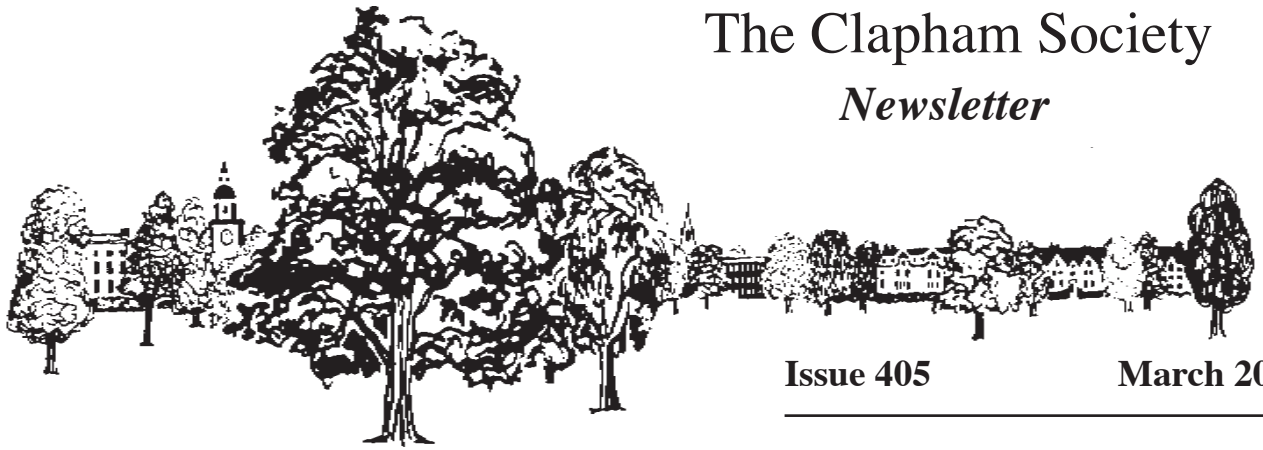


The Clapham Society

Newsletter



Issue 405

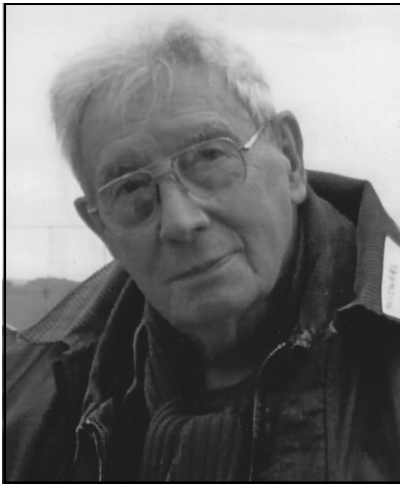
March 2018

We were very sorry to hear of the sudden death of our Acting Secretary, Maev Sullivan, who for many years has worked assiduously on behalf of the Clapham Society applying her legal expertise to a variety of issues. There will be a Memorial Service at Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common on **Friday 2 March** at 1 pm.

Michael Green (1931 - 2018)

With the death of Michael Green on 28 January Clapham has lost one of its most flamboyant residents. A tall, distinguished figure in Loden coat and bow tie, carrying a distressed Civil Service briefcase for street cred, he relished chats with local shop keepers, and the people he invariably fell into conversation with on the Clapham omnibus, and they with him; he was a good listener. His profound interest in people, young and old, came from the heart and inspired deep affection in those who had the good fortune to know him.

Michael's archaeological career began at the age of 17 when he helped with excavations on the Roman City of Godmanchester, near his Cambridgeshire home. The Godmanchester excavations were to become a lifelong work in progress for Michael and he had the satisfaction of seeing his final publication on the dig through the press shortly before his death. Highlights of his later architectural career included uncovering remains of the Palace of Whitehall around



10 Downing Street, and campaigning to save Covent Garden from redevelopment. As Inspector of Ancient Monuments and Buildings for English Heritage, he prided himself on the number of Westminster buildings he had saved from the bulldozer by having them listed.

