

The Clapham Society Newsletter

Issue 378

June 2015

Oddfellows Plaque

On Thursday 16 April our seventh Green Plaque, marking an important local building which has changed its use since it was built, was unveiled by Edmund Bird, Heritage Advisor to the Mayor of London, and former

Lambeth Conservation Officer. The hall, built in 1852 as a Baptist Chapel, was purchased in 1908 by the Pride of Clapham Lodge of the Oddfellows Friendly Society, and has been their meeting place ever since. It is now also home to the Shambhala Meditation



Edmund Bird unveils the new plaque Photo: Dana Kubick

Centre. After the unveiling ceremony the Trustees invited us into their hall, where they provided a lavish buffet, and an opportunity to see round the premises, including the Shambhala Centre. They displayed some archive material and the Provincial Grand Master gave a fascinating account of the origin and development of Friendly Societies. He touched on their links with medieval guilds and trade unions, and the interesting fact that when the welfare state was set up the expertise of the societies was used!

We are very grateful to the Oddfellows for providing a most successful evening, and also for their generous contribution to the cost of the plaque.

New members We have welcomed the following new members this month: Mark Godowski, John Haworth, Jamie and Sarah Maclean, Janice Morphet, Juliet Poyser, Carol Weinel, and Hugh and Gay Wenban Smith.

Sarah and Julian Lush have kindly invited us to hold our Summer Party on **Thursday 9 July** in the garden of their house in Larkhall Rise. The ticket application form is on the back page of this newsletter. Numbers are strictly limited so please apply early.

Our meetings are held at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. The bar at Omnibus is open from 7 pm, and meetings will commence at 8 pm. Our guest will normally speak for about 45 minutes, followed by around 15 minutes for questions and discussion, and the bar will remain open after meetings. Meetings are free and open to non-members, so please bring your friends along.

Monday 15 June

The Garden Museum. Christopher Woodward has been Director of the Garden Museum since 2006. The Museum was set up in 1977 to rescue from demolition the former parish church of St Mary-at-Lambeth, where John Tradescant is buried in a celebrated carved tomb. Tradescant was a 17th century scholar, gardener to King Charles I and a keen collector – he displayed his collection of ‘curiosities’ from his travels at his house in Lambeth. The Museum recently received funds from the Heritage Lottery Fund for modernisation and improvement of the facilities. Christopher will be speaking about the Museum, and the story of the Tradescants.

There are no meetings in July and August, but we have the following guided walks during the summer:

Wednesday 24 June

Twixt the Commons, led by **Timothy Walker** leaving from Clapham South Underground Station at 6.30 pm.

Sunday 26 July

Larkhall area, led by **Anne Wilson** leaving from Wandsworth Road Station at 3 pm.

Saturday 5 September

Clapham Common North Side (and some roads just off) led by **Peter Jefferson Smith** leaving from Clapham Common Underground Station at 3 pm.

Throughout the summer there are also many guided walks organised by Lambeth Local History societies. Pick up the leaflet, *Heritage Walks in South London*, available at our meetings, on our stands at events, and at Lambeth libraries.

The Clapham Society Annual Bandstand Concert is on **Sunday 6 September**. Save the date!

Watch this Space!

Reclamation work has now started on the new Bandstand Beds community food-growing space at the Green Waste Depot (the dump!) on Clapham Common. Lambeth Council are committed to complete the key enabling works by mid-June.

Meanwhile, Bandstand Beds continue to fundraise for the new food growing site. So far they've managed

to secure over £9000 in grant funding to install and kit out a polytunnel, build raised beds, compost bins, display boards and a seating area. They now aim to raise another £2000 to buy a shipping container and equip it with cooking facilities for their community feasts. Donations are welcome.

On Saturday 27 June, Bandstand

Beds will be holding a community clean-up day on the garden site funded by Capital Clean-up and they are looking for volunteers to help out with litter picking. This will be followed by a celebration picnic on the Common in the afternoon – with live music on the Bandstand. Everyone is more than welcome to join in this event!

July onwards will see regular volunteer sessions as Bandstand Beds put the site together. Can you help? For more information visit bandstandbeds.org.uk or follow them on Twitter @bandstandbeds.



Clapham Chamber Concerts

Friday 26 June sees Clapham Chamber Concerts' final concert of the 2014-15 season, with a programme including Weber's *Clarinet Quintet*, the *Rhapsodic Quintet* by Howells and Beethoven's *Septet*. The event will be a fitting finale to the season, celebrating the Concerts' welcome return to St Paul's Church after an absence of several months, with a memorable programme of chamber music.

