



# The Clapham Society Newsletter

Issue 414

February 2019

## Peter Jefferson Smith 1939-2018

We were very sorry to hear the sad news of the death of Peter Jefferson Smith a few days before Christmas. Peter was an outstanding figure in Clapham and in the Clapham Society for over 50 years. He was totally committed to the good of the local community and his contributions to the area have been so diverse, numerous and long lasting that we have decided to issue a special supplement to highlight some of the most important. We have good reason to be grateful to Peter who will be much mourned and sorely missed.



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 18 February

An evening with **John O'Farrell**, local resident, Clapham Society member, renowned author and comedy scriptwriter. He will talk about his experiences as a writer from *Spitting Image* to Broadway musicals via numerous books including the recent *Things Can Only Get Worse*. In between, he found time to stand for Parliament against Theresa May and campaign for a new local school where he was Chair of Governors for eight years.

### Monday 18 March

**Bill Linskey** Chair of the Brixton Society will tell the story of the local sugar magnate and philanthropist, **Henry Tate**. Perhaps best known for his donation of paintings, which formed the basis of the Gallery of British Art, later known as Tate Gallery and now Tate Britain, Henry Tate also donated three libraries in Lambeth including the striking Brixton Library in Windrush Square. Bill's recent book about Henry Tate and the Brixton Library will be available at the meeting.

## Do you use Clapham Common?

The Annual Open Meeting of Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee (CCMAC) takes place on **Thursday 7 February** at 7 pm at Omnibus Theatre, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. You can find the agenda on the CCMAC website: [claphamcommon.london/come-to-our-annual-open-meeting](http://claphamcommon.london/come-to-our-annual-open-meeting).

All local residents and users of Clapham Common are welcome to join us to hear about future plans for our treasured green and open space. We will be joined by key personnel from Lambeth Council who will present and answer your questions.

We will also elect nine Community Representatives, for a two-year term from February 2019 to February 2021.

Nominees should be resident in one of five local authority wards which border the Common (Clapham Town, Clapham Common, Balham, Northcote and Shaftesbury) or represent a major user group on Clapham Common.

Candidates are asked to ensure they have time available to make a meaningful contribution. If you would like to stand the nomination form is on the website quoted above. Deadline for submission is **Thursday 31 January**. If you need any more information please contact me at the address on the back page.

*Andrew Summers*  
Clapham Society representative on  
CCMAC

## Organ Recital

Built just before WWI the wonderful Lewis organ in St Luke's Church was rebuilt and restored to its former glory in 2009. On **Saturday 2 February** at 7.30 pm there is a rare chance to hear this magnificent instrument in action, when Thomas Trotter, the UK's best loved organist, will give what promises to be a virtuoso recital, including works by Bach, Liszt and Elgar. And it will not only be your ears that can enjoy the evening, because a large screen will show the maestro's fingers and feet in full flow! St Luke's Church, 194 Ramsden Road, SW12 8RQ. Tickets £18 and £14 from [www.slms.org.uk](http://www.slms.org.uk).

## Clapham Common Film Club

In the May newsletter Chris Morgan Locke and I announced our intention to set up a film club based at Omnibus Theatre. It is now about to happen! Showings will be at the new upstairs space which has tiered seating, good projection facilities and a capacity of 70. A trial season of five monthly films will start on **Monday 25 February** at 7 pm. The plan is for the club to be a membership organisation with membership covering entry to all showings at no additional cost. Our projected break-even membership cost for this season is £35. The response will determine whether the club has a future into a longer season for 2019-2020.

We received much positive feedback following the May article and are now asking for the support of film enthusiasts by signing up on 25 February and also by promoting the club.

The mission is to show the best of world cinema in a congenial community setting. Subject to licensing from the distributor the film to be shown on 25 February is *The Fireman's Ball*, Milos Foreman's 1960s Czech comedy which preceded his departure for Hollywood. More information and details will be sent on request in an email to [ccfilm2018@gmail.com](mailto:ccfilm2018@gmail.com).

Roger Booker

## Jolly hockey sticks!

Balham's award-winning theatre group, Southside, is staging *Daisy Pulls It Off* by Denise Deegan, at Chestnut Grove Theatre, Chestnut Grove Academy, Boundaries Road, SW12 8JZ. Performances **Wednesday 20 February** to **Saturday 23 February** Wednesday to Friday at 7.45 pm Saturday at 3.00pm. Box office: 07914 657524 or book online at [southsideplayers.co.uk](http://southsideplayers.co.uk).

