed by a **free public** screening at 11.30 am on the same day. This will be complemented by an exhibition in the cinema foyer. Places are limited so be sure to reserve your seats by calling 0871 704 2055 in advance.

Our annual **Summer Party** is on **Wednesday 1 July at 6.30-8.30 pm** at Lambeth Academy, Elms Road, SW4. There may still be a few tickets available. Telephone Jennifer Everett on 020 7627 4770 to check.

Bandstand Events

The following musical events are planned on the Bandstand during July and August:

Sunday 5 July at 3 pm South London Jazz Orchestra

Saturday 11 July at 12 noon Rhythm of London. Young musicians will perform live with music genres including pop, folk, R & B and jazz. Rhythm of London aims to give young people the opportunity to experience and take part in live music.

Sunday 12 July at 3 pm South London Concert Band

Our regular monthly meetings are held at Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4 0BZ. The hall is open from 7.30 pm when coffee and tea are normally available. The talk begins promptly at 8 pm and most meetings finish by 9.30 pm.

We usually take a break during July and August, when our regular meetings are replaced by walks – see inside page for details – but this July we have a special extra meeting.

Tuesday 14 July

The Good, the Bad and the Ugly. John Adams is an architect, former Chairman of the Society and long-serving member of our Planning Sub-committee. His talk, illustrated with many photographs, will take a critical look at what has been built, or not built and what has been demolished in Clapham during his association with the Society since 1970. He will also consider the Society's influence in the light of some of the successes and failures as we try to preserve the significant past and get better new buildings.

Please come along and bring your friends to this special meeting, at which a complimentary glass of wine will be served.

Saturday 1 August at 3 pm South London Saxophone Quartet

Saturday 8 August at 12 noon The Bedford Bandstand – an afternoon of free live music to support upcoming artists in aid of the Teenage Cancer Trust

Sunday 9 August at 3 pm Becontree Brass Band

Sunday 16 August at 3 pm South London Jazz Orchestra

Sunday 23 August at 3 pm Crystal Palace Brass Band (continued overleaf)

Wednesday 16 September

The Man on the Clapham Omnibus.

Our speaker Iain Aitch is a London-based writer and journalist who has written for, among others, *The Times*, *The Guardian*, *The Daily Telegraph* and *Financial Times*. He says 'I generally write about the arts, travel and eccentricity. If I can tie up all three in one story then I am a happy man'. His first book, *A Fete Worse than Death*, tells the tale of a summer spent visiting such events up and down the country. His second, *We're British, Innit*, published last September, takes a sideways look at current preoccupations with Britishness. He will talk to us about the book and, in particular, about his researches into the history and use of the phrase 'the man on the Clapham omnibus'.

Wednesday 21 October

Annual General Meeting. The Guest Speaker will be Martin Linton, Member of Parliament for Battersea, a constituency which includes much of the area to the west and north of Clapham Common.

Wednesday 18 November

A musical entertainment to mark St Cecilia's Day, which falls a few days later. Members of the Clapham Chamber Concerts team will play and sing music by British composers, including some pieces by Purcell (who was born on St Cecilia's Day 350 years ago).

There is no meeting in December.

The next newsletter will be the September issue, which will be distributed at the end of August.

The Changarawe Project

In 2009 The Changarawe Project celebrates its tenth anniversary. In September we will be marking ten years since the opening of our pre-primary school, The Zawadi School. Quite a milestone!

In September 1999 we opened the new school with two small classrooms and an office and moved 22 children from the tiny room attached to Felistas Kalomo's house into one of the new classrooms. The other one still contained bags of cement and tools and the playground was full of bricks and rubble. It was a momentous day nonetheless and the culmination of 18 month's fund-raising in the UK. It was the start of fulfilling a dream that Felistas had told me about in April 1997 when my husband Martin, daughter Rose and I visited our daughter Eleanor, who was Felistas' neighbour for the best part of a year. Felistas had an idea that by providing nursery education for 4-6 year old children, too big to carry and too young for primary school, their mothers could improve the family income by being freed to work unencumbered for a few hours every day.

