



## Clapham Old Town Regeneration Project

The concept of a 'bus free' Old Town was first mooted in 1992 and generally supported by the Society, but it faded in the face of reality. Revived in 2009 in response to TfL's desire to improve their interchange in Clapham, the idea was for a shared and integrated landscape for people, fewer buses and restricted service and residents' traffic. South-west-bound through traffic from North Street would be re-routed along a two-way North Side up to the old library, thence along The Pavement to Clapham Cross. Although this proposal has been mired in a mixture of hope and controversy ever since, it is expected that Lambeth Council and TfL will have agreed upon the essentials prior to our meeting on 18 April, including traffic management, parking, landscaping and the number, location and type of bus stands. And whether these should be 'live' or 'dead'.

'Live' stands combine buses standing empty between trips with alighting and boarding on the same spot. 'Dead' stands separate alighting and boarding from the stand by placing them at conventional stops before and after the stand. 'Live' stands will require individual island pavements and bus shelters which add to the impact on the space, creating what is tantamount to a bus station. This arguably takes up too much space at the expense of landscape for people.

The Society's committee discussed the current drawings for both options and favours the 'dead' stand option, for which the drawings are thought to be the most promising yet seen. If Kensington and Chelsea can make this sort of thing work in Exhibition Road, why can't we? Do visit the Lambeth website ([www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/Environment/Regeneration](http://www.lambeth.gov.uk/Services/Environment/Regeneration)), compare the proposals, and respond to the Council. And definitely come along on 18 April.

*John Adams*

## Borehole

Drought and water shortages are very much in the news at present leading to fears of fierce restrictions on the use of water this summer. Hopefully Clapham Common will fare better than some parks and green spaces with the planned new water abstraction borehole to be installed next to Mount Pond.

A 25-cm diameter lined borehole will be drilled to 100 metres below ground level to strike an aquifer with pipes allowing Mount Pond to be filled. The borehole will also have fittings enabling water to be diverted to other nearby points as necessary.

## Clapham Art and Antiques Fair

This is a new two-day free event for local enthusiasts, celebrating the best of art and antiques in South West London. A range of objects from local galleries and antique dealers will be brought together in the glass hall of Clapham Methodist Church.

Set to become a regular fixture in SW4, the fair is open on **Friday 27 April** from 2 pm to 9 pm and on **Saturday 28 April** from 10.30 am to 6 pm at Clapham Methodist Church, 121 Clapham High Street, SW4 7UH. For more details call 07588 46870 or go to [www.theswreview/artbazaar](http://www.theswreview/artbazaar).

Our regular monthly meetings are held at **Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4 0BZ. The entrance to the school in Stonhouse Street, through the new building, is NOT open for our evening meetings. Use the Belmont Road entrance, cross the playground and enter the building on the right. The hall is open from 7.30 pm when coffee and tea are normally available. The talk begins promptly at 8 pm and most meetings finish by 9.30 pm. Meetings are free and non-members are very welcome.**

### Wednesday 18 April

#### Clapham Old Town Regeneration Project (formerly the Clapham Gateway).

The evening, advertised as presentations on several current issues affecting Clapham, will now be devoted entirely to a presentation by architects **Marks Barfield** (London Eye and Kew Gardens Treetop Walkway) and the project team, followed by discussion on this single and very topical subject. Lambeth Council and Transport for London (TfL) should have at last agreed proposals for the historic heart and centre of old Clapham extending up to the tube station at Clapham Cross, which will complete the promising start made in Venn Street. The £2.5m project has been controversial, but we will be shown the compromise which aims to balance the transportation needs of London in the 21st century with our desire to protect and improve the historic environment. (See also main story on this page.)

### Wednesday 16 May

**St Mary's Church and Monastery. Father Dominic O'Toole**, Parish Priest of St Mary's Church, will talk about the history of the church and monastery and the current restoration programme. This meeting will be at **St Mary's Monastery** in Clapham Park Road, and will thus be an opportunity to see inside this important Clapham building.

## The Garden Visiting Season has started

In 1927 a woman called Elsie Wragg had the bright idea of persuading people with lovely gardens to open them to the general public in order to raise money to support the Queen's Nursing Institute (QNI), which was the organisation providing all the funding for District Nurses. And so the National Gardens Scheme (NGS) was born. Fast forward to today and the NGS (or Yellow Book as it is sometimes known) is celebrating its 85th anniversary: it now gives away around £2.5 million each year to nursing and healthcare charities, and is the largest donor ever to Macmillan and Marie Curie.

