

# The Clapham Society Newsletter



Issue 399

July/August 2017

## Garden Museum

After the completion of an 18-month, £7.5 million re-development project the Garden Museum reopened at the end of May. The museum has been in the press recently, due to

the discovery of the Archbishops' Tomb during the building work. For more information about the tomb, the new Dan Pearson garden, the Ark Gallery, and the new café as well as opening hours and full details of the museum and exhibitions go to the website



[gardenmuseum.org.uk](http://gardenmuseum.org.uk). The Garden Museum is at 5 Lambeth Palace Road, SE1 7LB. Telephone 7401 8865.

## On the Bandstand

Concerts on the Bandstand, organised by the Clapham Common Management Committee, continue fortnightly throughout the summer on the following Sundays from 3 pm to 5 pm. All concerts are free.

**Sunday 9 July** A small local band, Fuzion, who play a mix of jazz, classical and popular music, featuring cello, piano and saxophone.

**Sunday 23 July** We welcome back the London Allstars steel band, who gave one of our most popular concerts last year.

## Sargent: The Watercolours

In June a major exhibition of watercolours by the American artist, John Singer Sargent (1865-1925) opened at Dulwich Picture Gallery. This is the first UK show in almost 100 years devoted to watercolours by this renowned portraitist. Sargent devoted time to developing his watercolours, which dazzle with light and colour, demonstrating a technical brilliance and striking individuality. This exhibition brings together over 80 watercolours to reveal his idiosyncratic view of the world and the scale of his achievement.

For more details of the exhibition and the many events at the gallery visit the website [dulwichpicturegallery.org](http://dulwichpicturegallery.org) or call 020 8693 5254.

**Sunday 6 August** Local players Creative Flowe will treat us to an afternoon of contemporary music and dance, showcasing the talents of a number of individual performers.

**Sunday 20 August** The Herne Hill-based Lambeth Wind Orchestra.

**Sunday 3 September** The Crystal Palace Band, sponsored by the Clapham Society. The band is one of our oldest traditional brass bands, and may well have played on this bandstand within a few years of it being built.

**There are no meetings in July and August. Instead we have the following free guided walks during the summer.**

**Wednesday 19 July**

**From Bating to Boxing: Some Plaques around Nightingale Lane**, led by Derrick Johnson. Leaving from Clapham South Underground Station at 6.30 pm.

**Sunday 6 August**

**Around Park Hill**. A guided walk along Crescent Lane to Abbeville Road, Parsons's Corner and Park Hill, to King's Avenue. Led by Alyson Wilson. Leaving from Clapham Common Underground Station at 2.30 pm.

**Wednesday 13 September**

**Old Clapham – People and Places**. A guided walk of central Clapham, picking up on the stories of notable people and buildings. Led by Peter Jefferson Smith, leaving from outside Omnibus Arts Centre, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW at 2.30 pm.

There are many other local walks throughout the summer. A free leaflet entitled *Local History Walks in South London*, showing full details of these is available at local libraries, Omnibus, on our walks and at our stands at local events.

The next meeting will be on **Monday 25 September**, when Julia Barfield of local architect Marks Barfield will talk about the company's work which includes the London Eye and Brighton's i360.

*Don't forget that our tenth Green Plaque will be unveiled on 43 Netherford Road on Tuesday 4 July at 6.30 pm. Full details were in the June newsletter.*

## Planning News

Details of representations made on planning applications since February are set out below.

### **Clapham Common: use for temporary events.**

For years Lambeth have allowed events to take place on the Common which, because of the number of them, should have had planning permission. Lambeth has now applied to use the Common for temporary events for 110 days each year. Many of the events are small and have no significant impact. But the application does not set out the full implications of the biggest events and for this reason we objected. No allowance is made for the many days needed either side of an event to put up and take down the large structures used and when parts of the Common become inaccessible to users. No consideration is given to their design, nor are all the large events scheduled to take place included in the application. Rather than 110 days, we estimate that that there will be closer to 200 each year when parts of the Common will be turned over to different uses.