A friendship and partnership began and The Changarawe Project came into existence. Now, in 2009, we have a school with three light airy classrooms, an office, a playground and a small caretaker's house with a teachers' staff room and storeroom attached. We employ 12 local people and have a regular 100 children passing through the Zawadi School for two years. ('Zawadi' means 'gift'). In addition we provide the entire education for 108 orphaned children, increasing by a further 25 every year (The Nigel Lloyd Fund), help 28 grandparents who support their orphaned grandchildren with light employment and a club, run a micro-credit scheme for 150 people per annum and have an expanding textile project.



The Project is a local initiative in every sense of the word, linking a family and small community in the UK, with families in a village in Tanzania. It is Tanzanian led and run, with financial support raised by the trustees in London.

Our Tenth Anniversary Party will take place on **Tuesday 22 September** at Battersea Town Hall. This should be a memorable evening of good food and music with an African flavour with our Tanzanian Director, Felistas Kalomo and the Zawadi School Headteacher, Helena Nicholas both present. Please join us for a milestone event and a great party!

For details and tickets for the party, or to join our mailing list, please contact me at 50 Chelsham Road, London SW4 6NP. Telephone 020 7498 6228.

Carolyn Walford, UK Director, The Changarawe Project

The following walks have been organised during our summer break

Wednesday 15 July

Clapham Common West Side. The emphasis of this walk, led by Derrick Johnson, will be on the development of the area to the west of the Common and will include a visit to one of the surviving grand houses and possibly show development in progress at another. Meet at Clapham South tube station at 6.30 pm.

Wednesday 19 August

Historic Clapham. David Perkin will lead a walk around the historic heart of Clapham from Holy Trinity Church to St Paul's Church with diversions to trace the development of the village. Meet at Clapham Common tube station at 6.30 pm.

More walks....

A full programme of walks is organised by other local societies in Streatham, Vauxhall, Herne Hill, Brixton and others, throughout the summer. A walk on **Sunday 9 August** at 2.30 pm covers Clapham Park and Brixton Hill. A leaflet with full details is available at our July meeting, on our own walks shown above, or from local libraries.

Clapham Common belongs to you

The Annual General Meeting of the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee will be held at St Mary's Hall, St Alphonsus Road, SW4 on **Thursday 9 July** at 7 pm. The Committee is a voluntary body which works in partnership with Lambeth Council in the interests of the Common. The Clapham Society has a permanent representative on this committee. Come along and find out what is happening on the Common.

Reminder

Don't forget that the full programme of buildings open for **London Open House** on **Saturday 19** and **Sunday 20 September** will be available in mid-August. You can either look at it on www.londonopenhouse.org or pick up the booklet at local libraries. Visits to some of the most popular venues must be booked in advance, so it is well worth checking out what is open in good time.

Bandstand Events *(continued)*

In addition there will be **Purple Broccoli Story Telling Sessions** for 4-7 year olds from 11 to 11.30 am on **Thursday 30 July, Sunday 2 August, Thursday 6 August, Thursday 13 August** and **Saturday 15 August**.

Please double check events, and look for extra ones, on the notice board by the bandstand café or telephone the Bandstand Events Manager, David Holley on 020 7926 1017 or email: dholley@lambeth.gov.uk. Note that all events are subject to change and weather permitting, so do check before setting out.

Clapham Rovers

At our May meeting Peter Jefferson Smith gave an entertaining and illuminating presentation about our local football team which flourished between 1869 to around 1915. What many of us did not know, including Peter when he started his research, was that a Clapham Rovers team exists today as the name was adopted by a group of young men who started a team locally in 1996.

Peter started with a brief history of the development of the game, to which there are references as early as the 12th and 13th centuries but which began to be formalised when rules were developed by public schools and universities in the early 19th century. Initially rules varied in different places and games, but in 1863 the Football Association (FA) devised rules for Association Football and a few years later the Rugby Football Union (RFU) was formed and did the same for Rugby Football. At that time many teams, including Clapham Rovers, played both games, and Clapham Rovers were founder members of the RFU.