Across England and Wales about 4,000 people open their gardens, maybe once or twice a year, and for about £3.50, you can see some of the loveliest, and most interesting gardens in the country. Gardening has come a long way in the past 20 years. There is no right or wrong way to do it and today's NGS gardens reflect the huge variety of temperament, passions and tastes of their owners. Some people incorporate sculpture and art, some people like order and straight lines, some like a profusion of chaos, but all the NGS gardens offer inspiration and interest – and of course, great cake – NGS garden owners' teas are legendary! And the garden owner is always on hand to chat and answer questions.

In April there are some lovely Clapham gardens opening that you might like to see. Charles Rotherfoord (newly appointed Chairman of the Society of Garden Designers) and Rupert Tyler are opening their garden at 51 The Chase on 22 and 24 April. They have over 1,500 tulips which combine with irises and tree peonies to create a spectacular display. And if you like dahlias, look out for their opening on 30 September.

Three fabulous gardens in Sibella Road are opening on 25 and 29 April. They complement each other beautifully. No 28, which has never opened before, is a stylish formal garden with a lily pool and raised beds. The other two are opening for the NGS again after a break; No 7 has contrasting areas and a gentle country feel to it and No 18 is a small walled garden with a tiny lawn surrounded by deep herbaceous beds.

Not strictly Clapham but lovely nonetheless, is 6 Cornford Grove SW12, opening on the 29 and 30 April. This is a very pretty garden which has a lot of atmosphere. Its guiding principles combine aesthetic values with productivity, biodiversity and low

maintenance. And there are bees!

April is just the start of the garden visiting season. You can find details of gardens opening near you by going to the NGS website ([www.ngs.org.uk](http://www.ngs.org.uk)) and putting the dates and locations that you are interested in to the Garden Finder. It is an inexpensive way to spend the afternoon – and you are helping the lives of thousands of people through the donations the garden owners make to the NGS.

You can follow us on Twitter (@[LondonNGS](https://twitter.com/LondonNGS)) where all the openings of the season will be tweeted and you can find us on Facebook.

### April Garden Opening details

**51 The Chase SW4 0NP. Sunday 22 April** from 2 pm to 6 pm. **Tuesday 24 April** from 6 pm to 8 pm.

**Sibella Road Gardens SW4 6JA.**

Evening opening with wine on **Wednesday 25 April** from 5.30 pm to 7.30 pm. **Sunday 29 April** from 2 pm to 6 pm.

**6 Cornford Grove SW12 9JF. Sunday 29 April** from 2 pm to 6 pm. Evening opening with light refreshments and wine on **Monday 30 April** from 6 pm to 8 pm.

*Sue Phipps  
NGS SE Regional Chairman*

### And an Exhibition about Garden Visiting

At the Garden Museum, an exhibition in conjunction with the NGS, explores the 300 year-old British tradition of opening gardens to the public. Treasures include a sketch of the garden of Henry VIII's palace at Richmond, said to be the earliest surviving drawing of an English garden and Vita Sackville-West's private photograph album of Sissinghurst.

The exhibition runs from **Tuesday 24 April** to 24 June at the Garden Museum, 5 Lambeth Palace Road, SE1 7LB. Tel. 020 7401 8865.

## Planning News

Since last October the Planning Sub-committee has been notified of 150 applications, reviewed 40 of them and made representations on eight. They are summarised below.

**46 Grafton Square.** Objection to a very badly designed two-storey rear extension, which is completely unsympathetic towards its listed host building.

**12 Kings Avenue.** Comments on a scheme to replace the present single-storey garage buildings behind No 12, one of the few remaining buildings of Thomas Cubitt's Clapham Park Estate, with five small houses. They are designed to minimise the impact on neighbours and are reasonably respectful of the Cubitt building setting.

**Lease Lend Cottage, Hannington Road.** Comments on a rather dense scheme to redevelop the site with some large new houses, ingeniously laid out so as not to disturb neighbours, but at the expense of their own poor quality of outdoor space.

**Gilmore House Chapel, Clapham Common North Side.** Comments through Wandsworth's Conservation Area Advisory Committee to ensure that extensive alterations to this listed building do not damage its important features.

**9-11 Macaulay Road.** Support for a scheme to demolish the existing post-war office building and replace it with three well-designed, modern houses. Their scale and design, while modern, complement their Victorian neighbours.

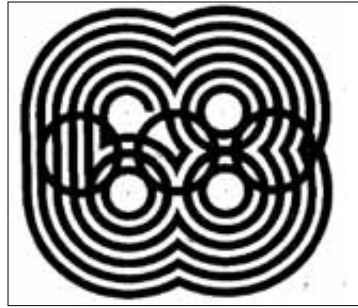
**The Artesian Well, 693-695 Wandsworth Road.** A strong objection to applications to extend the present building at the rear to create an exhibition space. The extension spoils the appearance and form of the principal building and damages the character of the surrounding conservation areas. Its claimed purpose is implausible in the context of what is a night club with a reputation for late night anti-social behaviour.