Instead we suggested that the large events should be subject to individual applications, so that the planning implications of each can be properly considered and residents given the opportunity to comment. This application is scheduled to be heard at committee on 4 July.

**Eurohotels, 79-81 Clapham Common South Side.** Objection to an application to extend the hotel at the rear, with a new building next to No. 2 Cautley Avenue. The hotel site is already over-intensively used, causing a nuisance to residential neighbours. In addition the proposed building is a poor pastiche of the neighbouring houses, damaging the character of the conservation area and Cautley Avenue. The application was refused.

**George West House, 2-3 Clapham Common North Side.** Objection to an application to change the use of this prominent commercial building from office to residential. It will involve the loss of 300 jobs, damage the local economy and erode the vitality and character that a rich mix of uses gives to Clapham. The application was refused.

**Telephone kiosk outside 22 The Pavement.** Objection to an application for a telephone kiosk which is effectively a structure for pavement advertising. The kiosk would obstruct the pavement as well as damaging views from the Common of the period buildings behind it

and the character of the conservation area. The application was refused.

**44 Clapham Common South Side.** Comments on an application to redevelop the now unused OCS site with 296 new homes, 5000 sq m of employment space and a waste transfer facility. The site is sandwiched between the Notre Dame Estate, Lambeth College and Abbeville Road houses at the back. It is a modern, high-density development consisting of six buildings ranging from ten to four storeys in height, separated by landscaped courtyards, one of which will become a new public square.

There has been a wide ranging design and consultation process over the last year and we have encouraged the height of the development to be reduced to minimise its impact, especially on the Common, its relationship to the adjacent Abbeville Road houses to be improved, links created through to the neighbouring estate and historic drainage problems in the vicinity to be addressed. A decision is expected in July.

**Over-large house extensions.** The 'improve not move' trend is generating a number of applications for very large extensions to houses, to the extent that their original form becomes unrecognisable and large areas of their gardens are taken over by building. We commented on or objected to several of these (121 Clapham Manor Street, 15 Lydon Road, 43 Rodenhurst Road). Lambeth's policy on this type of development is strict and all were refused or withdrawn.

**169 Clapham High Street.** Objection to an advertising hoarding on the entrance to the deep level shelter below the Northern Line at the junction of the High Street and Clapham Park Road. Having removed the previous hoardings, repaired and redecorated the historic entrance structure, another advertisement would be a step backwards, damaging the character and appearance of the structure and the conservation area. The application was refused.

*Philip Ashford*

*Convenor, Planning Sub-committee*

## The Arts Society

The Arts Society has the following visits this year. On **Wednesday 27 September** a morning tour of Kenwood House entitled *Dido Belle and Lord Mansfield*, followed by an afternoon tour *Above and below Stairs*. On **Tuesday 19 December** an evening tour of Denis Severs' Spitalfields

## An evening with Chris Difford

On **Wednesday 30 August** Chris Difford of Squeeze will be at Clapham Books, reading from and signing copies of his new book *Some Fantastic Place: My Life In and Out of Squeeze* and playing a few songs, too! Tickets are £25, which includes the price of the book (RRP £20), or £5 without. Please go to <https://www.eventbrite.com/e/an-evening-with-chris-difford-of-squeeze-tickets-35106618842> to reserve your place. Limited capacity. Clapham Books, 26 The Pavement, SW4 0JA.

## Clapham Leaf Club

The Club's Grand Finale will be at Venn Street Market on **Saturday 8 July** from 10 am to 4 pm. This annual event invites all local primary schools to take part at the market as stall holders selling the produce and recipes made from their harvest. Schools attending this year include Allen Edwards, Clapham Manor, Heathbrook and Larkhall Rise Primary Schools. Customers can buy great produce from the young growers including herbs, flowering baskets, fresh pastas and pestos, fresh fruit and veg, eggs, potted tomatoes, varieties of potatoes and beetroot brownies – but get there early as stocks go fast!



*Really interesting... the Society's stand at the Common People Fair in May*

house, with refreshments.

