



The Clapham Society *Newsletter*

Issue 398

June 2017

Clapham Society Summer Party

There are still a few tickets left for the party in a beautiful garden on Clapham Common West Side on **Tuesday 27 June**. This is an ideal opportunity to meet other members in pleasant surroundings on a summer evening. Check availability with Alyson Wilson (020 7622 6360). Tickets are also on sale (for cash) at the Clapham Society stand at the Fairs shown on page 3.

Repairing the Alphabet

I recently spotted Andrew Logan, sculptor of the Alphabet outside the library in Clapham High Street, repairing his sculpture. We had a brief chat and he explained there was no maintenance grant in place but we both agreed that it has weathered well in its five years. Andrew said there were some technical problems and that it would have helped had they been addressed earlier. He had a couple of assistants and they were treating the sculpture with various silver materials including extra mirror glass.

Martin Richards



Our meetings are held at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW. The bar at Omnibus is open from 7 pm, and meetings commence at 8 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. Non-members 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 26 June

Black Cultural Archives: Past, present and future.

Victoria Northridge, Collections Manager will be talking about the 30-odd year history of Black Cultural Archives. Starting from its origins in the 1980s she will focus on the individuals who made the dream of a Black Heritage Centre a reality, as well as the wider history of the African and Caribbean community in Britain. The talk will appraise the achievements of the organisation since opening the new building in Brixton in July 2014.

There are no meetings in July and August but the following guided walks take place during the summer months.

Tuesday 6 June. The development of a Victorian Suburb: Twixt the Commons, led by Timothy Walker. Leaving from Clapham South Underground Station at 6.30 pm.

Wednesday 19 July. From Batting 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, led by Alyson Wilson. Leaving from Clapham Common Underground Station at 2.30 pm.

Wednesday 13 September. Old Clapham: People and Places, led by Peter Jefferson Smith. Leaving from outside Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, at 2.30 pm.

Common and Open Spaces

Following a piece in the April newsletter to recruit members to the Common and Open Spaces Sub-committee, I am pleased to report that Andrew Summers has been co-opted on to the Clapham Society Committee.

Andrew, who lives in Clapham and regularly spends time on the Common, brings enthusiasm and energy to the role. He will represent the Clapham Society on the Clapham Common Advisory Committee (CCMAC). Jonathan McIver has also volunteered, and I am delighted that we have recruited some younger, energetic members to represent the Society on all aspects of the Common.

Anyone else with an interest in maintaining Clapham Common as a pleasant place for everyone to play sport, dog walk or for recreation should contact maevsullivan@gmail.com.

*Annabel Allott
Chairman*

Orpheus in the Underworld

St Paul's Opera will be performing Offenbach's riotous, fast-paced opera from **Thursday 29 June to Saturday 1 July** at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DR. Doors open at 5.30 pm for picnics in the grounds, and the performance commences at 7 pm. Tickets £25 at wegottickets.com/stpaulsopera or call 020 7622 2128. For further information email info@stpaulsopera.org.

Fred Uhde

Fred Uhde who has died aged 78, was devoted to Clapham Common, and worked hard to preserve and improve it.

He gave wholehearted support to many of the initiatives taken up by the local community; but the great cause which he made his own was noise, specifically the excessive noise, so disruptive to local residents, from concerts on the events site. He fought for many years against the organisers' attempts to push up the limits, becoming something of an expert on the technicalities, able to argue with promoters and Council officers on their own terms. And argue forcefully he did, with all the bluntness of an American businessman. For all his time in this country and love for it, he never grasped the English art of understatement.

He was a leading member of the Friends of Clapham Common, serving as Vice Chairman and was also for many years Vice Chairman of the Clapham Common Management Advisory Committee. He and Kathy were great hosts, and the Friends of Clapham Common annual garden party was a much enjoyed social event.

Fred was more than this. A successful businessman, he was also a man of great erudition, deeply religious and a strong believer in the family. He was devoted to Kathy and rejoiced in the success of his three sons.