Clapham Rovers was founded in August 1869 in a meeting at the Alexandra Hotel and their first match was played on Clapham Common that September. From the start the club won their matches and included experienced players. Most were from professional families – some local like the three Tayloe brothers, sons of a doctor who lived on South Side and others from further afield, like the three Birkett brothers from a West End medical family.

Peter gave some interesting comparisons of the game then and now.

In the early days of football the goal was simply two upright posts with a tape between; the game was controlled by two umpires on the pitch and the referee was only 'referred to' in the case of a dispute. Teams changed ends after a goal was scored, and at half time if there was no score. Positions were loose, there were no substitutes, and injured players were often put in goal. During the 1870s the game gradually became a team activity rather than an individual one, positions were established and expected to be kept to.

Rugby games too differed from today: early internationals had 20 men on each side, though club teams were only 15 because pitches were not large enough to accommodate more!

Peter then returned to the Clapham Rovers team, who played in colours of cerise and French grey, to talk about the achievements of their first decade in both football and some rugby. Membership grew steadily and after several moves they settled to play regularly at Wandsworth Common. He showed details and some pictures of the leading players and their background. In the 1870s, several Rovers players represented England in internationals, including Reginald Birkett for both football and rugby.

The club's most famous player was James Prinsep who joined the team on leaving Charterhouse at the age of 17 and in 1879 became the youngest player to play for England and the youngest player to play in a Cup Final. He held the former record until 2003 when Wayne Rooney was substituted in the second half of a friendly against Australia, and the latter until 2004 when Millwall substituted

Curtis Weston in the last few minutes of the match. Peter outlined the later career of Prinsep, who after taking part in a failed expedition to rescue General Gordon from Khartoum (arriving two days after he had been killed), remained in Egypt on secondment to the Egyptian army. He died at the age of only 34 when on leave in Scotland, and by a curious coincidence his death was registered by his uncle James Grant-Peterkin, the great-grandfather of a current Clapham resident and member of the Society!

In 1880 Clapham Rovers won the FA cup and was the fifth team to have their name on the famous cup. We heard an account of the game against Oxford University which drew a record crowd of 6,000. The team, however, never did as well again and their fortunes gradually declined. The game too changed as the working men's athletic clubs from the north started to displace the gentlemen of the south and professionalism and paid players took over. In 1907 Clapham Rovers joined the amateur teams which broke away from the FA to form their own association. But the team was in decline and finally disappeared around 1915.

The audience had a number of questions and, in particular, there was great interest in the present Clapham Rovers. Several members of the club were at the meeting and told us more about the foundation of the club and its activities.

This is necessarily only a very brief outline of Peter Jefferson Smith's very well-researched talk, and the full text will be available in the Local History Series section of our website in due course.

Transport and urban design: recent news

Councillor Nigel Haselden writes:

Clapham Gateway

I am pleased to report that the London Borough of Lambeth has appointed Urban Initiatives as consultants to develop a public realm improvement scheme for Clapham Old Town, 'Station Island' by the tube, and the connecting streetscape of The Pavement. This project builds on previous work carried out in 2002 as part of the Clapham Gateway initiative and will test and develop the earlier vision for the area. Urban Initiatives will work closely with local stakeholders to produce concept designs, which will then be developed with FM Conway, Lambeth Highways' term contractor, into detailed construction designs.

This final design study will form the basis of a Step Two submission to Transport for London in November under their Streets for People Area Based Scheme programme. If successful, the bid could attract about £1.8m to the study area.

Whilst the primary study area will be the principal focus of the study and bid, it is expected that complementary enhancements, and potential funding streams, will be identified for adjacent areas including Clapham Common North Side, Rectory Grove and North Street.

As local people we are used to the battered 1970s street pattern, the risky pedestrian crossings and hostile traffic speeds in our area: many of us have brought up children criss-crossing this environment on the way to and from school. I suspect that we are also intrinsically proud of the mixture of medieval origins and urban buzz that define Clapham, and I am full of anticipation as we embark on this scheme to temper the worst of these aspects and enhance the best, to make a high-quality public space for future generations.