This will be led by Amanda Lake (violin), with fellow CCC artistic director Jonathan Parkin (clarinet), Guillem Calvo de Martínez (violin), Sophie Rivlin (cello), Sam Rice (bass), Joanna Stark (bassoon) and Paul Cott (horn). St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Doors open at 7.00 pm (cash bar available) for a concert start at 7.30 pm. Tickets at the door: £12, concessions and students £9, children £5. For more information see claphamchamberconcerts.org.uk.

Lambeth Cultural Services

2020 The period for comments on these important proposals for the future of facilities in Lambeth is now closed, and we have been told that a paper in July will address the submissions and how they should be taken into account. You can now see the Society's response to the document on line at claphamsociety.com/doc1/.

National Bookstart Week

On **Friday 12 June** at 10 am join a jungle-themed party with story and rhyme time, free activities for under-5s, and their parents and carers, including mask making, animal dens, interactive story-telling, crafts and lots more fun. Clapham Library, Mary Seacole Centre, 91 Clapham High Street, SW4 7DB. Tel: 020 7926 0717

Open Garden Squares There is still time to buy your £10 ticket to visit up to 200 gardens – many private, hidden or locked squares not normally open to the public – on **Saturday 13 June** and **Sunday 14 June**. Local gardens open include Trinity Hospice, Durand Gardens SW9 0PS, and Bonnington Square SW8 1GA. For details, to buy tickets and see the full listings to go opensquares.org.

More Gardens Open

On **Sunday 21 June** from 2 pm to 5 pm Nos. 40 and 44 Clapham Manor Street will be open for the National Gardens Scheme. No.40 is a large garden divided by trained arches of apple trees, with cobbled courtyard, stream, ferns and ivy garden, two ponds and many climbers. The emphasis at No.44 is on lush green planting with white flowers. Combined admission £6, children free. Homemade teas.

The Clapham Society needs a new secretary

We need a new secretary to join the Main Committee in October, since Jenny Cobley is unable to continue. The main duties are to circulate papers for and take minutes of the Main Committee, which meets six times a year. The secretary should also maintain a digital record of minutes and a record of where all paper records are stored. There are other activities to get involved in if time allows. For further information and expressions of interest, please contact jennycobley@aol.com.

Passions Of The Soul

Marie Soulier, founder of the Clapham Opera Festival, is also the founder of OPUS (Opera Pour Un Salon), which puts on opera and classical music in unexpected locations – from living rooms to shops.



For those who cannot wait for the Clapham Opera Festival to arrive, OPUS has organised an evening of Baroque Early Music on **Thursday 2 July**. Doors open at 7 pm, and the performance starts at 7.30 pm (prompt!) at the Church of the Holy Spirit, Narbonne Avenue, SW4 9LQ

You can enjoy the music of Monteverdi, Handel and Purcell amongst others, sung by the Maltese mezzo-soprano Claire Gigho, who performed the leading role in Rossini's *Cenerentola* at last year's festival. We also welcome back the exciting Hungarian recorder player Laszlo Rozsa and cellist Lucia Capellaro. They will be joined by a new face to the Clapham Opera scene, Alex McCartney on theorbo. Tickets £17, concessions £13 are available online from 5 June at operapourunsalon.net or email Marie Soulier (marie@operapourunsalon.net).

Wine Tasting On **Friday 26 June**, 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm, there will be a tasting of South African wines in the Mayor's Parlour at Lambeth Town Hall, SW2 1RW in support of Thatu, a charity which works with deprived communities in South Africa to improve their nutrition by growing their own food. The evening will be hosted by Jimmy Smith, founder of the West London Wine School.

For tickets at £35 email info@thathu.com or telephone 07910 332939. Places are strictly limited so book now!

On the Common

The Common and Open Spaces Sub-committee (C&OS) has been discussing a range of issues: I will report three here. The first has been about succession tree planting, and in particular for our distinctive and historic avenues. Here we worked jointly with Friends of Clapham Common and the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee. After a tree walk with Dave Paul and a subsequent meeting to clarify the discussion and agreements, it has been agreed by senior Lambeth Officers that succession planting will use the same location within the avenues to replace loss through damage or age. We owe a debt of gratitude to one of our committee, Diana Bell, who has persisted in seeking such an agreement for the last three years.

A further walk was lead by Iain Boulton who spent a windy but informative 90 minutes discussing the implication of different historic usage on the ecology of the Common. We learnt about old ponds, infill using bomb damage rubble, the significance of different grass types, and old gun emplacements that might double as bomb shelters, some of which now host new sport exercise structures. We spent a fascinating time in Battersea Woods where Iain discussed his plans to encourage the establishment of a permanent wetland feature, where natural ponds form during wet winters. Indeed as I write one such pond hosts many tadpoles. Iain plans to replace some tree/shrub species with ones that will provide a rich ecology for birds, small animals, plants, insects and water life. All on the walk felt enriched and encouraged by his intentions.

