

The Clapham Society Newsletter



Issue 420

September 2019

Studio Voltaire Neighbours Open Day

On **Saturday 21 September** from 2 pm to 5 pm you are invited to join us to find out about our development plans with Matheson Whiteley Architects and the Studio Voltaire team, and enjoy a tour of Studio Voltaire's current exhibition Mary Reid Kelley and Patrick Kelley, Rand/Goop, at 3 pm. Tea and cake will be provided.

Studio Voltaire, a leading arts and education organisation based in Clapham, is embarking on an ambitious redevelopment project to create 42% more affordable artists' studios, 233% more public space, a dedicated learning and events space, café and public courtyard garden. This exciting project will start in October 2019.

Studio Voltaire has been a vital part of Clapham's growing artistic community for the last 25 years. We want to share our plans for the future and hear your views.

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Studio Voltaire development



Starting on **Sunday 1 September** is Lambeth Local History Festival – a month long festival celebrating the diverse history of the borough, with events provided by local societies and museums. Clapham Society events include Jon Newman's talk shown above, Timothy Walker's talk on *The First Clapham Saints* on **Thursday 5 September** at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Church, Anne Wilson's walk *Clapham High Street and Environs* on **Sunday 15 September** leaving from Clapham North tube station at 2.30 pm and *Clapham in World War Two* walk on **Wednesday 25 September** leaving at 2.30 pm from Clapham South tube station, to be led by Tom Janz. The full programme of events is available at Lambeth Libraries or can be downloaded from the Latest News page of our website.

On **Saturday 7 September** Lambeth Local History Fair takes place at Brixton Library from 10.15 am to 4.15 pm. A full day with illustrated talks, local walks, tours around the building, exhibitions, bookstalls and refreshments.
Brixton Library, Brixton Oval, SW2 1JG

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.

Monday 16 September

The Heathwall: South London's least-known stream

There has been a growing interest over the last ten years in the underground rivers of London. In this talk, writer and archivist, Jon Newman uncovers the history and course of what is arguably the least-understood of them, the Heathwall. For centuries it has defined the parish and borough boundaries between Battersea, Clapham, Lambeth and Wandsworth while its tributaries, the Holburne and the Heathwall Brook both flow through Clapham. Consigned underground by Bazalgette in 1865 as part of his London Main Drainage scheme, it has largely been forgotten. Jon has just published a book on the river's history and this will be on sale.

Monday 14 October

Annual General Meeting. Followed by **Growing Up in Wartime Battersea.** Carol Rahn shares highlights of filmed interviews with men and women recounting their childhood experiences during the war.

What's going on at Omnibus Theatre?

There's not so much theatre here to report this month, but no lack of activity! Behind the scenes a new transformed, expanded, upgraded Omnibus is taking shape ready for its opening in mid-September. Go in and have a look at what's happening! Marie is happy to show you round and explain the new arrangements, of which she is justifiably proud.

Studio Voltaire Neighbours Open Day

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Following the redevelopment, we will be able to offer more activities to local schools, community groups, health organisations and individuals who do not have a space of their own, or who do not ordinarily take part in arts activities, greatly supporting community cohesion and lifelong learning.

Feedback from our neighbours is key to transforming our much-loved gallery into a more welcoming and accessible space, unlocking the full potential of our site and improving how visitors experience our programmes. Come along and join us at Studio Voltaire, 1A Nelsons Row, Clapham SW4 7JR.

Laura Harford, Curator (Participation)

Rough Sleepers

Many of you will have witnessed the distressing rise in the amount of rough sleeping along Clapham High Street. For many months now a semi-permanent encampment stretches many metres outside the Post Office. More recently, the familiar trappings of someone who expects to be staying for a while have appeared on both sides of the road under the railway bridge at Clapham North. In addition, a group of Roma use the Common and the green space near Clapham Common tube station as their base for the summer.

The reasons people find themselves homeless and living on the streets are varied and the difficulties in resolving these problems cannot be under-estimated. However, this shouldn't be a reason not to demand that our public authorities work together to address the issue and give people in difficult circumstances the support they need. Local residents can also help. Whilst some people choose to give money and food to those living on the street there is a concern that this perpetuates the situation and discourages individuals from engaging with the various agencies who can provide support.