'Better Neighbourhoods' environmental improvement programme

Lambeth Council, with Lambeth Living, is undertaking a £3.5m programme of environmental works from the end of May until March 2010 to make Lambeth cleaner, greener and safer. The 'Better Neighbourhoods' programme will target six key areas, including housing estates that are in most need of environmental improvements. Roads and pavements will be resurfaced, hundreds of new street trees planted, recycling facilities will be improved on estates and tired and outdated street signs and furniture will be replaced.

(continued overleaf)

The Clapham Society at Summer Events

We have had a busy summer with our stand at the three local festivals which we have attended for many years now. These provide us with a good opportunity to talk to newcomers to the area and to let them know what we do. In particular, we like to reach the families who often attend these events, and aim to interest them in the history and development of the area and in what is happening locally. We also welcome the opportunity to introduce people to our events and publications, and to make new members. We always need more volunteers to help on our stand. If you would like to help next year please contact Maev Sullivan (see below for contact details).



This year we were invited to have a stand at the first **Open Day** held at **Hatfields**, the restorers of fine furniture and works of art, who moved in to a splendid early 19th century house in Clapham High Street in 2007. The workshops were open for the public to see gilding, lacquerwork, cabinet making and other skilled crafts in progress, and members of the public brought in their treasures, or photographs of them, for opinions and valuations. In addition we had the opportunity to introduce the Clapham Society to new people.

The day was a great success and plans are already afoot for a repeat next year. Watch out for the date, so that you do not miss the Open Day.

New members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members this month: Andrew and Leonie Cannon, Mark, Jacqueline and Jessica Dyer, Gregor, Alex and Kirstin Harvie, Anne Heavey, Margaret McEvoy and Anna Ragoni Machievelli.

'Better Neighbourhoods' environmental improvement programme (continued)

Locally, Heath Road and Westbury Estates with Portslade Road and Heath Road highway areas will be the first parts of the programme to benefit.

Wandsworth Road Demonstration Project

Your Clapham Town councillors are very keen to celebrate the £4m scheme to improve Wandsworth Road between Stockwell and Clapham. It is the biggest road safety scheme in Lambeth's history and it has cut accidents by more than 60 per cent in its first year. The total number of accidents has dropped from an average of 40 a year to just 15 since completion in spring 2007. There have been no serious incidents on the 2 km stretch of road since the work was finished in spring 2007, compared to an average of more than five a year before the improvements were implemented.

The improvement scheme, managed by Lambeth Council, has transformed the road for pedestrians, cyclists and other road users, cutting traffic speeds, improving the appearance of the area and most importantly leading to improved road safety. New pedestrian crossings have been introduced, footpaths have been repaved, street lighting has been improved, cycle and bus lanes created, roads resurfaced and more than 100 trees have been planted.

The improvements are having a real and positive effect on the quality of life for people who live locally and use the area regularly – but most importantly it is reducing injuries and accidents. It has been a complex project involving funding from a wide range of sources and I would like to thank those who contributed to the planning process.

If you would like to know more about any of these projects, please contact me at email: nhaselden@lambeth.gov.uk or telephone 07946 081 260.

*Councillor Nigel Haselden
Deputy Cabinet Member for Sustainability*

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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Secretary 552 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 3JX Tel: 020 7720 3343	Jill Cramphorn
Treasurer 15 Turret Grove, London SW4 0ES Tel: 020 7720 7536	David Brown
Membership Secretary 30 Trinity Close, London SW4 0JD Tel: 020 7627 4770	Jennifer Everett

Meetings and Events 2 Fitzwilliam Road, London SW4 0DN Email: maevsullivan@gmail.com	Maev Sullivan Tel: 020 7498 9205
Planning Matters 45 Rodenhurst Road, London SW4 8AE Email: pjashford@yahoo.co.uk	Philip Ashford Tel: 020 8674 1727
Common and Open Spaces 22 Iveley Road, London SW4 0EW Email: annajs@mac.com	Anna Jefferson Smith Tel: 020 7622 8285
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Details of meetings, activities and a full list of our publications are on **The Clapham Society** web site at www.claphamsociety.com