## Bethlem Royal Hospital

At our last meeting of 2018 Amy Moffat, Learning and Outreach Officer at Bethlem Royal Hospital, gave us an interesting account of the history of the hospital and the Museum of the Mind. The hospital was founded in 1247 by Simon Fitzmary, an Alderman of the City of London on a site at Moorfields, now marked by a plaque. Originally started as a priory of the church of St Mary of Bethlehem to serve knights setting off for the Holy Land, the collection of donations for shelter and care of those with mental health problems gradually grew to be the focus of the institution. In the 17th century the hospital was rebuilt on a larger, nearby site where it could accommodate 120 patients. Amy showed a scene from Hogarth's *Rake's Progress* which graphically described the conditions in such an establishment, and in particular two smartly dressed ladies who were allowed to tour in exchange for a donation. We learnt, of course, how Bethlehem had gradually become Bethlem, and then 'bedlam' – a word used to mean chaos and madness.

In 1815 a new Bethlem hospital was built south of the river in the leafy countryside of St George's Fields in Lambeth – the building we now know as the Imperial War Museum. Here there were over 400 patients on four floors, with the worst cases in the basement. We heard about the development of treatment for mental health issues, how the medieval four 'humours' and their treatment have been replaced by over 400 different diagnoses, how physical restraints were slowly replaced by drugs and therapies. Amy told us about the 19th century use of head shapes, phrenology and facial expressions for diagnosis and analysis of mental health.

By the 1930s Lambeth was no longer in the healthy countryside so Bethlem Hospital moved out to Beckenham. Here in a deliberate break with old design the hospital was built on a villa system, each ward housed in a separate building with kitchen, garden and sports facilities. This is still how wards are organised today with a greater emphasis on surroundings and the introduction of pet therapy.

Royal Bethlem Hospital, now part of the South London and Maudsley NHS Trust is still on the same site which it shares with the Museum of the Mind. This was formally opened in 2015 by artist Grayson Perry. Amy showed some of the exhibits at the Museum, and in particular paintings by artists who were patients including Richard Dadd and Louis Wain.

This was an interesting and informative talk on a subject more readily discussed today than in the past.

## Westbury Estate Development

We have reported on the development of this estate in previous newsletters. Lambeth Council have been progressing the proposals, unfortunately ignoring the comments the Clapham Society made but probably concentrating on maximising the number of houses rather than the visual impact on the surroundings.

Lambeth have, however, done a good job of keeping residents and other interested locals (like our Society) informed on progress. This has taken the form of issuing regular newsletters, the last one being in October. They concentrate information on the next year or two and explain the impact on residents of the preparatory work. Temporary and permanent rehousing of existing residents and dealing with the practical problems of planning for development are quite complex so a long overall timescale is to be expected.

You may have noticed that mature trees in the wide pavement on Wandsworth Road have been removed for the services (drains, electricity, gas and water services) to be plotted and ground

conditions assessed. The first phase involving sites fronting Wandsworth Road will involve putting up timber hoardings around the three sites that form Phase 1 of the rebuilding, which will not be completed until summer 2020. Other phases will follow so completion of the whole development will extend into the late 2020s.

Peter Cobley

## The Vogue for Vegan

Clapham is rapidly following the current trend for veganism. Not only do several local restaurants now offer vegan dishes but Venn Street Market recently invited Fat Gay Vegan to curate a vegan section at their popular Saturday market. There are around ten different vegan stalls, including Jake's Vegan steaks, Let's Do Temaki and vegan beer Mondo Brewing. Fresh plant-based produce includes homemade vegan cheeses, cookies, cupcakes and Jakes Boost 'tasty nut and seed butter mix'. It sounds worth a try! Every Saturday from 10 am to 4 pm in Venn Street.



## CHANGE in membership subscription

As announced at the last Annual General Meeting in October 2018 the committee has decided that the annual subscription will be increased from the new membership year starting 1 April 2019.

The new rates are as follows:

Individual £10      Household £15      Business £25

Postage (if required) remains at £10.

If you pay your subscription by bank standing order please ensure that you amend the amount payable on 1 April next to the correct amount. If you wish to make your payment by bank transfer please use the reference of (surname), (initial), (postcode), M (for membership) and D (for donation). Full details of the Society's bank account can be found on the website ([claphamsociety.com](http://claphamsociety.com)).