**42 Clapham Manor Street.** A strong objection to an application for a large new building behind the listed Victorian dispensary building, to be used as a performance space for the present ballet school. It swamps the original dispensary building designed by JT Knowles, one of Clapham's most important architects, and is far too large for what was essentially back garden land. As such it damages the character of the conservation area, looms over its residential neighbours, and is likely to generate excessive traffic levels in a narrow residential street.

**The Two Brewers, 114 Clapham High Street.** Comments on a proposal to extend the rear bar outdoors at first floor level, which could prove noisy for neighbours.

## Mexico 1968

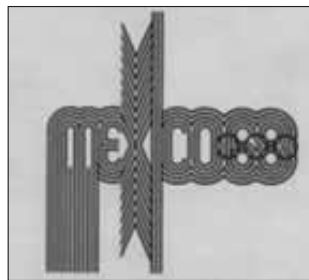
To mark this London Olympic Games year, John Adams took us back to the time he and his wife Marina spent in Mexico in the lead up to, and during the Olympic Games of 1968. They had recently qualified as architects and, having family in Mexico, decided to take an extended trip there in the hope of finding work in connection with the Olympics. Within a day of arrival John got a job with the Organising Committee for the Olympic Games.



He first gave us a brief summary of the history and geography of Mexico City to put the modern city in context with pre-Columbian, colonial to 20th century architecture, in which form and particularly colour combine to thrive in strong sunlight.

He described the student uprising which took place just before the Olympics and almost caused the games to be cancelled. 1968 was a year of student unrest in many cities, and the troubles in Mexico appeared to result from over-reaction by riot police to a minor disturbance in a school. With several pictures John described the subsequent police action, shootings, burning buses, huge protest marches and the army occupation of the university and city centre with tanks; all leading up to a fatal attack on a peaceful demonstration in the suburb of Tlatelolco just two weeks before the Games were due to start.

We then moved back to the Olympics and in particular the graphic design programme led by Lance Wyman who, in the absence of any tradition in modern graphic design in Mexico, was recruited from the office of George Nelson in New York. In addition to his on-screen description of the distinctive logo, alphabet, signage and symbols and their application to the Olympic venues and the city itself, John had assembled a large display of original programmes, bulletins, tickets, posters and newsletters for us to look at before and after his talk. A unique, instantly recognisable identity was established for the Olympiad, so that everything to do with the Games and the concurrent Cultural Olympics was visually co-ordinated, intelligible and relevant. The original inspiration for the 68 logo design, right, drew upon pre-Columbian and recent folkloric art form.



Finally John showed us pictures of some of the sites for the Games. These included the huge 106,000-seat Azteca football stadium and the graceful pre-existing 83,700 seat University City open-air stadium which only needed modification. (The new London Olympic Stadium has 80,000 seats, all necessarily under cover). New facilities, distributed around the city so as to provide a useful legacy, included a swimming pool and gymnasium, a velodrome (open air with mahogany track!), fencing hall, 22,000-capacity Sports Palace and the Olympic Village, which housed 10,000 during the Games and was subsequently converted into housing.

It was interesting to see the number of empty seats in some pictures of actual events. Tickets were not hard to get and modestly priced. John, ably supported by Marina as technician, gave us a truly fascinating insight in to what he summarised, despite the preceding disturbances, as the last truly relaxed Olympiad.

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**Vandyck in Sicily** This exhibition which runs until 27 May at Dulwich Picture Gallery covers the one year (1624-5) that the artist spent in Palermo. The exhibition focuses on this fateful year when plague struck Palermo and most of the population died. The portrait of the Viceroy of Sicily from the Dulwich collection will be seen for the first time alongside the suit of armour worn in the portrait, which has been loaned by the Royal Armouries of Madrid. For details and opening times go to [www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk](http://www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk) or telephone 020 8693 5254.

## Putney Society Hustings

The Putney Society has arranged a hustings for the forthcoming London Assembly elections.

The candidates of the four major parties for the Merton and Wandsworth constituency, Richard Tracey AM (Conservative), Leonie Cooper (Labour), Lisa Smart (Liberal Democrat) and Roy Vickery (Green) have all agreed to attend. If and when further candidates emerge these may also be include. The event will be on **Thursday 19 April** at St Mary's Church, High Street, Putney, SW15 1SN starting at 8 pm.

## On the Common: Events

Members will recall that last year the Society expressed concern about the escalation of commercial events on Clapham Common, and the resulting degradation of the event site. The intention of Lambeth Council was to maximise income from these events. It is becoming apparent that 2012 is going to be very different, as a number of events have already been cancelled.

We particularly regret the departure of Ben and Jerry's Sundae, since the Society was closely involved in its arrival on Clapham Common and welcomed the opportunity each year to promote local interests.

