



The Clapham Society Newsletter

Issue 412

November 2018

Winter Fair at Omnibus Theatre

On **Saturday 17 November** The Changarawe Project will be holding a Pop-Up Winter Fair at Omnibus Theatre, where we will be selling Redina's textiles (see below). We will be joined by a large variety of other stalls selling everything from jewellery to jam – the perfect place to do some early Christmas shopping! There will be a second-hand children's book stall, with all surplus books going to Changarawe for the Zawadi School.

The Changarawe Project is a Tanzanian community project with strong links to Clapham. It was founded in 1998 by Caro Walford, who has lived in Clapham since 1979 and who formerly ran Clapham Physiotherapy, and Felistas Kalomo from Changarawe, a village in the Morogoro region of Tanzania.

Caro and Felistas met in 1997 and were united by a vision to help the many orphaned and destitute children of Changarawe. The Zawadi ('gift') School was opened the following year, a one-room classroom providing basic education and welfare support to a small group of children.

Over the last two decades, through the generosity of supporters in the UK, many of whom are themselves Clapham residents, the Project has grown considerably and now includes a fully functioning pre-primary school with three classrooms, a micro-finance scheme, a peer education project, an elderly carer support programme, a study centre and a fund to support orphans to continue their education.

Over 600 children have passed through the Zawadi School since its doors first opened and the Project currently supports over 150 orphans to continue their education at primary and secondary level. Last year, a student we have supported from childhood entered Dar es Salaam University to begin undergraduate studies, where we continue to support him. At the heart of everything we do is the commitment to help people to help themselves. We believe in doing a few things extremely well to empower, in a truly sustainable way, people who would otherwise have very little. A number of villagers who participated in our micro-finance scheme have gone on to set up small businesses, including Redina, who makes beautiful handmade textiles that are sold in the UK to help raise funds for the Project.

Tickets for the fair can be purchased in advance via omnibus-clapham.org/winter-pop-up-fair/ and include entry into a raffle with some great prizes.

Every single penny of the funds raised will go to support our important work in Tanzania, about which you can read more on our website: www.changaraweproject.org

Robert Watkinson, Trustee

Our meetings are held at Omnibus Theatre, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. The talk will commence promptly at 8 pm and the bar will open prior to the talk at 7 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 the talk. Meetings are free and open to non-members, who are invited to make a donation.

Please arrive in good time to ensure entry. There is a limit on the number the room can accommodate and you will not be admitted when that number is reached.



The Changarawe Project's staff (Felistas is second from right, front row) with visiting trustee Kate Beveridge

Monday 19 November

Past Caring: The History of Bethlem.

Bethlem Royal Hospital was founded in 1247 and was the first institution in the UK to specialise in the care of the mentally ill. The hospital continues to provide in-patient care as part of the South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust, and has been based in south London since 1930. **Amy Moffat**, Community Engagement Officer from Bethlem Museum of the Mind, will speak about the long history of the institution, whose name Bedlam became a synonym for chaos and confusion.

December - see overleaf

There is no meeting in December.
The first meeting in 2019 will be on Monday 21 January 2019 when Bob Flanagan, Chairman of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery, will discuss the history of the cemetery and give details of some of the many remarkable Clapham residents who chose to be buried there.

Police meeting

The next police meeting with residents is on **Tuesday 6 November** at 7 pm at Lambeth Academy, Elms Road, SW4

New Education Centre at Brixton Windmill

Construction work will start in November on a new education centre that Lambeth Council are building in Windmill Gardens beside the 202-year-old Brixton Windmill.

The centre, designed *pro bono* by the prestigious architects Squire and Partners, is a great new asset for the borough and will include a professionally fitted out baking kitchen. The Friends of Windmill Gardens (FoWG), whose volunteers currently deliver guided tours of Brixton Windmill one weekend a month from March to October, will be signing a lease with Lambeth to manage the building once it is completed at the end of April 2019.

Besides being a purpose built centre for school workshops at the Windmill the building, which is being constructed by Logan SE Ltd, will also serve as the Brixton Windmill Visitor Centre and will be available for hire by local community groups.



Interior of the new centre

FoWG members have been working hard over the past months to raise money to fit out and furnish the new centre so it is fit for purpose and can open in May next year. We launched a £29k fit out appeal and last July ran a successful crowd-funding campaign, which exceeded the target we set of £12k. We have made several grant applications and some have been successful but we need to raise much more if we are to deliver an improved education programme and visitor experience at the Windmill.

If you would like to donate to our fit out appeal go to brixtonwindmill.org/fit-out-appeal. Although Brixton Windmill is now closed for the winter you can view it from the outside during daylight hours when Windmill Gardens is open. You can also purchase the wholemeal Brixton Flour that is milled at the Windmill from several local shops including The Old Post Office Bakery, 76 Landor Road, SW9 9PH.

To find out more about Brixton Windmill and the activities organised by FoWG visit our website: brixtonwindmill.org.

