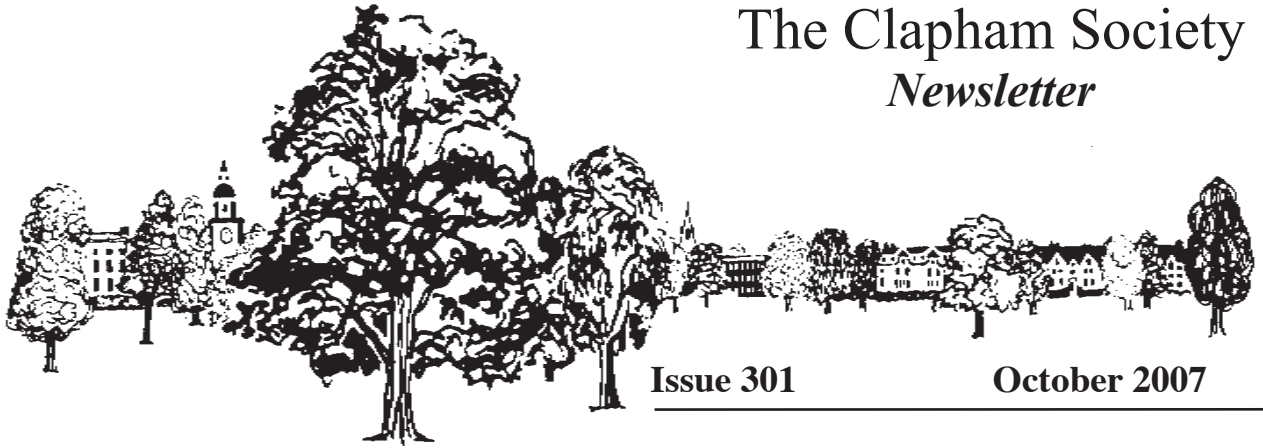


The Clapham Society Newsletter



Issue 301

October 2007

Instant Sunshine

Our final meeting of the year on **Wednesday 21 November** is a light-hearted musical entertainment provided by **Instant Sunshine**. The group, which comprises Peter Christie, David Barlow, Alan Maryon-Davis and Tim Barlow, plays at festivals and theatres in London, throughout the UK and all over the world. They were voted 'Hit of the Fringe' when they first appeared at the Edinburgh Festival 30 years ago and have been back regularly, including this year.

Over a hundred of their songs have been recorded and some are on EMI's British Comedy Classic recordings. They have been described as following the British tradition of humour as typified by Flanders and Swann, but the group's visual humour enhances the songs and adds a unique touch to their live shows. Other groups, including the King Singers, have also recorded Instant Sunshine songs, which are all written by Peter Christie.

Instant Sunshine have written and performed many signature tunes of radio and television programmes and their long association with the BBC programme *Stop the Week* meant that they reached a wide audience. *The Scotsman* described **Instant Sunshine** as 'too warm to be cool and too polite to be cutting edge – what they are is very, very entertaining'.

Alan Maryon-Davis is both a Clapham resident and a long-standing member of the Clapham Society. We are delighted that he has arranged for the group to perform for the Clapham Society. The performance will take place at our usual meeting place, the Lower Hall at Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4 commencing promptly at 8 pm. Tickets are £10, and include a glass of wine at the interval. There is an application form on the back of this newsletter.

Please bring your friends – all are very welcome to come along and enjoy this exhilarating evening!

The Annual General meeting will be held on **Tuesday 16 October** at Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4. The hall is open from 7.30 pm and the meeting will commence promptly at 8 pm. The Agenda for the meeting is on page 3 of this newsletter.

There is no meeting in December.



The blue-green algae mystery

Towards the end of August an unwelcome presence appeared on the Mount Pond on Clapham Common in the form of blue-green algae. Around the same time dead carp were surfacing on the pond. The Clapham Angling Preservation Society and Lambeth Council alerted the Environment Agency (EA) assuming at first that the two events were linked by a reduction in oxygen levels in the water. Fishing on the pond was stopped and dog walkers warned not to let them drink or swim in the water in view of its potential toxicity.

When the EA checked the oxygen levels it was found that, although reduced, the levels were not sufficiently low for the fish to have died as a result. With the carefully regulated use of an

aerator the oxygen levels were brought back to normal and the detective work was begun. Only carp had been affected. Live fish were sent via the EA to try to trace evidence of disease. The results of these tests are awaited.

During this episode over 270 carp have died, some up to 20lb in weight, but at the time of going to press the situation appears to be improving. However dead carp are appearing in other waterways, including the Thames and the Wandle.

Interestingly a refined form of blue-green algae is sometimes billed as the ultimate health supplement.

