



## Prize-winning local buildings

We are pleased to report that two local buildings were recognised in the Civic Trust Awards for 2010, announced on 12 March.

The new building at **Clapham Manor Primary School** received an Award. The judges described the extension as 'a robust, beautiful and modern building which extends and complements the older school.' They liked the new staircase and lift core which eases access to the school's various floors and skilfully resolves the way users navigate their way around the school.

Members will have seen the striking polychromatic glass panelled building when going to our meetings in the older part of the school. Some may have seen round it last year when it was open for London Open House weekend, but if you did not, watch out for this year's event when we hope it will be open again.

**Trinity Hospice** received a Commendation for its new wing, which replaces the out-dated wing 'with sensitivity and sophistication'. The judges commented on the exemplary way in which 'the facilities meet the complex needs of residents, their families and medical staff... reflecting the desire to celebrate life and activity, whilst respecting the quiet and tranquil needs of the individual'.

If you have still not taken the opportunity to see round this new wing you can do so this month in the evening on **Wednesday 21 April** or the morning on **Saturday 24 April**. Call 020 7787 1094 to book your place.

The Clapham Society's architecture and planning team were involved with the early stages of consultation on the Civic Trust Awards and are delighted that their views coincided with those of the judges.

Our regular monthly meetings are held at **Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4 0BZ**. The entrance to the school in **Stonhouse Street, through the new building, is NOT open for our evening meetings. Use the Belmont Road entrance, cross the playground and enter the building on the right. 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.**

### Wednesday 21 April

**Lambeth College Sixth Form Centre.** Over the past few years many of our members will have watched the progress of



*Lambeth College Sixth Form Centre – the roof terrace*

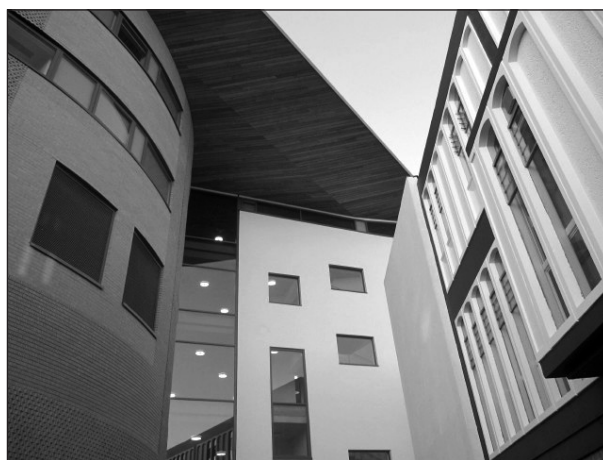
the construction of Lambeth College's flagship Sixth Form Centre on Clapham Common South Side. The centre was opened in June 2009 and has been a huge success with both teachers and students. Various events have been staged at the centre enabling members of the public to enjoy its facilities, particularly the auditorium. At the opening, Richard Chambers, Principal and Chief Executive of the College, said "We wanted a building with 'wow factor'

– an iconic building for Lambeth. The design radiates optimism about our collective ability to learn together." **Peter Doble**, Vice-Principal of Lambeth College and **Chris Harding**, a partner at BDP, one of the UK's leading architectural firms, will tell us how this 'wow factor' was achieved through the design, planning and construction of the college and the plans for further expansion of the site.

### Wednesday 19 May

**The Garden Museum.** **Christopher Woodward**, Director of the Garden Museum formerly the Museum of Garden History, which is housed in the church of St-Mary-at-Lambeth, will talk about the history and development of the Museum which reopened in 2008 after a dramatic transformation.

He will go on to trace the story of gardening in Britain through works of art from the Elizabethan period to the present.



*Lambeth College Sixth Form Centre – the internal courtyard*

## Treasures of Lambeth Palace Library Exhibition

In celebration of its 400<sup>th</sup> anniversary this year, Lambeth Palace Library is opening a special exhibition to the public in the Great Hall of the Palace. Founded in 1610, the Library is one of England's oldest public libraries and has a rich and varied history. It is the historic library and record office of the Archbishops of Canterbury and the principal repository of the documentary history of the Church of England. Its records, which are freely available for research, date from the 9<sup>th</sup> century to the present day. The exhibition draws upon the Library's incomparably rich and diverse collections of manuscripts, archives and books, some of which will be on display for the first time. It reveals how the collections have developed since 1610 and explores the history surrounding the people who owned, studied or used them as aids to prayer and devotion.

The exhibition will take place from **17 May to 23 July** and a visit is recommended. Admission tickets cost £8.00 (adults) and £7.00 (concessions). Bookings can be made and further details obtained on 0871 230 1107 or [www.lambethpalacelibrary.org/content/treasuresexhibition](http://www.lambethpalacelibrary.org/content/treasuresexhibition).