When Michael and Christine moved to Clapham Common North Side in 1981, Michael, now retired, focused his professional curiosity on the buildings and land outside his front door. Samuel Pepys, one of his heroes, had died nearby but the exact location of the house, Clapham Place, was not documented. Thanks to

Our meetings are held at Omnibus, 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 THEATRE CAN ACCOMMODATE AND YOU WILL NOT BE ADMITTED WHEN THAT NUMBER IS REACHED.

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 Adviser to TfL, Edmund is a former Lambeth Conservation Team Manager and local resident with unrivalled knowledge of local historic buildings.

Monday 23 April

Let's Talk: About Old Age And Dementia. Local journalist and author **Pippa Kelly** began charting her elderly parents' declining years in the national press over a decade ago, describing her battles to secure state funding for them both and her mother's descent into dementia. Since their deaths she has become one of the UK's foremost writers on older people's care and dementia. Her talk will explore society's attitudes towards its elderly, particularly those with dementia, and highlight the uplifting yet unsung initiatives that are changing lives. She will be signing copies of her novel, *Invisible Ink*.

Michael's research the site is now on the map, to the west of The Chase. His account of Clapham Place is included in his *History of Clapham*, copiously illustrated with his drawings.

When ill health began to slow Michael down he established a convivial routine of taking a friend – often a fellow member of the Clapham Society – to lunch at one of his favourite Clapham restaurants, ever the bon viveur and generous host. We extend our deepest commiseration to Christine and James at this sad time.

Deborah Singmaster

Summer Walks

Our guided walks programme, commencing in May, is now on our website at claphamsociety.com/clapsocevents.html. We have two walks on Clapham Common led by the enthusiastic Common expert, Iain Boulton, four walks by our local historians, including one as part of London History Day on 31 May, and an exciting new walk about Clapham Ghostsigns devised and led by Sam Roberts who spoke at one of our meetings last year. Full details will be in the newsletter each month throughout the summer.

Disquiet over the Quietway

There is a lot to like about the principle of creating Quietways – a citywide initiative to promote cycling across London that has been promoted by Sustrans and the Mayors of London (past and present) with the support of the London boroughs. The stated objective is to create continuous and convenient quiet cycle routes on less-busy backstreets across London. Most of the first seven Quietways (11 are being worked on currently) have sections that are already in place. It is proposed that further sections and the next phase of Quietways will be launched during 2018.

Quietway routes are marked with purple signs to help cyclists find their way along roads they may not have cycled before, and these routes are intended to appeal to people who want to cycle on streets with low traffic levels, especially if they are new to cycling in London. Where opportunities arise they are being routed through green spaces.

Two Quietway routes are being introduced that pass through Clapham. Quietway 4 provides a route from Clapham Common to Wimbledon. Quietway 5 (Q5) will eventually link Waterloo to Norbury via Balham. These two routes are designed to link up at Windmill Drive, Clapham Common.

The main issue the Society has with these proposals is the route across the Common chosen for Q5, which will follow heavily used pedestrian routes and be laid out as a 2.8 metre shared surface for cyclists and pedestrians. Sustrans' philosophy is that shared surfaces engender an etiquette that results in lower cycle speeds and more considerate cycling. The Society questions whether this will be the result, fears the proposal raises a number of safety concerns, and is concerned that policing of the route will be non-existent.

Secret Underground London

At our January meeting Nick Catford galloped through his fascinating 200 pictures of underground London at such breakneck speed that it was hard to absorb the wealth of information contained. His knowledge of the subject and his pictures, both the result of many years' work, must be absolutely unrivalled.

He started with pictures of disused tube stations of which there are an astonishing number. Many of us recognise the glazed terracotta facades of the Brompton, Down Street or Aldwych stations, but relatively few of the many disused stations and lines can be detected above ground. And have we ever thought how so many stations came to be abandoned? Originally the underground lines were all independent companies, and as they gradually merged and were finally coordinated into one company, many stations turned out to be too close to each other and so were closed.