Both walks enabled us to get to know our professional Parks and Environment Officers; C&OS is convinced this helps us strengthen community relationships, especially at times of uncertainty such as the current re-structuring within Lambeth. A further walk was organised by Business Improvement District (BID), which represents the local business and shopping community, and Land Use Consultants (LUC). This was about the potential for BID's hopes for 'greening the High Street'. Members of C&OS joined architects, road planners, local councillors, members of BID and other community representatives to walk from Clapham North Underground Station, up the High Street, along the Pavement and into North Street. Throughout the LUC team discussed possibilities for tree planting, raised planters, vertical greening walls I think the consultants have rarely met such dedicated and determined community representatives.

This consultation is just the first part of a long process of assessing the potential, raising funds and implementation. Many readers will understand the significance of street tree planting. And I would recommend that members go and look at what has been achieved by closing the junction of Cato Road with Bedford Road, neighbourhood enhancement planting in Clapham Manor Street, and the Bandstand Beds in the adjoining estate. C&OS hopes the BID initiative for Clapham under the 'green infrastructure for cities' programme is successful. Dave Paul has already been planting where possible more plane trees along the High Street. Is it such an impossible dream to imagine trees along the length of the High Street leading up to the Long Road avenue?

Deryn Watson

Brixton Windmill Brixton Windmill's annual parade and festival takes place on **Sunday 28 June**. The theme this year is trades and professions past and present. Locals dressed up as blacksmiths, builders, baristas, farmers, chimney sweeps, office workers, chefs, judges, artists, mobile phone repairers, gardeners, mechanics and of course millers and bakers will march up Brixton Hill to Windmill Gardens, accompanied by performers, musicians and Brixton's infamous road sweepers! The parade leaves Windrush Square at 1 pm. From 2 pm in Windmill Gardens enjoy an afternoon of craft and trade workshops, live music, dancing, stalls, theatrical performances and live animals from Brixton City Farm.

Clapham Dissenters On **Thursday 4 June** at 7.30 pm at Clapham Books, 26 The Pavement, SW4 0JA Rev. Ivor Rees, minister at the United Reformed Church in Grafton Square from 1967 to 1973, will launch his book, *Clapham Dissenters*, the story of the Dissenting congregation, founded in the early 1640s, who became Clapham Congregational Church at Grafton Square, then in 1972, Clapham United Reformed Church.

Head for Heights

The visit to St Mary's Church in Clapham Park Road to climb up the spire will be on **Thursday 18 June**. If you have put your name down for it, please confirm your attendance by email before 15 June so that any spare spaces can be re-allocated. The visit will include a talk from the job architect and climbing the scaffolding to see the stone conservation work on the spire. If you have not put your name down

A Brave New World

Edmund Bird made his second appearance for the Clapham Society within a few days when he gave a presentation on his recent book, *Lambeth Architecture: A Brave New World 1945-1965*, at our April meeting. A full hall at Omnibus enjoyed his very well-informed and lively presentation, and his readiness to answer questions and discuss buildings of this period.

He briefly mentioned his two previous books in this series, which cover Lambeth's Edwardian architecture and the years from 1914-1939, before giving a lavishly illustrated run through this book which covers the first 20 post-WWII years. The introduction gives an overview of the period, followed by a chapter on Lambeth during World War II, and a Festival of Britain chapter before moving on to describe the buildings in categories: public buildings, entertainment and leisure, transport, educational, housing, commercial and ecclesiastical. Final chapters cover public art and sculpture, a fascinating round up of Lambeth post-war buildings which have already been demolished and a postscript on Lambeth in film and model villages. Every building mentioned and described is illustrated, and interior photographs as well as plans and diagrams are included to give a totally comprehensive guide.

Edmund's presentation, both in the book and his illustrated talk, is both clear and concise. A useful addition to the book is a location map, which is as helpful to those of us who think we know the area but sometimes have trouble placing specific buildings, as to those new to the area. Photographs are varied and well-chosen in that they show some people, cars and background details which set the buildings in context and give a true flavour of the period.