New members and their guests are welcome, and as we are halfway through the programme of lectures, new members joining now will receive one free guest ticket. Single membership is £50 per annum plus a joining fee of £10. Double membership is £90 per annum plus joining fee of £10 each. For details email [ClaphamCommon@TheArtsSociety.org](mailto:ClaphamCommon@TheArtsSociety.org).



## Ghostsigns

Sam Roberts with his encyclopaedic knowledge of Ghostsigns kept a large audience informed and entertained at our May meeting.

He started with a run down of what the term means. Basically it refers to the old advertisements painted directly on to the brickwork of buildings, from about the 1890s onwards which have faded over time. But it is also used to cover other old signage, sometimes in mosaic, painted glass shop signs, enamel advertisements and even some moulded in plaster on walls. Sam showed us surviving examples of all these. Some painted ghostsigns are so faded that they are very difficult to read, whereas others which have been recently revealed after being hidden behind hoardings for years are bright and almost pristine.

It just so happens that Clapham is particularly rich in surviving ghostsigns. Sam showed pictures that many of us are familiar with, including the Deane & Co sign on the wall of 17 The Pavement, the Royal London Mutual Insurance Society high on the flank wall of The Alexandra, and the profusion of signs, one on top of another, on Cedars Mews near the corner of Cedars Road and Wandsworth Road. But how many of us have noticed the very faded car repairer in Landor Road, or Gillette in Clapham High Street? Usually, though not always, one needs to be looking up high on the walls of buildings to spot ghostsigns.

Unfortunately, signs are not protected by any legislation and so they do tend to

disappear. One example of this was on Clapham High Street, where a splendid sign reading 'Music Rolls Exchanged' was painted over in 2007. There was an outcry about this locally, which resulted in a question being asked in the Greater London Assembly, but it was stated that nothing could be done about it. Luckily, shortly before it disappeared we photographed it, and the picture is in our book *Discovering Clapham*.

Greater awareness of these historic signs has led to many being saved, but also in some cases to over-enthusiastic and bad restoration. Repainting a sign with modern paint destroys its whole point. On the other hand the lead paints originally used are not now allowed, so the signs are best left to grow old gracefully. An enthusiastic audience detained Sam for a long time, answering questions and discussing the topic.

Sam leads tours of ghostsigns on the South Bank and on his home ground, Stoke Newington. He is thinking of adding one of the Clapham area since we have so many signs. Watch this space! But in the meantime look out for the signs, and I promise you once you start noticing them you will see them everywhere and will be amazed how many there are.

On Sam's website [ghostsigns.co.uk](http://ghostsigns.co.uk) you can see many pictures, book walking tours and follow his blog. His colleague Roy Reed also has many pictures of Clapham signs at <http://reeddesign.co.uk/wordpress/2017/02/22/ghostsigns-of-clapham/>

## Lambeth Heritage Festival

This annual festival starts on **Saturday 2 September** with the Lambeth Local History Fair at St Leonard's Church in Streatham. This coincides with the Clapham Old Town Fair, but we shall have stands and displays at both events.

There will be events, talks and walks through the borough provided by local history societies, local museums and Lambeth Archives. Clapham Society events for the Heritage Month include the bandstand concert on **Sunday 3 September**, the unveiling of our 11th Green Plaque on **Wednesday 6 September** on the former Plough Brewery in Wandsworth Road with a tour of the premises, a walk led by Peter Jefferson Smith on **Wednesday 13 September** and a talk by local architect, Julia Barfield at our meeting at Omnibus on **Monday 25 September**. The full programme of events will be available from mid-July at Lambeth Libraries, Omnibus and at Bandstand concerts.

## Clapham Old Town Fair

On **Saturday 2 September** Omnibus and Clapham BID present Clapham Old Town Fair in The Polygon. There will be a range of activities for the whole family, some of the best food and drink Clapham has to offer, lots of live music and the much-anticipated return of the Omnibus Dog Show, Clapham's Mutts. Expect farm animals and the old favourites. You can battle it out in the egg and spoon race or try your hand at the coconut shy, and enjoy the nostalgia of a traditional fair right in the heart of Clapham's Old Town.