Nick showed us pictures of underground air raid shelters, including our Clapham deep shelters, government and military tunnels, the Post Office Underground railway (now open to the public, see postalmuseum.org) cemetery catacombs and lots, lots more. A fascinating aspect of his talk was how he secured access to some secret locations – but not all, of course government tunnels remain inaccessible. It was interesting to hear which underground locations are regularly used for filming, and which are open for visits, including several underground stations (see ltmuseum.co.uk/whats-on/hidden-london) To see many of the pictures and read more you will need to buy Nick Catford's comprehensive book on the subject *Secret Underground London*.

The proposed route for Q5, coming south from Bromell's Road, will cross The Pavement at the Copenhagen crossing at the end of Bromell's Road just south of the existing pedestrian crossing; pass the fountain to Rookery Road; pass the Long Pond and the playground, to Windmill Drive; and then down to Clapham South where it will cross Nightingale Lane before cutting across to Cavendish Road and onwards south to Tooting Bec Common.

We consider a separate cycle crossing at Bromell's Road will give rise to conflicts with pedestrians using the busy Copenhagen crossing and will pose an additional hazard for traffic emerging from Bromell's Road on to The Pavement at this point. This junction has already proved hazardous, and carries large pedestrian flows. The area round the fountain is a popular meeting point and has high footfall. It seems inappropriate to create a cycle thoroughfare through this area. We also have concerns about routeing cyclists past the entrance to the playground, given the number of children with tricycles and scooters and parents with pushchairs, etc.

Tied into the plan is that Windmill Drive will be closed to traffic between the entrance to the parks depot site and Bandstand Beds, with a loss of parking spaces along this Lambeth stretch of the road. At a recent public meeting a number of residents pointed out various problems that will arise given the narrow carriageway and lack of passing space currently. This also happens to be an important stopping area for people with very young children and disabled visitors to the Common.

These matters raise questions about the way Lambeth and TfL engage with local residents, many of whom seem to be unaware of the plan, and that they have neglected to give sufficient weight to the recreational needs of users of the Common in drawing up these proposals. Council officers at a recent meeting arranged by local councillors indicated there was very limited prospect of the routeing of Q5 and other details being changed. A councillor has stated these details were effectively agreed, in spite of vocal opposition at the time, some two years ago.

Despite the advanced state of this plan, we consider it is seriously flawed. Specifically, we do not see why a new route is required when there is already a cycle path from Bromell's Road to Clapham South. This could be easily upgraded. We are concerned that speed will be an issue with many cyclists using Q5. And we are especially concerned about this route being shoehorned into the area of the Common by the fountain, as it gets extremely crowded with any hint of good weather.

The plans can be viewed online at tfl.gov.uk/travel-information/improvements-and-projects/quietways. Comments should go to Cabinet Member Cllr Braithwaite and to your local ward councillors. The Society will continue to press for changes to the route.

Andrew Summers & Mark Leffler

New members

We have welcomed the following new members since the start of the year: David Bingham, Lucinda MacDougald, JM Tollast and KA Elliott.

Colour Your Common

Clapham Common attracts lots of visitors and CCMAC, the community group that works with Lambeth Council to manage this popular open space, is thrilled to have been awarded a £10,000 grant from the Mayor of London's Greener City Fund for their Colour Your Common project.

The money will be used to create a wildflower meadow in an area of the Common beside Windmill Drive, that will bring beauty and biodiversity. It will be a wildlife haven where people can sit in peace and tranquillity or picnic with friends and family.

The project will start in March and run through the spring and summer; the first task is to prepare the ground and shift loads of soil. Local schools are going to get involved and Good Gym Lambeth will be jogging over next month to pitch in and help, but lots more burly bods are needed.

Do you love Clapham Common and wildlife – and can spare some time to help? Find out how to get involved at the CCMAC Colour Your Common Launch at the Bandstand Beds community garden on Windmill Drive – **Saturday 3 March** from 12 pm to 3 pm. Learn all about the planned activities for the coming months, sow wildflower seeds and tuck into tea and cake. Everyone welcome!

