

The Clapham Society Newsletter



Issue 404

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On the Common

Winterville

The Society will participate fully in the post-event feedback that was agreed to by Lambeth. Specifically, Society committee members participated in a site inspection and will hold both the organisers and Lambeth to their commitment that the event site will be fully restored by the end of April at the latest. (Readers may recall that Lambeth commissioned an Agrostis report, the recommendations of which on preventative and restorative measures both Lambeth and Winterville promised to implement.) If anyone has any comments or views on Winterville, please do let me know. Through our membership of the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC) we believe we have successfully stymied two additional events that Lambeth were proposing for the Common this year, both of which would have been wholly incompatible with their obligation to protect the Common.



Investment Plans

Through the CCMAC we have identified around £3m of investment priorities for Clapham Common. Through various funding mechanisms £500,000 is secured but the remainder is dependent on funds from either Lambeth or external fund sources. Recent discussions with Lambeth have made us decidedly unoptimistic that Lambeth will provide much funding to meet the £3m needs. If this is the case, we will need to brace ourselves to substantially reduce our expectations regarding what investment can be made in the Common as external fund sources are unlikely to be sufficient to fill the gap.

Polygon toilet block

We are now as sure as we can be that Lambeth will not seek to build a new structure on this site, rather, incorporate it into the existing Old Town landscaping. We await a timetable for these works as it seems a simple project whose delay creates unnecessarily unsightly hoardings.

continued overleaf

Our meetings are held at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. The bar is open from 7 pm, and meetings 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 the talk. Meetings are free and open to non-members. Non-members are invited to make a donation. **PLEASE ARRIVE IN GOOD TIME TO ENSURE ENTRY. THERE IS A LIMIT ON THE NUMBER THE THEATRE CAN ACCOMMODATE AND YOU WILL NOT BE ADMITTED WHEN THAT NUMBER IS REACHED.**

Monday 26 February

Shackleton's Heart – not his best bit?

Clapham resident **Dr Ian Calder** has long been fascinated by the extraordinary Antarctic journeys undertaken by Sir Ernest Shackleton, and in particular his repeated breakdowns. Ian and consultant cardiologist Dr Jan Till believe that Sir Ernest had a congenital heart defect. As well as physical heart problems Sir Ernest had a colourful romantic history. Ian researched Sir Ernest's career by learning to manage sled dogs, sailing to Antarctica on a square-rigger, yachting to and crossing South Georgia on skis, and rummaging about in the archives of the Scott Polar Research Institute.

Monday 19 March

Lambeth's Victorian Architecture.

One of our most popular speakers in the past, **Edmund Bird**, returns to tell us about Victorian architecture in Lambeth with a focus on our area. After four books about 20th century architecture in Lambeth, Edmund takes us back to the era of intense building activity in south London. Now heritage advisor to TfL Edmund is a former Lambeth Conservation Team Manager and local resident with unrivalled knowledge of local historic buildings.

On the Common - continued Long Pond

We have been involved in a dispute between the Clapham Model Yacht Club (CMYC) and Lambeth with regard to the terms and conditions of their usage of both the Long Pond and the boathouse.

The CMYC has been using the Long Pond since 1870. For more information on CMYC visit their website cmyc.wordpress.com. We have successfully staved off, in our view, an ill-conceived proposal by Lambeth to run a pedalo concession on this pond that would have also threatened the CMYC. However, given the peppercorn rent charged by Lambeth for the boathouse and their desire to expand potential activity on the pond, all stakeholders will need further discussions to reach an amicable solution.

The Society's view is that CMYC must be treated fairly and, given its history, should be accommodated in any long-term plan for these amenities. However, a reasonable case can also be made for additional usage of the pond and possibly a redevelopment of the boathouse. Others are of the opinion that the Common doesn't need any more 'activities' that will intensify its usage and that parts of the Common should be left to relative peace and tranquility. As always, we will seek to ensure that the council's proposals are formulated with the full input of local residents and any decisions can command broad support.

The CCMAC's Annual General Meeting

This will take place on **Thursday 1 February** at 7 pm at **Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW**. Please do come along as it is open to everyone and it is the principal body through which residents and the council engage on all matters relating to Clapham Common.

If you have views or suggestions on any of the issues mentioned above please email me at andrew_summers_london@yahoo.co.uk.

*Andrew Summers
Commons and Open Space Sub-committee*

Antibiotics and Antibiotic Resistance. Is this the antibiotic Armageddon?

At our November meeting Dr John Clark, consultant microbiologist at St Helier Hospital, described the history of antibiotics and the reasons why antibiotic resistance is developing. Some antibacterial agents were developed in the 1890s, such as Salvarsan, an organoarsenic compound which was used to treat syphilis. However, the beginning of the modern antibiotic era is normally associated with the discovery of penicillin by



Watercolour sketch - Ivor Rawlisonson, 2017

production fell and antibiotics became more widely available worldwide. What could possibly go wrong?