For any queries contact the Membership Secretary.

## Southwark Cathedral Guides

Southwark Cathedral is looking to recruit volunteer guides to join their team and deliver cathedral tours including group visits, drop in tours and evening tours.

They offer extensive and in-depth training, expenses once volunteering and the opportunity to join them on outings to archives and museums.

Training takes approximately three months with sessions alternating between Wednesday evening and Saturdays starting on **Saturday 2 March**. A written and practical test has to be undertaken and passed to become a cathedral guide. New guides are given priority to take tours and must commit to a minimum of one year's guiding at the cathedral.

There is an opportunity to grow the role by offering walking tours in the local area, assisting with the history resources at the cathedral and doing research into new walks. If you are interested contact Ruth Miller, Visits and Tours Officer at Southwark Cathedral, on 020 7367 6734 or email [ruth.miller@southwark.anglican.org](mailto:ruth.miller@southwark.anglican.org) for further information.

## The Wind in the Willows Revisited

At the meeting of The Arts Society Clapham Common on **Wednesday 20 February** John Ericson will look at the various illustrators of this classic book – E H Shepard, Arthur Rackham, Robert Ingpen, Inga Moore and Val Biro – comparing and contrasting how the same scenes are depicted by different artists. Clapham Picturehouse, 76 Venn Street, SW4 0AT starting at 11 am.

Membership of The Arts Society Clapham Common costs £50 or £90 joint membership (plus joining fee) and gives free entry for 10 lectures. Visitors pay £8 per lecture (£10 from March). Information about membership can be obtained at [theartsociety.org/claphamcommon](http://theartsociety.org/claphamcommon) or at Clapham Picture House before the lecture.

## Clapham Chamber Concerts

The next concert is on **Friday 1 February** when clarinettist Jonathan Parkin will be joined by pianist John Paul Ekins and bassoonist Luke Tucker to perform a varied programme which will include works by Beethoven, Rossini and Elgar, as well as two stunning trio works by slightly lesser known composers, Mikhail Glinka and William Hurlstone. This concert will feature Hurlstone's *Trio in G minor* in its recently discovered complete version. This is a great chance to hear some lesser known gems alongside works by some of our most loved composers.

St. Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. £12 adults, £10 CCC friends and concessions, £5 children. For further information, email [claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com](mailto:claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com).

## February at Omnibus Theatre

The highlight of the month is *The Orchestra* by celebrated French dramatist Jean Anouilh. Better known for his play *Antigone* an adaptation of Sophocles' classical drama, *The Orchestra* is one of his lesser known and neglected plays. Set in post-WWII France it is about a group of musicians. Fizzing comedy and catastrophe collide.

*The Orchestra* is directed by Kristine Landon-Smith, Tamasha theatre co-founder and part of the creative team who brought the now classic film *East is East* featuring Jimi Mistry to the stage and then to the big screen. This play is one of Kristine's favourites and is a stage revival not seen in London for over ten years. Translation is by theatre director Jeremy Sams who will be a special guest at a post-show Q&A alongside Kristine on **Tuesday 5 February**. The play runs for three weeks from **Tuesday 29 January to Sunday 17 February**, (daily except Mondays) at 7.30 pm. Tickets £16, concessions £13 from [omnibus-clapham.org/the-orchestra](http://omnibus-clapham.org/the-orchestra), the Box Office on 020 7622 4105 or call in at Omnibus Theatre, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW.

## St Paul's Opera 2019

Save the dates **Friday 22 March** for a concert of oratorio and **Friday 5 and Saturday 6 July** for *Le Nozze di Figaro*. Tickets available shortly.

We at St Paul's Opera are truly blessed to find that Jonathan Boardman is the new vicar at St Paul's Church, our home. There are few, let alone few clergy, who can claim such a passion for opera. This manifests itself as an enviable bank of ideas and a contact list, which have already proved most helpful to our cause. He's certainly going to have a very positive effect on the future of St Paul's Opera.