In Clapham, the Ace of Clubs day centre provides a range of services for those who are homeless, vulnerable and otherwise marginalised. The team at Ace of Clubs is skilled and focused in linking people with a wide range of services including accommodation, welfare, rehab, training, healthcare and many others.

Ace of Clubs produces a £1 meal ticket that can be purchased from the shop on Clapham Park Road. The ticket entitles someone to a three-course meal from Ace of Clubs throughout the week. It also helps promote the centre to people who may not know it exists and encourages people to access the wide range of services available.

So rather than give money directly to those on the streets another option is to give them a meal ticket or just give a direct donation to this well regarded charity.

If they see someone sleeping rough in the area, residents are also encouraged to contact the Lambeth Safer Streets Team, who will deploy a trained outreach worker to engage and offer support. (0207 501 0601 or sttlambeth@cgl.org.uk)

It is also important to speak to your local representatives, to raise your concerns with them and urge the various public agencies to work together to solve some of the long standing challenging cases that people will see as they walk around Clapham.

Mark Leffler



The Choir Sings On!

Clapham Community Choir's autumn session starts on **Tuesday 3 September**, and goes through to Christmas. It's a friendly non-audition choir, with members from Clapham and around, singing a lot of different music. The Choir meets on Tuesday evenings, 7.30 pm to 9.00 pm, at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Singing in a choir is enjoyable and refreshing! New members are welcome at any time.

E-mail info@claphamcommunitychoir.org. or go to, singclapham.org/.

Whitehall Choir

If you're a choral singer keen to improve your vocal technique (and you love the music of Handel), then come along to Whitehall Choir's *Messiah* workshop on **Saturday 7 September** at the Church of the Holy Spirit in Narbonne Avenue, SW4 9JU. Led by the choir's inspirational music director Joanna Tomlinson and accompanied by pianist Michael Higgins, this will be the choir's seventh Come and Sing event at CHS. The choir loves the church for its welcoming atmosphere, wonderful acoustic and for its proximity to Abbeville Road for the lunch break! The day runs from 10 am to 5 pm, with a sing-through for audience at 4 pm. Tickets and full details at whitehallchoir.org.

Bat Walk

Friday 27 September

Autumn Bat Walk. Dr Iain Boulton will lead his always popular walk using bat detectors and our own eyes to look for, listen to and be amazed at these fascinating creatures! Wrap up warm for a journey into the world of our night time companions. Meet at 7 pm at the Bandstand: duration approximately 60 minutes.

The 56th Annual General Meeting of the Clapham Society will be held on **Monday 14 October** at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW starting at 8 pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous AGM (15 October 2018) available at the meeting
3. Adoption of the Annual Report for the year 2018-19
4. Adoption of the Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2019
5. Election of the Officers and Committee Members for the year 2019-2020
Chairman Treasurer Secretary
Vice-Chairman Solicitor Membership Secretary
A maximum of ten further Committee Members
6. Appointment of the Independent Examiner
7. Any other business and announcements

The formal business will be followed by a talk by **Carol Rahn** on Growing Up in Wartime Battersea.

Nominations for the election of Officers and Committee Members must be made to the Secretary at least 14 days before the Annual General Meeting. Every nomination must be in writing, supported by a seconder. The consent of the person nominated must be obtained.

Gillian White, Secretary, 2a Sibella Road, SW4 6HX

Down the Garden Path

Local gardener, Sam MacDonald has written a delightful little book of musings and snippets, sometimes informative, sometimes amusing about gardens and gardening. A perfect little bedside book to pick at. *Down the Garden Path* is available at bookshops and online.

The Arts Society Clapham Common

The autumn season starts on **Wednesday 18 September** with a talk by Dr Paul Roberts *Last Supper in Pompeii* – celebrating the Roman love affair with food and drink.

New research from Oxford and Italy unveils secrets from vineyards, graves and even the people of Pompeii themselves. Talks take place at the Clapham Picturehouse, 76 Venn Street SW4 0AT starting at 11am. Single membership is £50 and £90 for joint (plus joining fee) and gives free entry for 10 lectures. Visitors pay £10 per lecture. Information about membership can be obtained from claphamcommon@theartsociety.org, or come and see us at before the lecture.