We will watch developments closely and in the meantime offer commiseration to the anglers.

Planning News

Since May we have been notified of some 210 applications. We reviewed 45 of them and made representations on 31. The principal ones were:

89 Park Hill. Objection to a new house to be built in the presently neglected back garden of this house, the open aspect of which is an important part of the character of the conservation area.

25-33 Macaulay Road. Continued criticism of another variation on proposals for this development, because the new building to replace Nos. 25/27 fails to respond to the rhythm of the existing neighbouring villas.

Since our original criticism the design has been replaced by a dull but safe pastiche of other traditional buildings in the street. In the absence of a good modern design we reluctantly accepted this approach.

The Windmill on the Common. Objection to a covered pergola on the front of the building, because of the damaging effect it would have on the appearance of this late 18th century building.

Land next to 2 Turret Grove. Objection to an awkwardly designed and overlarge scheme on a site which requires a more modest level of development if it is not to spoil the amenity of its neighbours and make a positive contribution to the street scene.

St Mary's Monastery, St Alphonsus Road. Support for an application to repair this listed building using the proper, traditional materials.

24/24A Abbeville Road. Objection to another poorly designed scheme for a three-storey building on the site of the present buildings, which continues to fail to achieve a harmonious relationship with its surroundings.

Grafton Square. Continued reservations about modified and improved proposals at Nos. 6 and 16 for rear extensions, because of their effect on the appearance and fabric of these listed buildings.

83 Park Hill. Objection to the demolition of the existing modest, two-storey house and its replacement with a five-storey residential building, designed in a strange mixture of traditional and modern styles, the size of which blocks out local views and turns a front garden into a car park.

144-150 Clapham Manor Street. Continued objection to another scheme to build a mansard roof which damages the streetscape as well as the setting of the listed building next door.

Lambeth Council have been active recently with consultation exercises on several planning initiatives. We have commented on their draft development brief for the leisure centre in Clapham Manor Street, urging the retention of the existing pool building, or at least the façade if it is to be replaced, as well as a sensible level of new residential development on the depot site behind it. We have supported the Council's draft planning guidance designed to raise standards in flat conversions and new housing development across the borough.

Lambeth Council have also recently produced draft conservation area statements for Clapham High Street and Rectory Grove/Clapham Manor Street, which we will comment on shortly. They contain a wealth of interesting information about the areas, as well as guidance and management proposals and can be found on Lambeth's Planning website.

Wandsworth Museum

The present exhibitions, *Last Orders* and *Just the Job*, will continue until the museum's closure on 30 December 2007. However, from 1 October the museum will be open only from Wednesday to Sunday from 1pm to 5 pm. Closed on Monday and Tuesday.

If you do not know this delightful small museum, we would urge you to visit it in its last few months in its former

courthouse building at 11 Garratt Lane, SW18. Tel: 020 8871 7074. Website: www.wandsworth.gov.uk/museum

Wandsworth Council have recently announced that they are ready to offer the new museum a 20-year lease on part of the West Hill building, with a fixed level of funding for the first five years which will cover the rent payable.

Fireworks Lambeth Council's free fireworks event on Clapham Common will be on Friday 2 November beginning at 7.25 pm.

Black History Month

Two events at Holy Trinity Church this month celebrate Black History Month. On **Wednesday 10 October** at 8 pm there will be a talk by American author Kevin Belmonte, who was the lead historical consultant for the film *Amazing Grace* and script consultant for several BBC programmes about William Wilberforce. His award-winning biography, *William Wilberforce: A Hero for Humanity*, was reissued in paperback early this year. Free admission, no tickets necessary – just turn up on the day!

On **Wednesday 31 October** at 7.30 pm the Philharmonia Orchestra Chamber Ensemble will present a programme of music which includes Ravel's *String Quartet*, one of the most popular string quartets of all time, and the *Divertissement for Bassoon and String Quartet* by Francaix. For tickets (£17.50) call the Box Office on 0800 652 6717 or go to www.philharmonia.co.uk.

On **Saturday 20 October** local historian Steve Martin will be leading two walks tracing Clapham's links with the slave trade and with the abolition campaign. Meet outside Holy Trinity Church at 1.30 pm or 3 pm.

The inaugural Lambeth black history lecture: *Challenges to slavery* takes place at Lambeth Archives on **Tuesday 30 October** at 7 pm.

On **Wednesday 31 October** Steve Martin will launch his book on slavery and the abolition movement in Lambeth, and at the same event the Brixton Society launch their own publication about the contribution black people made to Brixton in the twentieth century. The event starts at 7 pm at Brixton Library.