Tricia Ninian  
St Paul's Opera

## Clapham Maps

Do you have any of the large 1870s OS maps of Clapham which you no longer require? A set of four were published by the Clapham Society in 1979, and we continued to sell them for many years, but no longer have any left. A new Clapham resident is particularly keen to find one of the Common area, either framed or unframed. Or if you have a copy of the 1849 Bland map, or any other historical map of the central area of Clapham he would be interested. Please contact me (details on back page) if you or anyone you know might be able to help.

Alyson Wilson



## Recent Developments

**The Polygon** (see photo) We are delighted and very relieved to note the hoardings opposite Trinity restaurant on The Polygon were at last dismantled in early January, and the site has now been cleared to enable this long-awaited landscaping project in the heart of the Old Town to proceed. The photo was taken on 11 January.



**4-68 Rectory Grove & 8-10 Rectory Gardens** The Society shared concerns expressed by local residents of Rectory Grove about a proposal to develop two 3-storey houses on the former bomb site in the middle of the terrace fronting Rectory Gardens. We consider this would be totally out of scale and character with the adjoining cluster of 19th century cottages that are in the process of a comprehensive renovation, and would have an adverse impact on the opposite side of the street. The regeneration is long overdue, but the Society has objected to this element of the scheme.

**The Spinney** A year ago Lambeth Council applied to the Secretary of State for Environment, Food and Rural Affairs (DEFRA) for consent for the former One O'Clock Club building on Windmill Drive to be redeveloped and replaced by a considerably larger structure for use as a pre-school nursery. This development was opposed by the Society and others, principally on the grounds that it would result in the enclosure of part of the Common for non-recreational activities and this would also necessarily exclude the public. The decision to challenge the scheme was controversial as many residents considered the nursery a worthy proposal. However, the Society felt this was an inappropriate site for a school, and an undesirable encroachment on the Common which is held in trust by Lambeth for recreational purposes on behalf of the wider community. On 18 December we were notified that Lambeth's application was being turned down by DEFRA, and that the Government's Inspector had concluded that the 'public recreation test' would not be met by the proposed enclosure and development.

*Mark Leffler*

## Love your (Wandsworth) Common

On **Thursday 14 February** the Wandsworth Society has an illustrated talk and discussion led by the co-chairs of the Friends of Wandsworth Common, which was launched last May. They will set out their vision for the Common, and

how it will be achieved working with the Management Advisory Committee and the Wandsworth Society. The meeting is at 7.45 for 8 pm at West Side Church, Melody Road/Allfarthing Lane, SW18 2QQ.

## Please help the Society

The Clapham Society can only remain a vigorous and useful local organisation if more members contribute their time and energy. As a result of old age, ill health and people moving out of the area, we are short of active members to serve on the various Sub-committees.

We urgently need members to help on the Planning, Open Spaces and Local History Sub-committees and we would welcome your expertise and time. The commitment is valuable but not too time-consuming. Sub-committees meet every two months, and in between there are a few important meetings to attend and some correspondence to be done. We also need help with the newsletter production and with extending our use of social media. We would be so grateful if you felt able to contribute.

Please email me if you are interested – [annabel@allott.plus.com](mailto:annabel@allott.plus.com). Thank you.

*Annabel Allott*  
Chairman

## Missing years

We have been contacted by Joe Cushnan who is writing a book about his father who left their Belfast home in 1960, his wife and seven young children, and vanished. The next they heard of him was when they were told he had died at 57 in 1982 in Clapham. Joe wants to find out about the 22 'missing' years.

He is interested in working with a Clapham writer with insight into the 1970s, the Rose & Crown pub, the British Legion in Victoria Rise, St Mary's Church, Orlando Road and, of course, anyone who knew his father John Cushnan who preferred to be known as John Kelly. Joe is looking for a short piece on the era, the specific area and, maybe, his father. He is offering a small fee of £50 for 2,000 words. If you would like to write the piece or have any useful information please contact Joe Cushnan: [joecushnan@aol.com](mailto:joecushnan@aol.com) or 07595 660 085.

If you have any queries about **The Clapham Society** or have news of local events, please contact the appropriate person below:

### Chairman

**Annabel Allott**

Email: [annabel@allott.plus.com](mailto:annabel@allott.plus.com)

### Secretary

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### Membership Secretary

**Jennifer Everett**

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### Common and Open Spaces

**Andrew Summers**

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### Meetings and Events

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### Planning Matters

Tel: 020 8675 5679

### Roads and Transport

Tel: 020 7720 9370

### Newsletter and Publications

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### Christine Armstrong

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