As his son Christopher put it in his funeral eulogy, 'he leaves behind a trail of monuments,a prosperous family, a large circle of friends, and a better world than would have been without him.'

Peter Jefferson Smith



Wandsworth Heritage Festival

The festival continues until 11 June with events, walks and talks throughout the borough. Details available in local libraries or wandsworth.gov.uk.

Our Tenth Green Plaque

In 2011 the Clapham Society started a scheme to mark with a Green Plaque an important local building which has changed use since it was built. In July we shall be unveiling our tenth Green Plaque, the second this year with another to follow in September. Progress has been erratic, because it can take time to obtain permission from the owner – indeed, it is sometimes difficult to identify the owner of a building, and in the case of a Listed Building, it takes time to obtain consent from the council. As the scheme has spread, so has its popularity; we are in the happy position that we are now approached by owners with requests to mark their building in this way. If you know of any local building which you think should be celebrated, do suggest it to the Chairman.

The plaque gives minimum information, usually only the date of building and the former and present uses. But there is a brief illustrated history of each building on our website at claphamsociety.com/articles/greenplaques.html.

Our tenth Green Plaque will be unveiled on **Tuesday 4 July** at 6.30 pm on the former Coroner's Court and LCC Weights and Measures Office at 43 Netherford Road, SW4 6AF. The ceremony will be performed by the owners of the property, Axel Maier and Allison Clark, who have kindly invited guests to refreshments afterwards. All members are welcome.



Sir Hans Sloane, Chelsea Porcelain and the Chelsea Physic Garden

At our April meeting, local ceramic expert Sally Kevill-Davies delighted a large audience with her fascinating pictures and stories of the plants depicted on Chelsea Porcelain during the mid-eighteenth century.

Sir Hans Sloane, physician to Queen Anne, George I and George II, was passionate about natural history and had studied the medicinal plants at Chelsea Physic Garden as a student. In 1722 when he was the owner of Chelsea Manor he leased the Garden to the Worshipful Company of Apothecaries for £5 per annum in perpetuity. In that year too he appointed as his gardener Philip Miller who, equally passionate about plants and botany, installed hot houses, hot walls and forcing beds to grow exotic imported plants. At that time imported evergreen trees, in particular, were much in demand by the architects landscaping country estates.

In 1735 Sir Hans Sloane and Philip Miller met the German botanical artist George Ehret, who started drawing plants from the Physic Garden, then settled in Swan Walk alongside the Physic Garden and married Miller's sister-in-law. Over the next ten years Ehret published his drawings made in the Garden, and it was some of these which were reproduced on Chelsea Porcelain, made at the nearby Chelsea Porcelain Manufactory.

Sally showed pictures of delightful plates with detailed botanical illustrations and traced their sources from drawings by Ehret and other contemporary artists. Among her examples were a plate showing a cut Papaya fruit with the flower head, its delicate blue flower and a blue butterfly; another a *Pancreatium* in which the flower head has been enlarged and twisted to fit the shape of the plate and the colour deepened to contrast with the white background. In some cases the artistic

licence made the final plate difficult to relate to the source drawing.

By the mid 1750s the Chelsea porcelain dessert plates decorated with Sir Hans Sloane plants, which were mainly imported from British colonies in America and the West Indies, had become so popular that they almost displaced silver from the fashionable dessert table. Sally especially liked the triangle centred on the West Indies – sweetmeats made from sugar and tropical fruits served on Chelsea porcelain painted with exotic West Indian plants.

Sally's scholarship and detailed research on this topic is impressive, and can be fully appreciated in the book, *Sir Hans Sloane's Plants on Chelsea Porcelain*, by Sally Kevill-Davies, available to order from Clapham Books.

Saturdays in June

Don't miss Clapham's summer Saturday fairs:

Saturday 10 June St Paul's Church Fair, Rectory Grove.

Saturday 17 June Holy Trinity Church Fayre, Clapham Common.

Saturday 24 June Abbeville Fete, Abbeville Road.