New members

We have welcomed the following new members this summer: Vicki Lant, Alison & Nigel Newbery, Jia & Robert Newcombe, and Steve Hurston, Dana Shotton, Carolinda Tolstoy, and Jack Wallington & Christopher Anderson

St Paul's Opera

Huge thanks to all Clapham Society members who came along to *Le Nozze di Figaro* at St Paul's Church in July. The cast loved every minute of the production and now we are plotting the details of our Gala Concert on **Friday 11 October**. Please put this date in your diaries and details will be revealed shortly. If you are not on our mailing list and you would like to receive more information, please send a request to info@stpaulsopera.org. In the meantime, enjoy the memory of Figaro with a photographic reminder of our production. *Tricia Ninian*



Clapham Book Festival

Clapham's book festival is on **Saturday 5 October** this year and includes top-notch thriller writers, historians, historical novelists and biographers. Clapham Writers will also host a meet-and-greet with local authors at Omnibus Theatre from 8.30 pm to which all are welcome.

The programme put together by Paula Johnson (Society of Authors, Associate Director Royal Society of Literature, Royal Literary Fund Trustee) includes TV historian and royalty specialist Professor Kate Williams, Ursula Buchan discussing with local novelist Elizabeth Buchan a new and intimately revealing biography of her grandfather, John Buchan, *Guardian* journalist and Ondaatje winner Aida Edemariam, and BBC veteran journalist Frank Gardner OBE talking about his battlefield journey from *Blood & Sand* to his novels *Crisis* and *Ultimatum* with local thriller writer Simon Berthon.



Frank Gardner's exciting thrillers draw closely on his battlefield reporting

Clapham Writers, This is Clapham, Clapham Books and **Omnibus Theatre** are all partners in the Clapham Book Festival. Information and tickets available from omnibus-clapham.org/clapham-book-festival-2019.

Clapham Common Film Club

Clapham Common Film Club starts a new season at Omnibus Theatre on **Sunday 29 September** with the Belgian/French film *The Kid with a Bike*. It tells the story of a young boy abandoned by his father and in care and the female town hairdresser who, in a random act of kindness, agrees to foster him on weekends. 'A quietly rapturous film about love and redemption', and a 2011 Cannes Festival prize winner.

The season will consist of 10 films at monthly intervals. These include *Wajib*, a comedy drama from Palestine, *Elvira Madigan*, the Swedish classic from 1967, *The Salesman*, the Iranian best foreign film Oscar winner, and *Toni Erdmann*, Sight and Sound's best film of 2016.

Autumn screening dates are **Monday 28 October, Sunday 24 November, Monday 16 December**. Starting time 7.30 pm at Omnibus Theatre, doors and bar from 7.00 pm. Membership essential and can be acquired at the screening or in advance, details and more information from Roger Booker at ccfilmrb@gmail.com. *Roger Booker*

Michael English (1930 - 2019)

Michael English, of whose death on 16 July we were sorry to learn, played a significant part in Clapham life for more than twenty years. From 1990 to 2002 he represented Clapham Town ward on Lambeth Council. Thereafter he served for several years on the Clapham Society's main committee, where he proved to be a valuable source of knowledge and advice, particularly on legal questions and on matters relating to Clapham Common.

While local politics – he was a member of Rochdale Council from 1953 to 1964 – occupied the early and later parts of his career, his 19 years as MP for Nottingham West constituted its heart. Although he never worked as a lawyer, his law degree equipped him well for the close attention he paid as an MP to detailed aspects of parliamentary procedure and practice, for his knowledge of which he developed a well-earned reputation. He played a big part in several significant developments, notably the televising of Parliament.