A visit to the Lambeth Palace Library exhibition can be combined with a special additional admission fee of £2.50 rather than the usual £6.00 and £5.00 (concessions) to visit the Garden Museum's permanent collection and temporary exhibition space, which at the time of the Library's special exhibition will be featuring *Christopher Lloyd: A life at Great Dixter*. The Garden Museum is located next door to Lambeth Palace on Lambeth Palace Road, London, SE1 7LB. The Garden Museum is the subject of our monthly talk on **19 May**. Full details of this exhibition are at [www.gardenmuseum.org.uk/exhibitions/](http://www.gardenmuseum.org.uk/exhibitions/) or 020 7401 8865.

Maev Sullivan

## Thanks...

Peter Holland, who for many years has delivered newsletters in the Rodenhurst Road area as well as sending out the newsletters to members on our postal list, has had to retire due to ill health. He was always very conscientious and took pride in getting the newsletters into the post within a few hours of receiving them, so that far-flung members would usually receive their newsletters as soon as local members. We are immensely grateful to him for his hard work and devotion to the society and wish him a speedy recovery.

Nicholas Butler and Rosaleen Hughes have kindly agreed to take on the Rodenhurst Road deliveries and Ann Dunkley will handle the postal list. Our thanks to them for stepping in at short notice.

## The Papered Parlour

There are more classes at our local independent craft venue this month. On **Sunday 11 April** you can learn how to turn a simple strip of silver in to a ring in a basic silversmithing class and on **Saturday 24 and Sunday 25 April** you can join in *Make a Dress* Weekend. For more details telephone 020 7627 8703, email [claire@thepaperedparlour.co.uk](mailto:claire@thepaperedparlour.co.uk) or go to [www.thepaperedparlour.co.uk](http://www.thepaperedparlour.co.uk).

## Fire Hydrants



As a result of the article by Peter Skuse in the last newsletter about the Standing Fire Hydrant in Abbeville Road we have been told by Lambeth's Conservation and Urban Design team of a similar survivor (illustrated above) at the south end of Lyham Road at its junction with New Park Road. As is evident from the picture, this one is clearly a candidate for the treatment recently given to the one in Abbeville Road. Does anyone know of others anywhere in the London area?

## New 'Kid' on the Block

The Society's walk leaflet on the area round Nightingale Lane is being revised and should be ready when the weather warms up. It will include a Blue Plaque which has appeared since the last edition. It is on 105 Nightingale Lane, The Home for Aged Jews and reads simply "Ted 'Kid' Lewis 1893-1970 World Champion Boxer lived and died here".

Born Gershon Mendeloff in Aldgate he assumed the name 'Kid' Lewis from one of his brothers, also a boxer, (Ted was added later in the USA). At 14 he fought for sixpence and a cup of tea. He became professional in 1909 and in 1913 he won the British featherweight crown with a 17<sup>th</sup> round knockout of Alec Lambert at the National Sporting Club. A year later he won the European title.

Campaigning now as a lightweight and welterweight he left London in 1914 and toured Australia and the USA. In August 1915 in Boston, he fought Jack Britton (known as the 'Boxing Marvel') for the first time and won a 12-round decision to become welterweight champion of the world. Between 1915 and 1921 he fought Britton no fewer than 20 times, a total of 224 rounds. After losing the title in New Orleans in 1916 he reclaimed it in 1917 in Dayton, but lost it for the last time in 1919 when Britton knocked him out in the 9<sup>th</sup> round.

Returning to England in 1920 Lewis won the British and European welterweight titles at Olympia but relinquished them later that year because of difficulty in making the weight. In 1922, also at Olympia, he took on the charismatic Frenchman Georges Carpentier, World and European light heavyweight champion. After out-boxing the much heavier man he was warned by the referee for holding. Lewis was distracted by the referee's hand on his shoulder and looked away. Carpentier took advantage of this and a vicious right sent Lewis to the canvas to be counted out.

Later in 1922 Lewis won the British and then the European middleweight titles but lost these the following year. His last two titles were the British and European welterweight crowns which he won at the Royal Albert Hall in July 1924 but he lost them later in the year to a much younger man. He continued boxing until 1929 and his final record was 279 bouts, won 170, lost 30, 13 draws, 66 no decision.