Each event has its own distinctive feel, but all have plenty of entertainment for young and old, craft stalls and food and drink. The Clapham Society will have a stand at each event, where you can chat to members, see our displays and purchase publications about Clapham and tickets for the Summer Party.

Springing into summer

This spring has been a busy time for Bandstand Beds, not only have volunteers been feverishly sowing seeds for the summer growing season they have also been spending Saturdays building a kitchen at one end of the new shipping container ready for a series of Common Cook-ups.

The first of these on **Saturday 17 June** will be part of London Food Month, and for this event Bandstand Beds' food blogging duo Will and Conor



(howellandharte.com) will be teaming up with Michel Roux Junior's Cactus Kitchens to create a mouth-watering menu to be enjoyed by all.

Two more Common Cook-ups will follow on **8 July** and **5 August**. As well as providing us with an evening of culinary delights from Will and Conor the aim of these events is to raise money to extend the hoggin pathway and improve disabled access into the extended part of the community garden.

But it's not all about eating food, it's also about growing it! Want to know how? Bandstand Beds has set up more workshops with Social Landscapes where you can learn some basic gardening skills. They will be held on **Tuesday 20 June** from 6 to 8 pm, and **Saturday 29 July** from 10.30 am to 12.30 pm. These pay-what-you-can workshops are open to everyone but you will need to book a place to attend.

As well as all of this, throughout the summer the group will also hold pop-up bring 'n' picnics at the end of their regular Saturday morning and Wednesday evening sessions. A fantastic way to round off an hour or so pottering in the garden. Why not drop by and see for yourself?

For more information or to get involved in growing on Clapham Common visit bandstandbeds.org.uk. To book for the Common Cook-up events or gardening workshops visit evenbrite.co.uk and search Bandstand Beds.

Clarinet On The Town

For their closing concert of the season, on **Friday 23 June**, Clapham Chamber Concerts present a programme of light music from the 1930s and 1940s with Jonathan Parkin (clarinet), Amanda Lake (violin) and the CCC String Ensemble. The audience will be treated to a selection of light music, jazz-inspired music and English folk-inspired music, composed during the early-mid part of the twentieth century, featuring the clarinet as a solo instrument accompanied by string orchestra.

The concert starts at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets available on the door at £12, £10 concessions and Friends of CCC, £5 children. For further information email claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com.

David Dandridge

The Great Get Together

The family and friends of the late Jo Cox MP, who lived her life spreading her belief 'that we have more in common than that which divides us', are inviting people across the country to mark the anniversary of her murder, just before the EU Referendum last June, by organising or attending a celebration in their community.

The Clapham event will take place from noon on **Sunday 18 June** in the grounds of the Holy Trinity Church, Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QZ. If you want to join in all you need to do is to bring picnic blankets, food to eat and – if you can spare it – some to share. The organisers are looking for all kinds of entertainment (face painting, acoustic music, juggling, magic tricks, etc) so if you have something to offer, please let the organisers know. Full details can be found on eventerbee.co.uk/event/great-get-together-clapham.

Midsummer at Omnibus

Thursday 8 June to Saturday 10 June at 7.30 pm. *The Faerie Thorn*, based on the book *The Faerie Thorn and Other Stories* recreates author Jane Talbot's dark and entrancing literary tales for adults, propelling the audience into the world of devilish debts, broken bargains and unjust trials. Tickets £15, £12 concessions.

Friday 16 June to Friday 30 June at 7.30 pm, Saturday matinees at 2.30 pm. *A Midsummer Night's Dream: An Interactive Adventure*. Part treasure-hunt, part play set in the streets around Clapham, this interactive theatre experience brings to life Shakespeare's classic tale of love and mischief on a summer's night. Tickets £18, £16 concessions.

For more information and to book tickets go to omnibus-clapham.org, tel: 020 7498 4699 or call in at Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side, SW4 0QW

Have you got 2-3 hours a week free?

'I really enjoyed my time with Home-Start Lambeth and found it an invaluable experience. The training was excellent and prepared me well for visiting my family.'