Jean Kerrigan, Chair of Friends of Windmill Gardens

Fake News? The recent edition of *Wandsworth Historian* challenges some misinformation or fake news which has long irritated locals as they pass Book House on East Hill Wandsworth. A plaque claims connections with 20th century novelist Hugh Walpole and that the Man Booker Prize was started there. There is no evidence for the former claim, and the Prize was inaugurated in 1968 while the Book Trust who part-administer the award did not move in to Book House until 1980.

Clapham Chamber Concerts (CCC)

The second concert in the special 10th anniversary season on **Friday 16 November** features CCC's own clarinettist, Jonathan Parkin, now a popular and familiar face at the series, accompanied by his long-standing duo partner, pianist Sebastian Stanley. This recital will feature two classic favourites from the romantic repertoire for clarinet and piano: Weber's exciting *Grand Duo Concertant*, one of the earliest and most significant works written for clarinet and piano, and Schumann's *Fantasy Pieces*, which display some of the most gentle and poetic writing of this wonderful composer. The second half of the concert features two beautiful, slightly overlooked works from the twentieth century English repertoire.

The concert starts at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets available on the door at £12, £10 concessions and Friends of CCC, £5 children. For further information email claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com.

Battersea Arts Centre

This month's free talks at Battersea Arts Centre include *Theatre on the Front line* on **Monday 12 November** at 7 pm which explores how theatre brought joy and hope in times of conflict: from Lena Ashwell's work on the front line in World War I to those bringing theatre to refugees today. On **Thursday 15 November** from 6.30 to 8.30 pm a workshop about fruit trees will explain how fruit trees grow and what to consider when planting them. As well as explaining rootstocks, pollination partners and spacing, the workshop will look at how to create an ecological design to support your fruit trees. This workshop is part of preparations for the installation of the Battersea Arts Centre's Community Garden along Town Hall Road in the New Year. For details and bookings go to bac.org.uk or call in at Battersea Arts Centre, Lavender Hill, SW11 5TN.

Christmas Fair

The Wandsworth Friends of Royal Trinity Hospice will hold their annual Christmas Fair at St Luke's Church, 194 Ramsden Road, SW12 8RQ on **Tuesday 13 November** (Preview Evening) from 6.30 to 9.30 pm and on **Wednesday 14 November** from 8.30 am to 3.30 pm. Do come along and support this event which last year raised more than £30,000 for the Hospice.

Opera Masterclass

On **Friday 23 November** St Paul's Opera is hosting a Masterclass with David Butt Philip, one of the UK's rising stars of the opera world. This will feature five candidates from the recent St Paul's Opera productions – Hugh Benson, Stephen Cviic, Christopher Head, Sophie Horrocks and Olivia Lewis. Whilst this event will give candidates a valuable experience in vocal production, it is also a must for members of the audience who consider themselves 'someone who just enjoys opera but has no idea how they make such a beautiful sound'. It's a bit like watching Bake Off – we all know how to make a cake, but it's fascinating to watch someone with real talent brave enough to have a go!

Venue: St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Doors open at 7 pm, Masterclass starts at 7.30 pm. Tickets: £10, Students £8 on the door or online at spo-masterclassdbp.eventbrite.co.uk

The Oscar Wilde Temple

Don't miss The Oscar Wilde Temple by McDermott & McGough at Studio Voltaire, 1A Nelsons Row, SW4 7JR.

For this major new commission, the most ambitious in Studio Voltaire's history, the entire gallery, a Victorian former chapel, has been transformed to create an environment that celebrates the Irish poet and author. Period wallpaper, stained glass windows, hangings and 19th century chandeliers and furniture adorn the space, evoking the provocative sensuousness of the Aesthetic Movement. Open Wednesday to Sunday 10 am to 6 pm until 31 March 2019. Admission free.

Jim Grover photographs

If you missed Jim Grover's exhibition *Windrush: Portrait of a Generation* at St James' Church, Park Hill in October there is a chance to see these fascinating photographs in Brixton during November. The exhibition will be at St. John's Angell Town, 49 Wiltshire Road, SW9 7NE from **Thursday 1 November to Thursday 15 November** from 2 to 6 pm Monday to Saturday.

Perception Festival at Omnibus Theatre

The theme of isolation is explored in all its forms in Omnibus Theatre's fourth annual Perception Festival, a collage of theatre, music and movement animated by over ten dynamic shows with different points of view. The festival runs from **Tuesday 30 October to Saturday 24 November**.

Highlights include acclaimed Volcano Theatre's re-developed *Macbeth*; *Director's Cut* and the return of Creation Theatre with a binaural reimagining of Edgar Allen Poe's *The Pit And The Pendulum*. This version has been adapted by playwright Christopher York (*Build A Rocket*) whose credentials also include being a member of The Faction and a recipient of the High Tide First Commissions Award. Performed with



Oscar Wilde as a Sunflower, 1881 by Punch cartoonist, Edward Linley Sambourne

innovative binaural sound design, AV projection and wireless headphones. It will be an exploration of sensory deprivation and isolation in a near pitch-black room. Not for the faint hearted!