Following this event, there will be further volunteer days on **17 March**, **31 March** and **14 April**, from 1 pm until 4 pm.

If, however, you're unable to make it to the Common to help out on these dates, CCMAC is also looking to raise extra funding to buy plants for this magnificent project. To find out how to make a financial donation or for more information email ccmacvolunteers@gmail.com.

Follow Colour Your Common on Twitter [@colourcommon1](https://twitter.com/colourcommon1).

David Dandridge



Omnibus March Highlights

Theatre highlights include a five night run of a contemporary Persian fable set during the 2010 Green Uprising in Tehran. *Lilac Wine* fuses vaudeville, spoken word, drag, and lip synch to explore the meanings of intercultural and the implications of witnessing a revolution by mistake. **Tuesday 13 March** to **Saturday 17 March**, at 7.30 pm and 9 pm Saturday

Only two years ago the World Bank declared that nearly two billion people live on less than \$2 a day. In 2017, can we still claim ignorance of the deprivation and exploitation around the world? *The Fever*, written by Wallace Shawn (known to most as the voice of the nervous Rex in *Toy Story*) is as pertinent today as it was in 1989. It examines our mostly unacknowledged collusion with a pervasive situation. **Tuesday 27 March** to **Thursday 29 March** at 7.30 pm. Tickets £15, concessions £12.

Sunday Music's highlight is the Tom Smith Septet on **Sunday 4 March** at 4 pm. Smith is an extremely talented BBC Young Jazz Musician finalist in 2014 and 2016. The evening will feature compositions and arrangements of jazz standards played by some of London's most exciting young musicians. Tickets only £10 and £5 for under 25s. For more information and tickets go to omnibus-clapham.org, telephone 020 7498 4699 or call in at 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW.

The Métier Ensemble

On **Friday 23 March**, Clapham Chamber Concerts (CCC) welcomes the Métier Ensemble for a performance to include Bach's *Flute Sonata in E minor*, Fauré *Elegie* and Frank Bridge *Miniatures* alongside works by Suk, York Bowen and Kapustin.

Cellist Sophie Rivlin, a frequent performer at CCC, is joined by pianist Elspeth Wyllie and flautist Claire Overbury for this unusual and varied programme.

The concert will start at 7.30 pm. St. Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets at the door £12 for adults, £10 for CCC friends and concessions, £5 for children. For further information, please see claphamchamberconcerts.org.uk.

St Paul's Opera

The fifth Anniversary Gala Concert of St. Paul's Opera (SPO) on **Saturday 24 March** will be a riotous romp through some of opera's greatest numbers. Chosen from the company's catalogue of hits, the evening will include scenes from *Don Giovanni*, *Turandot* and more – but not like you've ever seen them before! This tour-de-force battle of the sexes pits soprano against baritone, mezzo against soprano, and tenor against, well, everyone! Performed by some of St. Paul's favourite stars including the Cviic siblings, Bernhard (Crede) the Bass, Don G Barney (Beer) and SPO founder 'Queen' Tricia Ninian, the evening will be directed by Ashley Pearson, whose upcoming work includes assisting with *Macbeth* at the Royal Opera House and directing SPO's summer festival production of *Così fan Tutte*.

Join us for an intoxicating evening of opera brimming with talent and charm. The evening at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX starts at 7.30 pm (doors 7 pm). Tickets are £15 for the concert or £25 for concert and access to the exclusive back-stage after party, both available from wegottickets.com/StPaulsOpera.

Patricia Ninian

Membership

Subscriptions for 2018-19 are due on 1 April and should be sent to the Membership Secretary. Members who pay by standing order are asked to check that the correct amount is being paid by their bank. Rates are as follows: Individuals £6.00, Household £9.00, Business £15.00.

Please add £10 if you receive the newsletter by post to cover the cost of postage. Alternatively you can choose to receive the newsletter by email at no extra cost. If you wish to opt for this method inform the Membership Secretary.

Planning News

Since the last planning update Philip Ashford has stepped down as the Convenor of the Planning Sub-committee and has been replaced by Sarah Bridger. We thank Philip for all his hard work in chairing the Sub-committee for the last 13 years.