The current problem is that bacteria can develop resistance to antibiotics, which means that some bacterial infections cannot be successfully treated. This resistance can develop by several different mechanisms, which allow resistant bacteria to grow.

The World Health Organisation (WHO) defines antibiotic resistance as 'a microorganism's resistance to an antimicrobial drug that was once able to treat an infection by that microorganism'. Resistance is spread among the bacteria as they multiply or by direct transfer of resistant bacterial DNA among bacteria. Resistance to a particular antibiotic can be shown to spread around the world. There have been very few new antibiotics developed since the 1960s. This was not a cause for concern at the time, as antibiotic resistance was rare, but in recent years the rise of antibiotic resistance is hitting the headlines. Several reports and calls for action have been published, including a report from our Chief Medical Officer. Worldwide more than 700,000 people per year die due to infection with resistant bacteria. The frequency of these infections is increasing, meaning that more deaths will be due to resistant bacteria.

This crisis is caused by the overuse of antibiotics in humans and animals and the ease of spread of these organisms around the world. The failure to develop new antibiotics is of great concern. The few new antibiotics produced are mainly new versions of existing antibiotics and mainly against common organisms such as Methicillin resistant *Staphylococcus aureus* (MRSA). New antibiotics were not being produced as research and development (R&D) costs are very high and these costs are not usually recouped. There have therefore been international agreements to promote R&D through financial assistance and central funding. Efforts are being made to reduce the use of antibiotics in animals and in Europe it has been agreed that antibiotics should no longer be used as growth promoters. There are also ongoing efforts to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics in humans by educating both doctors and patients. For example, antibiotics are not active against viral infections, such as colds, 'flu and many sore throats, and it is important to complete each course of antibiotics. Thus, there needs to be a change in medical and farming practices throughout the world to reduce the unnecessary use of antibiotics.

Jenny Cobley

A Clapham Hairdresser



Toni Mascoli (with glasses) in the Clapham salon in 1973

Toni Mascoli, who died in December 2017, was one of the brothers who started Toni & Guy, now a worldwide franchised hairdressers, in Clapham. His father Francesco, a barber from southern Italy brought his young family to London, renting a small flat in Clapham and finding work in a Mayfair hairdresser, where he was eventually joined by two sons.

Following the sudden death of their mother and the realisation that they had to support the family, in 1963 Toni and his brother Gaetano (Guy) took over a small hairdressers in Clapham Park Road. This they built up by a prodigious level of work and imaginative, innovative styling, to what they described as a Mayfair salon at Clapham prices. After ten years they did, in fact, leave Clapham and open a salon in Davies Street, Mayfair. They soon opened other salons around the country, and then franchised the name, and continued to expand all over the world. There are now around 500 Toni & Guy salons in 50 countries.

Rainbow Aphorisms

You may have noticed the artworks on the windows of the Brewers in Clapham High Street. These are part of a series of public artworks produced by Studio Voltaire in partnership with Art on the Underground and This is Clapham. They are shown on sites in Clapham and Brixton, including the façade of Studio Voltaire, Brixton Underground station and other temporary locations.

On **Saturday 10 February** there is a Curator's walking tour of these installations, starting at Studio Voltaire, 1a Voltaire Road, SW4 7JR at 4 pm. The event is free but due to limited capacity, booking is recommended. Call 020 7622 1294 or email info@studiovoltaire.org to reserve your place.

Jazz at St Luke's Church

On **Saturday 3 February** at 7.30 pm St Luke's Music Society is presenting an evening sponsored by Gregsons Solicitors, featuring Joe Stilgoe and his trio. Joe is one of the most exciting stars of the jazz world. An acclaimed singer, pianist and songwriter, he has been touring globally with huge success, often being compared with many great jazz performers. Joe comes from a strong musical heritage – his father is the brilliant Sir Richard Stilgoe and his mother an opera singer. 'Joe Stilgoe is a genius' according to Chris Evans on BBC Radio 2. More details and bookings at slms.org.uk.

Local History Articles

In 2017 the *South London Press* published 19 articles about Clapham history written by our local historians. These are now all on the Clapham Society website – go to Articles in the Local History section. The subjects are very wide-ranging, with titles including *From Bankruptcy to 'The Thunderer'*, *Murder in Clapham: the cabman's story*, *Making Sweets in Clapham*, *Letter Bomb Inventor Lived in Clapham*, and *Clapham and the May lower*. They are well worth a look!

Save the date!

St Paul's Opera will celebrate its fifth anniversary with a gala concert and party on **Saturday 24 March**. An evening of excerpts from the five years of opera productions including *Gianni Schicchi*, *Turandot*, *Don Giovanni*, *The Magic Flute* and *Orpheus in the Underworld*. Doors open at 7 pm. Concert 7.30 – 10 pm, followed by party. Tickets available at wegottickets.com/StPaulsOpera £15 concert only £25 concert and party.