Derrick Johnson

## Festival Chorus

This community choir, based between Wandsworth and Clapham Commons, was thrilled to win a BBC Performing Arts Fund grant to enable it to put on one of the most ambitious choral works, J S Bach's *St Matthew Passion*, on 27 March as part of the St Luke's Music Society concert series. The concert was a sell out. Ferelith Hordon, Chair, said '*St Matthew Passion* is one of the biggest and most challenging concerts ever staged by Festival Chorus. It is such a magnificent work requiring a big orchestra, many soloists and a huge choir so it is a real financial and organisational challenge particularly for an amateur choir like ours. The BBC grant helped make it possible, along with much hard work and long term planning and saving by the choir over several years. This was one of our best concerts ever.'

Rehearsals for the concert started back in November and were preceded by publicity encouraging new members to join the choir to sing this great work. Over 140 singers signed up and some choir members took small solo parts as well.

Festival Chorus puts on three concerts a year in St Luke's Church, as well as holding other social events. The choir is open to all comers irrespective of ability or experience – there are no auditions, you just turn up to a rehearsal at the beginning of term. Rehearsals are held weekly on Monday from 8 pm to 9.30 pm in term time only at Broomwood Methodist Church Hall, Kyrle Road. The next Festival Chorus concert will be in June and the programme will include Brahms *Liebeslieder*. If you are interested in joining them for their next concert (rehearsals start **Monday 12 April**) or want more information check out their website at [www.festivalchorus.co.uk](http://www.festivalchorus.co.uk) or email [fhordon@aol.com](mailto:fhordon@aol.com).

Ann Pettifer

## Garden Open

Clapham Society member, Charles Rutherford, is opening his garden at 51 The Chase, SW4 0NP under the National Gardens Scheme on **Sunday 25 April** from 2 pm to 6 pm and on **Wednesday 28 April** from 6 pm to 8 pm.

The garden has been created over 20 years using 15 different species of trees. It is spectacular in spring when 1500 tulips bloom among irises and tree peonies. Narrow paths lead to a mound surrounded by acanthus and topped by a large steel sculpture. A geodetic dome shelters seedlings, succulents and subtropicals.

## The Priest and the Playwright

We have recently been sent a copy of this book which is the result of the author's inheritance of a dusty pile of letters, which led her on to painstaking research of the correspondence and its background. The letters were written between 1898 and 1906 by her great-uncle, William Brown, whom she met only once or twice when she was a young girl and he an elderly and intimidating bishop.

As a poor young priest with a parish in poverty-stricken Vauxhall, William Brown met the American-born novelist Pearl Craigie, who lived in some style in Bayswater. He had written to her after reading one of her novels which had impressed him, and she invited him to come to her house. Despite the huge disparity in their life styles and their personalities this meeting developed into a warm friendship and a regular correspondence, which lasted until Pearl Craigie's premature death in 1906.

We read of her friendship with fellow American Mary Curzon and her visit to India when Lord Curzon was Viceroy; of visits to Blenheim Palace to see another American heiress, Consuelo Vanderbilt, the Duchess of Marlborough; and of frequent stays at her family's country house in the Isle of Wight. But we also learn of her visits to Vauxhall and her support for William in his efforts to ease the suffering of his poor parishioners there. Above all, she contributed generously to help him realise his dream of building a new school and then a church, St Anne's Vauxhall, in Kennington Lane. For his part he supported her in her literary life and in her struggles for acceptance in Edwardian society in England. It is a fascinating glimpse of the contrast between early 20<sup>th</sup> century life in an affluent household in Bayswater and a poor parish in Vauxhall.

*The Priest and the Playwright* by M F Brown is published by Penn Press, price £7.99, and available from booksellers.



## On the Common

Anyone passing the bandstand on Clapham Common recently cannot have failed to notice the poor state of the surrounding mound. A victim of its own success, scarcely a blade of grass is left. Lambeth Council came up with the suggestion that the bare ground could be protected and enhanced by a box hedge about twelve inches high. Neither the Friends of Clapham Common (FoCC) nor the Clapham Society saw this as a viable solution and the proposal was withdrawn.

As a temporary solution, and in order to make a visual improvement before spring and summer, the FoCC proposed that the mound be re-turfed by voluntary labour. The cost would be shared between the FoCC and the Clapham Society and the work would have been carried out in early March. Unfortunately the request for permission from Lambeth produced no response.

## New US Embassy

If, as a result of recent press coverage, you are curious about the proposals for the Nine Elms site for the new US Embassy, you can find out more on the website [www.newusembassy-london.co.uk](http://www.newusembassy-london.co.uk). There is also a link to the site of the selected architect, KieranTimberlake, where you can see the detailed designs.

## Music in Clapham

We are fortunate to have plenty of music in Clapham in the 21<sup>st</sup> century, but we do not have the street musicians of an earlier age. Writing in the late 1930s Frank Byford described vividly the ‘one-man-band’ musician he remembered from his youth in the 1880s.