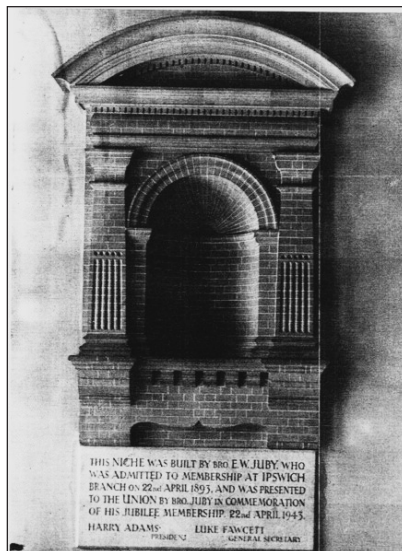
The audience was clearly much impressed by this exposition of the relatively recent architecture of the area, which opened our eyes to things around us which we tend to take for granted, and all copies of this book and the earlier ones which were brought to the meeting were sold out. We now await publication later this year of the final volume in the series, which will cover post-1966 architecture. *Lambeth Architecture: A Brave New World 1945-1965* is available from Clapham Books, 26 The Pavement, SW4 0JA.

and you would like to come if spaces become available, email petercobley23@aol.com or phone 020 7720 2370 before 13 June.

Peter Cobley

Clapham Society Fails to Find a Niche

A recent enquiry from Paul Juby of Ipswich led to a search for an unusual object. Paul's grandfather, Ernest Juby, born in 1873, was a highly skilled bricklayer and lifelong member of the Amalgamated Union of Building Trade Workers whose head office, known as 'The Builders' is on the corner of Crescent Lane and Abbeville Road. In the winter of 1901, when cold weather prevented outside work, he started to make an ornamental niche. It took him three months working eight hours a day. It was 2 feet 7 inches (0.78 m) high and 17.5 inches (0.44 m) wide and made from Dutch red bricks. In 1943, to celebrate 50 years as a member of the union, he presented it to the union and it was installed in the entrance hall of the head office with a suitable inscription as shown in our photograph.



Paul asked us whether the niche was still there but, sadly, there is no sign of it. We can only guess that it was a casualty of the extension of the building in 1973-4 when, following merger with the woodworkers' and painters' unions, more space was required and the union became the Union of Construction Allied Trades and Technicians (UCATT) which it is today. An unfortunate loss of an attractive object but a reminder of Clapham's past when the headquarters of so many trade unions were located here.

Derrick Johnson

Mozart's Great Mass

On **Saturday 27 June** at 7.30 pm Andrea Brown conducts the Festival Chorus and Sinclair Sinfonia in Mozart's *Mass in C Minor K. 427*. Also known as the 'Great Mass', the work reflects Mozart's preoccupation with the works of Handel and Bach within a magnificent choral mass setting. St Luke's Church, Thurleigh Road, SW12 8RQ.

Tickets £16, concessions £14 on the door, or in advance from Northcote Music, 155 Northcote Road, SW11 6QB. More information at festivalchorus.co.uk.

Wine And Roses

Once again there's a chance to sip the wine and smell the roses in the garden of 18 Sibella Rd, SW4 6HX. This fundraiser for the Charles Michael Strong Fund in the Roy Castle Lung Cancer Foundation has become an annual event and provides a good opportunity to catch up with friends and neighbours while supporting a very worthwhile charity with suggested donations of £5 for wine and nibbles.

This year the opening is on **Sunday 14 June** from 5 pm to 8 pm.

June Highlights at Omnibus

Thursday 11 June at 7.30 pm. Story telling evening *So this is what happened*. Tickets £5.

Thursday 18 June at 7.30 pm. *Crocodiles in Cream*. A portrait of Lewis Carroll drawing from his diaries, letters, poems and stories, taking the audience into the world, half-dream, half-reality of this complex many-sided figure: mathematician, logician, photographer, poet. Tickets £15, concessions £12.

Sunday 21 June at 7 pm. Endellion String Quartet. Tickets £18, concessions £15.

Tuesday 23 and Wednesday 24 June at 7.30 pm. Lightbox Theatre presents *The Air Around Us*, which paints a vivid picture of Battersea, shedding light on a generation of Londoners whose stories are in danger of becoming lost amid regeneration. Tickets £10, concessions £8. For more details including the full monthly programme and to buy tickets go to omnibus-clapham.org. Keep up to date with events by signing up for the email newsletter.

Saturdays in June Don't forget our local Fair, Fayre and Fete this month:

Saturday 13 June St Paul's Church Fair, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. 12 noon to 4 pm.

Saturday 20 June Holy Trinity Church Fayre, Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QZ. 11am to 5 pm.

Saturday 27 June Abbeville Fete, Church of the Holy Spirit, Narbonne Avenue, SW4 9LQ and Abbeville Road. 12 noon to 4 pm

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 **The Clapham Society** website at claphamsociety.com.

Cut here -----

Summer Party in the garden of Sarah and Julian Lush in Larkhall Rise on Thursday 9 July from 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm.

Drinks and canapés.

Please send me tickets @ £12 each. Cheque, payable to the Clapham Society, for £..... with a stamped self addressed envelope to: Alyson Wilson, 22 Crescent Grove, SW4 7 AH.

Name/s..... Telephone number.....