Closing the festival, three strong female performers stage arresting and deeply personal pieces, two of which are new plays: *Fragments Of A Complicated Mind* by theatre-maker Damilola 'DK' Fashola and *The Real Deal* by award-winning poet and playwright Katie Bonna.

For details and booking go to omnibus-clapham.org or call in at Omnibus Theatre, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW.

Growing Underground

Following the successful unveiling of the Society's 12th plaque on the Deep Shelter at Clapham Common Station Richard Ballard, the co-founder of Growing Underground, who now occupy the shelter, kindly invited a small group to tour the premises. Those selected were members who contribute significantly to the Society's activities.

After completing a questionnaire about our health and divesting ourselves of any jewellery – this is a food production site which has to meet stringent regulations – we were whisked down in the nearly 80 year-old lift to below the Northern Line. Having changed into white Wellington boots, laboratory-style coats and blue hairnets we set off down the white-walled tunnel lit by energy saving LED technology. Richard explained how the seeds were germinated then transferred to trays where they grow on recycled carpet. The hydroponic technique uses 70% less water than open field farming and is pesticide free. We were impressed by the ingenuity of the process and the ability to operate all the year round in a sustainable way.

Before we returned to the surface we were given sample packs of the flavoursome leaves to take away with us. Crops grown include pea shoots, coriander, garlic chives, fennel, salad rocket, broccoli, red and wasabi mustard and pink stem and purple radish. These are available in mixed packs such as Asian, Indian and Italian salads at selected branches of Marks & Spencer, Ocado and Waitrose. The produce is supplied to local restaurants and may be bought at Venn Street Market – only yards from where it is grown beneath Clapham's busy High Street. We would like to thank Richard and his team for their friendly and enthusiastic welcome. It is particularly pleasing that a space built to protect us in war now has a new role feeding us in peacetime.

The history of this Deep Shelter with illustrations of Growing Underground can be seen on our website at claphamsociety.com/Articles/Plaque12.html.

Derrick Johnson

Christmas lights On **Friday 23 November** Christmas lights will be switched on in Northcote Road, accompanied by carol singers, reindeer, funfair rides, Santa's grotto, fire engines and lots more. This will be followed by a Christmas Pop up market on **Sunday 25 November** when parking bays along the length of Northcote Road will be suspended, and approximately 60 visiting traders will take part in a festive shopping day.

Winterville returns to Clapham

On Tuesday 9 October, Lambeth's Planning Applications Committee deliberated for over two hours on whether Winterville should be allowed to return to the Event Site this winter. All bar one of our local Councillors, the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee, and a resident who had helped to organise a petition locally, opposed the application. Objections hugely outnumbered supporters of the application. However, with a majority of 5:2 the Committee approved the application, and Winterville will be installing their various structures and equipment, including an ice rink, cinema, fairground rides, catering and market stalls etc, as well as perimeter fencing from **Thursday 1 November**. They are not scheduled to complete de-rigging of the site until **Saturday 5 January**. At 66 days, their occupation of the site will be 10 days longer than last year.

The Society has been concerned about the progressive damage being done to the Event Site, a level grassed area of approx. 10 acres (4.5 ha) abutting Long Road, and sited behind the netball courts and skateboard area off Rookery Road for several years. The holding of events on this site, while popular in themselves and money raising for the Parks Service, restricts public access to this important piece of the Common not just during the event itself, but also for the whole time that the area is enclosed. Over the years we have seen a general degradation of the ground conditions and quality of the grass. Last winter Lambeth agreed to Winterville taking place on this site, in spite of concerns raised about the impact this was likely to have. As Andrew Summers has previously documented here, when Winterville vacated last



January they left the whole site in a dreadful state.



As residents will be aware the site was fenced off by Lambeth and efforts were made to level the ground and reseed it ahead of the spring and summer programme of events. This fencing was not dismantled till the end of May, by which time the public had been deprived

of access to this large area of green space for the best part of seven months. What was truly shocking to witness was the very poor state of the area even after five months of it lying fallow. Large areas remained bare of grass and the soil was of very poor quality. A further attempt was made to improve the site at the beginning of September.

The majority of objectors to Winterville returning to the Event Site have argued that it would be better placed on the Circus Site, and/or the Redgra football pitches on the west side of the Common which would better withstand the heavy equipment, vehicular traffic and heavy footfall resulting from this event. The Winterville organisers were apparently not prepared to entertain this option as they sought the close proximity to Clapham Common tube and local amenities to generate high visitor numbers. It is not clear to what extent Lambeth officers pressed the alternative option, if at all.

We are advised that this time Winterville will retain direct responsibility for repairing damage to the Event Site after they decamp in January, rather

than Lambeth Parks, however they will only be required to return the state of the ground to its present condition (i.e. very poor), and the Event Site will again be fenced off for a substantial period to allow the ground to recover.

Whilst many of Winterville's offerings are very popular, the Society does not accept it is an appropriate use for the Event Site for a variety of reasons, but primarily because it prevents the site from being used as public open space for passive and active recreation for a large part of the year, not just the weeks the event takes place. We look to our members to support our position.

Mark Leffler

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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