‘There have been various types of street musicians since I was a boy, but the item which intrigued me most was the one man band, and I was surprised to hear in a broadcast recently from *In Town Tonight*, there is still one, at any rate, who continues the old tradition, but I was disappointed at the result of his performance which was not nearly so good as the effect produced by the man I remember about 1880. He was quite a

character. A bass drum was fastened to his back, he wore a conical brass helmet adorned with a number of tiny bells which jingled merrily when he shook his head. Strapped to his mouth was a set of pandean pipes on which he played the air, and the accompaniment was supplied by a concertina fixed to a small shelf attached to his waist and played with one hand in an up-and-down motion. The drum stick and cymbals on the top of the drum were operated by straps fixed to the heel of his boot, and he looked just like a Heath Robinson drawing. It must have been very difficult to play anything but he managed it somehow and it was amusing to watch his antics, jiggling about in all directions to operate his various gadgets. The noise of the drum attracted attention and he certainly worked hard while playing.’

## St Luke’s Music

On **Saturday 17 April** the Flanders Recorder Quartet will perform *The Miracle of the Recorder* which traces the history of the recorder on many different instruments – ancient and modern. The programme includes music by Bach, Vivaldi and Sweelinck alongside more recent pieces written especially for them.

The Flanders Recorder Quartet was founded in 1987. With more than 1,500 concerts on five continents under its belt, the ensemble has become a prominent fixture in the world of Early Music. Their collection of recorders include a copy of a recorder of 1511, ten recorders copied from the collection of Henry VIII, and a 2.3 metre (7ft 6in.) tall baroque sub-bass. Such an array of unique and very rare specimens provides a feast for the eyes and the ears, as well as providing a convincing argument in favour of the instrument.

The concert is at St Luke’s Church, Thurlleigh Road, Battersea SW12 8RQ, starting at 7.30pm. Tickets are £16 (£12 concessions) from the box office 07951 791619 or online at [www.slms.org.uk](http://www.slms.org.uk).

## Schmidt’s win again

For the second year Schmidt’s Restaurant in Rookery Road has won a Lambeth Business Award – this time a silver trophy in the ‘Best Hospitality, Leisure and Tourism Business in Lambeth’ category.

Opening hours for this mid-season are Thursday to Sunday from 9.30 am to 5 pm. Remember you can also book a private party at any time. Telephone 020 7720 7787 for details or to book a table.

## Aspects of Battersea History 1770-1910

Wandsworth Historical Society’s new publication contains six essays which anyone with an interest in the history of South London will enjoy. One study tells of the National Penitentiary, which might have been built in the late 18<sup>th</sup> century on an 82-acre site near Battersea Rise, had it not been stopped by political influence and ‘nimbyism’. The ‘principal inhabitants’ of Battersea and Wandsworth – presumably those who occupied the recently built villas around the Common and on Lavender Hill – opposed the scheme which would be ‘highly prejudicial’ to their interests.

Another essay describes the development of the mansion flats in the Prince of Wales Road (now Drive) area, and yet another is about the developer, Henry Hart Davis. *Aspects of Battersea History 1770-1910*, by Keith Bailey, is available price £9.00 plus £1.50 for post and packing from Neil Robson, 119 Heythorp Street, London SW18 5BT.

## Clapham Gateway

The full report of the Clapham Gateway consultation can now be downloaded at [www.lambeth.gov.uk/claphamgateway](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/claphamgateway). The report is very lengthy and detailed, but for a briefer summary of what is going on read the Feedback newsletter on the same site. This reveals that 63% of those who took part in the consultation supported Option A (to remove the bus stand from Old Town and create a new piazza). The Feedback newsletter lists the various concerns expressed and what is being done to address them. Detailed designs are due to be presented before the summer holiday period.

## Help needed

London’s annual Open Garden Squares Weekend will be held this year on **Saturday 12 June** and **Sunday 13 June**. Over 200 sites will be open, including private gardens and squares, allotments, museum and church gardens and gardens by barges on the River Thames.

Friendly, enthusiastic volunteers are needed to welcome visitors, to check and sell tickets, and to ensure the garden is treated with respect. One half-day duty is required and volunteers receive a free ticket to visit as many gardens as they wish in the two days. It is an interesting and worthwhile weekend. If you would like to be involved contact Jock Blakey on 020 7708 2795 or email [blakeyjock@btinternet.com](mailto:blakeyjock@btinternet.com).

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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Email: [alisonmacnair@fastmail.co.uk](mailto:alisonmacnair@fastmail.co.uk)

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Details of meetings, activities and a full list of our publications are on **The Clapham Society** website at [www.claphamsociety.com](http://www.claphamsociety.com)