The Clapham Society committee often reaped the benefit of his extensive memory and of his thoughtful and careful attention to detail. These helped guide us away from actions that, though immediately appealing, might have proved counterproductive in the end. His contributions to discussion were always quiet and courteous, but they could have a remarkably powerful effect. He will be remembered by many of us as a good friend to Clapham and a valued colleague. *Jill Cramphorn*

Brewing in the Wandle Valley

At our last meeting before the summer break Alison Cousins gave us an interesting talk about the old and the new in south London brewing. She listed several new small microbreweries which have started up locally in the last few years, the first of which was Sambrook's of Battersea.

But first we heard about the many historic breweries in Croydon, where one can be traced back to the 1580s, Mitcham and our close neighbour, The Ram Brewery in Wandsworth. It started in the mid-16th century and the adjoining pub dates from at least 1524. The first of the Young family to be involved was Charles Allen Young, around 1830. Locally made beam engines were installed in the mid 19th century and were still in use until the 1970s. The Dorset Horn ram was not registered as the emblem until the 1890s. The final member of the family was Sir John Young ("Mr. John ") who stood up against the change to keg beer, and continued to use dray horses for delivery, which were cared for with devotion on site.

Sir John Young died at the same time as the last ever brew in 2006 – it was served at his funeral. The site was sold to developers who have demolished all but the historic buildings in the centre. In order to maintain continuous brewing a former member of Young's stayed on to 'guard' the original buildings but also to set up a nanobrewery with equipment salvaged from the main building. Being unable to sell this brew officially he established comedy nights by invitation, at which it was available.

The brewer, John Hatch, produced a Greenland Ale (named after the present developers) for National Beer Day on June 15 this year and they, in turn, presented him with a Brewing Book in which he could record all ongoing brews.

Since the talk Alison has found out that Greenland have agreed with Sambrook's that they can take out a 20-year lease to operate brewing on the site to ensure the continuity and develop a heritage centre. She hopes John will have a role in this after all he has done.

St Luke's Music Society

The new season opens on **Saturday 5 October** when Ian Bostridge presents *Winterreise* accompanied by the brilliant pianist Julius Drake. Bostridge is not only recognised as probably the greatest interpreter in the world of Schubert's masterpiece, but has also written a fascinating and critically acclaimed book on it.

Then on **Saturday December 14** the wonderful, widely loved violinist Tasmin Little returns for her second appearance in St Luke's in what will be her last season on the concert stage before her retirement next summer.



The new year opens with Miloš, the first classical guitarist ever to perform solo in the Royal Albert Hall, with his programme *From Bach to the Beatles*, before the anarchic Budapest Café Orchestra appears in February and Steven Osborne plays Beethoven's majestic final three sonatas to mark the 250th anniversary of Beethoven's birth in March. Full details of this stunning season are at www.slms.org.uk.

Trinity Hospice

Royal Trinity Hospice's Family Walk and Fun Day will take place on **Sunday 22 September**, between 10 am and 4 pm. More information and tickets can be found on Royal Trinity Hospice's website: royaltrinity-hospice.london/Event/family-walk.

The day will start with a choice of 2, 5 and 8 mile walks around Clapham Common. New to this year, Trinity have introduced Trek to Trinity, an option to walk to the hospice from home or any location of your choice. You can walk on your own, with family or even get a whole team together to take on the challenge. After the walk, attendees will enjoy the carnival atmosphere of the Fun Day in Trinity's award-winning garden where a bouncy castle, BBQ, face painting, magic shows, live music, and a licensed bar will be on offer.

Trinity is asking all walkers to raise sponsorship, whether as an individual or a team, and would be grateful if each adult could pledge to raise at least £25 for their walk. Tickets for the whole day are £15 for adults and £5 for children ages 5-16. Children under five go free so you are welcome to bring the little ones along!

Membership

Thank you to all members who have adjusted their standing orders to reflect the new subscription rates and brought this year's payment up-to-date. Reminders were sent where necessary to those who have neglected to do so. If you are not sure whether or not you need to do anything please ask the Membership Secretary (contact details are below).

Social Media

Now that The Clapham Society is extending its social media reach, we need support from members – you! – to help spread our message by retweeting or replying. If you're not on Twitter or Facebook and would like to be, it couldn't be easier. Just enter <https://help.twitter.com/en/create-twitter-account> or 'How do I create a Facebook account' in your search engine and follow the prompts.

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