Another cancellation has been the Big Dip, an open air heated swimming pool and play area erected on the circus site particularly enjoyed by children.

Large events from last year also not returning are the Jamie Oliver Festival, a second Lock'n'Load music event, and Sainsbury's Super Saturday promoted by Live Nation.

Still remaining in the large event category are Pride House and the music event SW4. These two events combined will occupy the event site throughout the school summer holidays, which is already causing upset among the local community.

In our February newsletter we recorded our opposition to a report about large music/dance events which was to go to Lambeth's Cabinet in February recommending both an increased permitted noise level and the extension of allowed finishing times from 9 pm to 11 pm. Apart from our own views there was a strong objection from Wandsworth Borough Council. The decision was deferred until later in the year.

**Mount Pond** At a recent art fair, Michael Green spotted this hitherto unknown watercolour of Mount Pond, Clapham Common, by David Cox. David Cox (1809-1885) – usually known as 'The Younger' since his father was also a watercolourist – lived in south London and amongst his patrons was John Allnutt of Clapham Common South Side.



## Jazz at St Luke's

Stacey Kent and her band will be performing at St Luke's Church, Thurleigh Road SW12 9RQ, on **Saturday 28 April** at 7.30 pm. Tickets at £16 (concessions £12) are available from the Box Office on 07951 791619.



## What is this?



## Where is this?

In a recent Antiques Road Show, mention was made of a Dr Cameron who practiced in Clapham in the early 1900s. Here he is pictured in his Argyll car, outside his Clapham home. Can anyone identify where this is?

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

**Chairman** **Annabel Allott**  
21 Clapham Common West Side, SW4 9AN  
Email: [annabel@allott.plus.com](mailto:annabel@allott.plus.com)

**Meetings and Events** **Maev Sullivan**  
2 Fitzwilliam Road, London SW4 0DN  
Tel: 020 7498 9205  
Email: [maevsullivan@gmail.com](mailto:maevsullivan@gmail.com)

**Treasurer** **David Brown**  
15 Turret Grove, London SW4 0ES  
Tel: 020 7720 7536

**Membership Secretary** **Jennifer Everett**  
30 Trinity Close, London SW4 0JD  
Tel: 020 7627 4770

## Clapham in the 1830s

We were recently sent the following delightful letter, written in 1909, recalling Clapham 70 years earlier:

'My very dear Ivy, I wish you a very Happy Christmas such as I used to enjoy when I was your age and lived at Clapham. Our house was next to the Plough Inn and is now I believe a drapers shop. No doubt you often walk on Clapham Common. That is where I spent much of my time out of school with my brother Matthew, and Charles and Hebern Ruddle. I was the youngest of eleven and allowed to run wild as I was not very strong so most of the time was spent on the Common. It was a lovely place then. Such lovely flowers covered the ground – bluebells, yellow and white bedstraw, heath and furze and birds without number and plenty of nightingales. Then there were fourteen ponds and they were full of interesting plants, fish and insects. I expect these ponds have been done away with except the Long pond, Mount pond and Cock pond the land having been drained it

must be now a dry wilderness. On the south side there was a lovely little oak wood full of bluebells and primroses. I know that is now built over.

It is now about 30 years since I was last there but well remember the happy hours of my childhood and our cricket and rounders and now my dear little Joy can scarce find any grass to walk on and no wild flowers to gather. Where Clapham Junction now is then

was all corn fields and such a number of butterflies.

If ever you go to the church on the common look at the east window and you will see a very pretty butterfly painted on the glass which was my delight to see on Sunday. The pews were so high I could not see over them and many had brass rods and red curtains round them. The poor all sat round the walls as they did in those days which gave rise to the old saying "The poor go to the wall". The pulpit was what they call a three decker and a sounding board over it. I expect it has been removed. I last saw it in 1852.



The Long pond is very deep in one part and one very sharp winter three daughters of a widow who kept a grocers shop went to see a friend skate... they were all standing close to each other when a lad came past and stampeded on the ice and they all fell in and were drowned – so mind that pond.

I hope you had a prize for music. I never could learn as my sight was bad, I wish I had. Remember me very kindly to Mother and Father and with very much love, I remain, Yours truly, P Churton.'

## Portrait of London

The current exhibition at Wandsworth Museum is of historic photographs of London. Alongside photographs from the Museum of London, which include an 1857 image of Trafalgar Square by Roger Fenton and a picture of the suffragette stand at the Women's Exhibition of 1909, are historic pictures of the borough of Wandsworth, including Balham, Battersea and Clapham. The exhibition is open until 12 August from Tuesdays to Sunday 10 am to 5 pm at 38 West Hill, SW18 1RZ.

Details of meetings, activities and a full list of our publications are on **The Clapham Society** website at [www.claphamsociety.com](http://www.claphamsociety.com).