The Clapham Society will have a display showing what we do, and a stand where you can pick up our free history map of Clapham Common, our guide to the trees on the Common, newsletters, and purchase books and walks of Clapham.

## Hamlet at St Paul's Church

Changeling Theatre present their production of *Hamlet* on **Friday 14 July** at 7.15 pm at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets are £20, £10 concessions from [changeling-theatre.com](http://changeling-theatre.com), the Parish Office on 020 7622 2128, or on the door (cash only). This is an outdoor performance, so please bring your own chairs and rugs.

Windmill Drive on Saturdays between 10 am and 1 pm to register interest. For more information visit [bandstandbeds.org.uk](http://bandstandbeds.org.uk).

David Dandridge

## Bandstand Beds

There's nothing quite like harvesting fresh veg from the garden for a delicious meal, and that's just what Will and Conor ([howellandharte.com](http://howellandharte.com)) do at the Common Cook-ups at the Bandstand Beds community garden. Following on from the first, two more Common Cook-ups are planned for **Saturday 8 July** and **Saturday 5 August**. The

aim of these supper clubs is to help raise funding to extend the hoggin pathways and improve accessibility into the extended part of the garden. To support this event while savouring the culinary creations of Conor and Will you can book a ticket by visiting [eventbrite.co.uk](http://eventbrite.co.uk) and searching for Bandstand Beds.

The community beds on the Common



have become so popular that we now meet on a midweek evening as well as on Saturday mornings. We may also run a daytime gardening session during the week for older people who would like to get involved in some outdoor activity with an opportunity of meeting new people. Drop an email to [ccbandstandbeds@gmail.com](mailto:ccbandstandbeds@gmail.com) or call into the garden on

## Developments on Clapham Common

**Winterville.** As reported in April (Issue 396) the CCMAC and representatives of the Clapham Society and the Friends of Clapham Common have continued to give serious and in-depth consideration to the proposals made by Winterville's organisers. The initial proposals were rather skimpy but by dint of detailed probing by the Society, the organisers have provided detailed information about the equipment to be used, on the impact on the Common of the event and their recommendations for protecting the ground. The Society cannot guarantee that, even if fully implemented, such measures would protect the Common. We are equally concerned about the duration of the event, which would commence on 23 November, after 10 days of setting up and end on 1 January. No timing for dismantling the site is available at the time of writing. The Society's representations to Lambeth Events are available on our website [claphamsociety.com](http://claphamsociety.com). We now await Winterville's planning and licensing applications.

**Polygon Café.** Work has started on the Polygon Café on the WC site opposite the Polygon. It is expected that the works will be completed within 68 days or towards the end of July. LBL's Project manager assured the CCMAC that it would be involved throughout the consultation process in respect of the formulation of plans for the **Westside Changing Rooms**

**Quietway 5 and Windmill Drive.** LBL's update to the CCMAC on Quietway 5 was delayed by the General Election. It seems that further discussion with the CCMAC will be confined to the surfacing and other design features of the pathway despite the fact that many of the Society's members and other users of the Common have objected strongly to the inadequacy of LBL's and TfL's consultation on this project. Objectors' views were expressed strongly at an open meeting held in March

2017 but have been ignored as far as I can ascertain. There is a very strong rumour that **Windmill Drive** will be closed as part of the Quietway project.

**LBL's reorganisation of the Lambeth Parks teams; Fundraising.** As previously reported Lambeth Parks has been renamed Lambeth Landscapes. It is now proposed to bring Lambeth Events, Sports and Parks/Landscapes into one department. This should improve communication and coordination and is a welcome improvement. A new head is being sought and senior management reorganisation could follow. In addition, LBL have reinstated two fundraising manager posts in the Lambeth Landscapes team, with the purpose of accessing grants and other sources of income to fund capital investment projects. This is welcome news as there is a dire shortage of finance for capital projects in all Lambeth's Commons and green spaces.

**Paddling Pool.** The water was turned on at the end of May for the Bank Holiday and drinking fountains for humans and dogs will be turned on within a few weeks.