There are many more events organized by Lambeth Council during this month. You can pick up the programme entitled *Lambeth and the Abolition* at local libraries or download it from www.lambeth.gov.uk (search for Black History Month programme 2007).

St Luke's Music Society

The first concert in the Society's fifth season is on **Saturday 13 October**, when violinist Tamsin Little, described by the *New York Times* as a 'formidable soloist' gives a solo recital, as part of the Wandsworth Arts Festival. The concert is at St Luke's Church, Thurleigh Road, SW11 at 7.30 pm. Tickets (£16 concessions £12) from the Box Office on 020 8673 9285 or at www.slms.org.uk

Wimbledon Bookfest

From 8 to 14 October an interesting range of authors will be taking part in this annual event. Clapham author, John O'Farrell will be in conversation with Giles Milton, author of *White Gold*, a history of the white slave trade: John Humphreys will talk about his book, *In God we Doubt*: AS Byatt will talk about her novel *Possession* and William Boyd about his latest novel *Restless*: there will be a literary pub quiz, afternoon tea with an antiquarian bookseller, a question and answer session with Sandi Toksvig, and lots, lots more. For full details go to: www.wimbledonbookfest.org or telephone the Box Office on 020 8543 4888.

Having a field day

This is the title of Lambeth Archives Open Day this year, which is on **Saturday 6 October** from 10 am to 5 pm at the Minet Library, 52 Knatchbull Road, SE5. The Clapham Society will have a stand with a display of pictures of the fascinating variety of sports played on Clapham Common. There is a full programme of talks and exhibitions throughout the day. Details are available at local libraries. Admission free.

Henry Tate Gardens

The Streatham Society are conducting tours of the gardens of Henry Tate's former house in Streatham on **Saturday 13 October** at 2.30 pm and 3.30 pm. The meeting point is the gate to the gardens on Streatham Common North, not far from the corner of Leigham Court Road.



photo: Colette Hill

That Hail Storm My thanks to all those who kindly sent pictures of the July hailstorm. There are too many to publish in the newsletter – at least all at once – but I will endeavour to print them out and have a small display at the Annual General Meeting.

THE 2007 ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

The 44th Annual General Meeting of the Clapham Society will be held on Tuesday 16 October 2007 at Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, London SW4, starting at 8 pm.

AGENDA

1. Apologies for absence
2. Approval of the Minutes of the previous AGM (17 October 2006) published in the Newsletter No 293, December 2006/January 2007, and available at the meeting
3. Adoption of the Annual Report for the year ended 30 September 2007
4. Adoption of the Financial Report and Accounts for the year ended 31 March 2007
5. Election of the Officers and Committee Members for the year 2007-2008
Chairman Hon Treasurer
Vice-Chairman Hon Solicitor
Hon Secretary Hon Membership Secretary
A maximum of ten further Committee Members
6. Re-appointment of the Hon Independent Examiner
7. Any other business and announcements

After the formal business there will be a break for refreshments.

Following the break the guest speaker will be the Rt Hon Keith Hill, MP, whose Streatham constituency includes part of Clapham.

NOMINATIONS

Nominations for the elections of Officers and Committee Members shall be made to the Secretary at least two clear days before the Annual General Meeting. Every nomination shall be in writing, supported by a seconder. The consent of the person nominated shall have been obtained.

Jill Cramphorn, Hon Secretary, 552 Wandsworth Road, London SW8 3JX

Trinity Hospice Annual Ball The Trinity Hospice celebrity-studded Ball is an evening of feasting and fun which includes dancing, a casino and live entertainment. It takes place this year on **Saturday 1 December** at Planit Embankment, WC2. The hospice is currently seeking sponsors for the event. For more details contact Laura Williams on 020 7787 1054 or email: lwilliams@trinityhospice.org.uk.

Local History

The new plans for Wandsworth Local History Library, outlined by Jane Allen at our June meeting, come in to force on 1 October. From that date the Local History Service will be known as the Heritage Service. The reception and general information point will be in the ground floor Reference Library at Altenburg Gardens, SW11. The former Local History room on the first floor will be used only for detailed enquiries and in depth research enquiries. This service will be available only **by appointment**. Appointments must be made with the Reference Library staff, and will be restricted until new Heritage Officers take up their posts in the late autumn. Two Heritage Officers will replace the current Local History librarians.

Town Centre Office changes

Michele Guimarin, who has been Clapham and Stockwell Town Centre Manager for the last few years is leaving at the end of September to take up a secondment with the Children and Young People's Service. Annick Alek, the Information Officer is also leaving to return to Streatham Town Centre office. We wish them well and look forward to meeting their successors in due course.