This local charity supporting vulnerable families with children under five is recruiting volunteers. Free training starts **Thursday 8 June**. More information at homestartlambeth.co.uk/being-a-volunteer, tel: 020 7924 9292, info@homestartlambeth.co.uk.

Liz Ranger
Scheme Manager

Morley College Exhibition

Opening on **Thursday 8 June** is an exhibition entitled *Between Dog and Wolf: A South London Twilight*, based on two books, *Death On The Brighton Road* and *Three South London Walks*. The exhibition and the books combine the writings of Jon Newman (Lambeth Archivist) and the artwork of David Western who have explored and depicted the histories of Battersea, Herne Hill and the Brighton Road using the work of artists such as Whistler and Ruskin. The exhibition contrasts historical images, archival documents and objects with contemporary watercolour landscapes, mapping and sound recordings of each place, to reflect on vanished localities and current responses to a rapidly changing South London.

There are Curator's talks on **Thursday 15 June** at 12.30 pm and **Tuesday 20 June** at 6 pm and a guided walk *Battersea Nocturne*, on **Thursday 29 June** at 8.30 pm. Meet beside statue of James Whistler on north side of Battersea Bridge, SW3.

The exhibition continues until 29 June at Morley Gallery, 61 Westminster Bridge Road, SE1 7HT.

June on the Bandstand

Sunday 11 June Here to Havana, an Afro-Cuban big band, who are well known to audiences in Clapham.

Sunday 25 June Clapham Community Choir, singing on the bandstand for the first time, will present a selection of World War I and II songs, traditional and modern songs from Britain and elsewhere, and jazz pieces.

Their conductor Adam Saunders will also conduct the young people's jazz orchestra which he trains, the Merton Youth Jazz Orchestra. The Choir will perform some numbers with the MYJO, which will play its own distinctive jazz repertoire as well. Clapham Community Choir warmly welcomes new members. Information can be found on the website singclapham.org.

Open Garden Squares Weekend

Don't forget that on **Saturday 17 June** and **Sunday 18 June** there is an unrivalled opportunity to visit around 230 gardens, many of them private and only open to the public on this one weekend of the year. Tickets, valid for the weekend, cost a mere £13.00. See full details, the list of gardens and buy tickets at opensquares.org.

The First Clapham Saints: A London Village 1600-1720

On **Sunday 4 June** at 3pm Timothy Walker will be talking about his recent book at Clapham Library, Mary Seacole Centre, 91 Clapham High Street, SW4 7DB. Tel: 020 7926 0717.

In the early seventeenth century, Clapham was just another small village outside London, but from 1630 it became home to a group of radical Puritan merchants. After the Restoration, Clapham continued as a centre for nonconformist merchants, so much so that it was described as a 'Whig Warren'. *The First Clapham Saints* explains why they chose Clapham and gives an absorbing picture of the village community, the relationships within it, and the part its inhabitants played in the major events of the time.

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

Acting Secretary

Tel: 020 7498 9205 Email: maevsullivan@gmail.com

Treasurer

Tel: 020 7720 7536 Email: david.brown@centrum-uk.com

Membership Secretary

Tel: 020 7627 4770 Email: jeverett@waitrose.com

Meetings and Events

Tel: 020 7720 7449 Email: christinearms52@hotmail.com

Annabel Allott

Maev Sullivan

David Brown

Jennifer Everett

Christine Armstrong

Common and Open Spaces

Tel: 07977 454229

Email: andrew_summers_london@yahoo.co.uk

Planning Matters

Tel: 020 8674 1727 Email: pjashford@yahoo.co.uk

Roads and Transport

Tel: 020 7720 9370 Email: mark.leffler88@gmail.com

Newsletter and Publications

Tel: 020 7622 6360 Email: alysonwilson.sw4@gmail.com

Andrew Summers

Philip Ashford

Mark Leffler

Alyson Wilson

Details of meetings, activities and a full list of our publications are on our website at claphamsociety.com