Next summer's opera will be *Così fan Tutte* on **Friday 29 June** and **Saturday 30 June**.

Twentieth Century Music

Clapham Chamber Concert founders, Amanda Lake (violin) and Jessie Maryon Davies (piano), return on **Friday 23 February** with a bold and dramatic programme of 20th century music. The colourful impressions of Ravel's *Tzigane* and Debussy's *La fille aux cheveux de lin* are juxtaposed with stark compositions from Kabalevsky and Bloch. Bridging the gap between the two worlds, Prokofiev's *Sonata for Violin and Piano No 2* combines a beautiful harmonic language with virtuosic writing for both instruments. 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 please email claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com.

Cinders in the Seventies

Balham's award-winning theatre group, Southside, will stage *Cinderella*, the ever-popular pantomime, from **Wednesday 14 February to Saturday 17 February** (half-term) at Chestnut Grove School Theatre, Boundaries Road SW12 8JZ. Tickets: £12, concessions £9.00, Wednesday and Saturday. Performances: 7.45 pm Wednesday-Friday, Saturday at 2 pm and 5.30pm. Box office: 07914 657524 or book online at southsideplayers.co.uk.

This version of *Cinderella* is based on an original script by Gail Lowe that Southside first performed in 1992. But this time we're rocking back to a time when disco and Abba ruled the airwaves and no self-respecting man left home without a medallion twinkling in his chest hair. Familiar heroes and villains feature in this delirious fairytale of rags to riches, true love at first sight, flared trousers and the pure of heart conquering wickedness. With plenty of songs, dancing and costumes to match.

Easter chicks

Every year, a group of nimble-fingered supporters hatch a plan to knit thousands of Easter chicks for Trinity. Our little feathered friends are then stuffed with small chocolate eggs, and sold to local clubs, businesses and schools to raise money for the care Trinity provides.

This year, the aim is to raise £10,000 from the Easter Campaign, and you are invited to grab your knitting needles and help produce chicks with the eggs-factor! For more information, please contact Hannah at hgooch@royaltrinityhospice.london.

A mystery lady

We have had a request to see if any of our readers might be able to identify the lady shown in this photograph with two children. She may have been a governess to these children, working for a family living at 3 Abbeville Road in about 1925, or perhaps she was just a family friend. It is just possible that she might also appear in the family album of a local family. If you have any clues please contact the editor.



Omnibus Theatre

1996 was a year of break-ups. Take That split, Arthur Scargill left the Labour Party. Princess Diana divorced Prince Charles. But in a year of break-ups, there was one massive coming together. Clapham Common hosted the Pride after march party. Thousands were there.

This February, Omnibus Theatre celebrates that landmark event. '96' is a festival of theatre and music that champions progress, achievement and possibility for everyone. Join the launch party on **Thursday 1 February** at 7.30 pm.

There are 16 events over the course of the month including five double bills, an exciting Sunday music line-up from Jazz to pop and classical and our headliner is *The Soul of Wittgenstein*, which runs from **Tuesday 6 February** to **Sunday 25 February**. Transferred following critical acclaim from The King's Head Theatre, this is a pertinent and engrossing amusingly confrontational, yet tender play. For more details and bookings call the Box Office on 0207 498 4699, go to omnibus-clapham.org or drop in at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW.

The Cinema museum

Members may remember that several years ago the Director of the Cinema Museum, Martin Humphries, gave us a fascinating talk about the Cinema Museum, and how it was started in Lambeth. Martin also unveiled the Clapham Society Green Plaque on the former Odeon Cinema (now Majestic Wine) at Clapham South. The old Lambeth Workhouse where film-maker Charlie Chaplin spent some of his childhood has been home to The Cinema Museum for 19 years.

The Museum is now under threat. The owners, South London and Maudsley NHS Trust (SLaM) are planning to sell the entire site, and the Cinema Museum's lease expires in March 2018. Bids are already in and are being evaluated, but no shortlist has yet been announced. It is hoped that a bid which includes retaining the Museum alongside development of other parts of the site will succeed. There is still time to sign the petition to save the Museum. Go to cinemamuseum.org.uk/ for details.

Lambeth Town Hall visits

Part of Lambeth Town Hall has recently reopened after a comprehensive refurbishment, and restoration of many of its original features. The public have been invited to visit, and there are still a few dates available : **Wednesdays 31 January, 7 February and 28 February** at 6 pm. If you would like to reserve a place email DCmascoli@lambeth.gov.uk.

French Conversation Group

Our group meets every other Wednesday at 11 am in the Abbeville Road area for an hour's conversation. None of us are native speakers, so we are a self-help group! Only a fairly basic knowledge needed. If you would like to join us do telephone me on 020 8673 0568.

Celia Bibby

Picture on the right - just a reminder of the peaceful pond, grass that has not been turned into a mud patch and the Common being used as it was intended to be!



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