**Volunteers.** We are still looking for volunteers who are interested in Clapham Common to join Andrew Sumner and Jonathan McIver to keep an eye on developments on the Common and continue the work done in the past by the Common and Open Spaces Sub-committee which was so enthusiastically and efficiently managed by Anna Jefferson Smith for many years and subsequently Deryn Watson and Annie Bayley. Please email [andrew\\_summers\\_london@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:andrew_summers_london@yahoo.co.uk) if you are interested.

*Maev Sullivan*

### New Members

We are pleased to welcome the following new members: Julieanna Haynes, Michelle Miller, Alexander and Eleanor Molla, Stephen and Anthea Savage.

## The Edinburgh Fringe at Omnibus

This July Omnibus will be previewing some performances before they go to the Edinburgh Fringe in August.

**Friday 21 July** at 7.30 pm. *Above the Mealy-mouthed Sea.* Fusing poetry, storytelling and song, award-winning performance poet, and Omnibus associate artist, Jemima Foxtrot debuts an amusing, strange and poignant play about growing up and inescapable truths.

**Sunday 23 July** and **Monday 24 July** at 7.30 pm. *Macblair: Dupre (Falling Sparrow).* It is 1994. Returning from a successful parliamentary meeting, Macblair and Macbrown meet three weird hacks on a stairwell in the House of Commons. They prophesy that Macblair will become leader of the Labour party, then Prime Minister, and eventually, King of the World. This is the story of Tony Blair as a Shakespearean tragicomedy.

**Wednesday 26 July** at 7.30 pm. *3 Years, 1 Week and a Lemon drizzle.* This play pieces together a number of Alexandra and Kate Donnachie's sometimes heart breaking and often hilarious memories of growing up together when older sister, Alex, developed a severe eating disorder as a teenager. The performance recalls touching memories, shares laugh-out-loud anecdotes and mashes Mars bars up, to bring to stage a story about living with a loved one and their mental illness.

**Thursday 27 July** and **Sunday 30 July** at 7.30 pm. *Wondr.* Distracted by giving an imaginary Ted talk to her bathroom mirror, social media phenomenon Faith Allgood (@WondrWomanUK) is running late for the school run. Little does she know her world is about to implode...

**Friday 28 July** and **Saturday 29 July** at 7.30 pm. *Pixel.* Daniella swings from meme to meme, a tarzan of the datafields. Can she find the answers she needs about who she really is through this digital odyssey?

For tickets go to [omnibus-clapham.org](http://omnibus-clapham.org), call the Box Office on 020 7498 4699 or call in at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW

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

#### Chairman

Tel: 020 7228 5551 Email: [annabel@allott.plus.com](mailto:annabel@allott.plus.com)

#### Acting Secretary

Email: [maevsullivan@gmail.com](mailto:maevsullivan@gmail.com)

#### Treasurer

Tel: 020 7720 7536 Email: [david.brown@centrum-uk.com](mailto:david.brown@centrum-uk.com)

#### Membership Secretary

Tel: 020 7627 4770 Email: [jeverett@waitrose.com](mailto:jeverett@waitrose.com)

#### Annabel Allott Meetings and Events

Tel: 020 7720 7449 Email: [christinearms52@hotmail.com](mailto:christinearms52@hotmail.com)

#### Maev Sullivan Planning Matters

Tel: 020 8674 1727 Email: [pjashford@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:pjashford@yahoo.co.uk)

#### David Brown Roads and Transport

Tel: 020 7720 9370 Email: [mark.leffler88@gmail.com](mailto:mark.leffler88@gmail.com)

#### Jennifer Everett Newsletter and Publications

Tel: 020 7622 6360 Email: [alysonwilson.sw4@gmail.com](mailto:alysonwilson.sw4@gmail.com)

#### Common and Open Spaces

Email: [andrew\\_summers\\_london@yahoo.co.uk](mailto:andrew_summers_london@yahoo.co.uk). Tel. 07977229

#### Christine Armstrong

#### Philip Ashford

#### Mark Leffler

#### Alyson Wilson

#### Andrew Summers