In the last four months we have been consulted on over 100 planning applications and made representations on 15, including the following:

18-19 The Pavement: Marks Barfield Architects invited the Planning Sub-committee to consult on their plans to redevelop this derelict site that has blighted Clapham Common since a fire broke out in the original building in 1999. The site has since been the subject of a number of inappropriate development schemes and unsuccessful planning applications, the most recent of which was refused at appeal in 2013. The proposed scheme by Marks Barfield, which would provide a contemporary three-storey building with a retail unit on the ground floor and flats on the first and second floors, has carefully considered and responded to the context of the site and overcomes our previous objections. The Society has publicly supported the application and would be glad to see this site redeveloped to enhance the setting of Clapham Common and the conservation area. The application awaits a decision.

397 Clapham Road: This once important early 19th century townhouse and home to Nathaniel Bagshaw Ward, inventor of the sealed glass case for transporting plants (known as the Wardian case), has been left to fall into disrepair. Following an unsuccessful application to demolish and replace the building, a new scheme has been put forward to convert the building into flats and would include the demolition of the original rear wall, which dates to 1825, to provide a large rear extension in addition to a mansard roof extension. Whilst we would welcome the restoration and sensitive extension of the building, the extent of demolition would present an unacceptable loss of historic fabric and this, together with the proposed design of the extensions, would harm the character and appearance of the Clapham Road Conservation Area. The development would also have an overbearing impact on neighbouring residents. An objection has been submitted and we await the outcome.

37-42 Elmhurst Mansions: We objected to the replacement of the original windows on the front elevation of this property, which have an attractive glazing-bar pattern repeated on this

building and the rest of the buildings on the street, with unsuitable uPVC windows. The uPVC windows would not have repeated the significant pattern of glazing bars and would have harmed the appearance of the building and wider streetscape. The Sub-committee is supportive of homeowners improving the thermal efficiency of their homes and suggested slim-line double-glazed windows, to match the design of the originals, as an alternative. The application was refused.

86-90 Clapham High Street: An application was submitted for a fixed wooden awning projecting over the pavement, which would have permanently encroached on the public highway. We submitted an objection and the application was refused.

11 Crescent Grove: We supported the principle of converting the former coach house into a separate dwelling, but objected to the removal of the original stable doors, which are integral to the significance of this Grade-II listed building in illustrating how these town houses were originally designed and serviced. We urged Lambeth to reconsider the approach they have historically adopted in allowing the removal of historic fabric to facilitate conversions, and advised that the doors could be easily retained and included as part of the development, which is a tried and tested approach on mews buildings in central London. The application was refused.

13 Crescent Grove: For a similar application to the above, we supported the conversion of the former coach house to 13 Crescent Grove into a separate dwelling, but commented on the unsuitability of a proposed bike store, which would have been a permanent feature blocking the front of the building. We advised that a more appropriate area for the bike store could be found and the plans have now been amended.

Lambeth's Basement Supplementary Planning Document: The Sub-committee were consulted on Lambeth's first draft of a new supplementary planning document on basement development. We commented that the document used too much technical jargon, which made it difficult for non-specialists to understand, and urged Lambeth to reconsider the wording and presentation of the document so it would prove useful to homeowners considering a basement, as well as developers.

Sarah Bridger

Battersea Breeze - Bike Rides For Women

HSBC UK Breeze offers fun, free bike rides – as well as plenty of support and inspiration – for women of all abilities, all across the UK.

With more than 2,000 trained volunteer Breeze Champions organising and leading the rides, the programme

is the cornerstone of British Cycling's ambition to get one million more women on their bikes by 2020. We're always delighted to welcome new women to our rides, so why not get involved and join the community?

Forthcoming rides include Wimbledon

Common/Putney Heath, Hyde Park/Brompton Cemetery, LSO Barbican concert, Portobello Road, International Women's Day statue tour and many more. Search for rides and more information at letsride.co.uk/breeze. Any questions contact me aisamiller@ntlworld.com.

Michelle Miller

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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