



The Clapham Society Newsletter

Issue 397

May 2017

CCMAC's Common People 2017



'Common People' will take place on **Saturday 27 May**, the Bank Holiday weekend, from 2 pm until 7 pm. Now in its third year, the event celebrates the diversity of south London's musical and spoken word talent. Over the course of the afternoon there will be a variety of live acts on the Bandstand, while on the hardstanding around it there will be stalls for community groups. These will include Bandstand Beds with lots of plants, the Clapham Society who will be giving a guided walk around the Common at 3.30 pm, The Spinney with natural thinkers activities, Dr Bike carrying out free cycle maintenance along with the local police security marking bikes, and Friends of Clapham Common. There will also be a bring 'n' share picnic so feel free to add your favourite dips, salads or cakes to the communal hamper.

'Common People' kick starts the summer season of Bandstand concerts supported by Lambeth Council but run by Clapham Common MAC, the community body helping the council manage Clapham Common. The Clapham Society is sponsoring the Crystal Palace Band's concert on **Sunday 3 September**.
David Dandridge

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 22 May

Ghostsigns. Fading on walls across the world are the ghosts of advertising past, still whispering the slogans of old. Once brightly coloured and promoting everything from Black Cat Cigarettes to Hovis Bread, these painted signs are now 'ghosts' of their former selves. Since 2006 **Sam Roberts** has been photographing, researching and archiving evidence of this outmoded form of advertising.

In a richly illustrated talk he will offer a brief history and share the stories that these signs tell, if you care to listen.

For more information about Ghostsigns visit ghostsigns.co.uk

Monday 26 June

Black Cultural Archives: Past, Present and future. **Victoria Northridge**, Collections Manager of Black Cultural Archives will be talking about the 30-odd year history of the organisation. 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 during July and August.

Our first summer walk will be on **Tuesday 6 June**, when Timothy Walker's walk, **The development of a Victorian suburb** tracing the development of the area between Clapham and Wandsworth Commons will leave from Clapham South Underground Station at 6.30 pm.

Tuesday 27 June

Summer Party. Our Chairman, Annabel Allott, has kindly invited us to hold the Society's summer party in the garden of her house on Clapham Common West Side. A ticket application form is on the back page of this newsletter. Numbers are limited, so you are advised to apply for your ticket in good time.

May is Book Month in Clapham

In our April newsletter we gave full details of Clapham Book Festival on **Saturday 6 May**, organised by Clapham Writers. The day's events will be held at Omnibus, and you can find the details and book tickets at omnibus-clapham.org. Or just go along to Omnibus at 6.30 pm on the day and meet the local authors.

In addition Omnibus celebrates its literary heritage (remember the building was once a library) with a festival of storytelling, entitled *And That's Another Story*. Highlights include:

Sunday 7 May at 11 am and 2.30 pm. *The Lighthouse Keeper's Lunch*, a much loved children's classic by Ronda and David Armitage, is brought to Omnibus in an all new musical extravaganza, packed with live music, audience participation and all the sights and sounds of the sea.

Tuesday 16 May until Thursday 18 May at 7.30 pm. *Lucy, Lucy and Lucy Barfield* by Lucy Grace, the real-life Lucy who inspired the little girl in C. S. Lewis' Narnia books.. On stage is Lucy Grace who is obsessed with the Narnia books. She discovers that Lewis has dedicated his novel *The Lion, the Witch and the Wardrobe* to the real Lucy – his god-daughter, Lucy Barfield. Grace decides to track her down and this is a very personal and poignant tale of her quest.

Friday 19 and Saturday 20 May at 7.30 pm. *We Are Brontë* by Publick Transport. Described as a 'mini comedic masterpiece' – Two would-be performers make an over-ambitious attempt to present a physical interpretation of the Brontë myth without having done the proper research.

There is lots more in the programme during the month. For all details and to book tickets go to omnibus-clapham.org, call 020 7498 4699 or Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side.

Lambeth Readers' and Writers' Festival runs for the whole month of May with events in libraries throughout the borough. On **Wednesday 31 May** at 6.30 pm Paul Crooks will be giving an Ancestry talk at Clapham Library. Get the full programme from Clapham Library, 91 Clapham High Street, SW4 7DB or other Lambeth libraries.

Wandsworth Heritage Festival

This annual festival will run from **Saturday 27 May to Thursday 11 June**. The brochure will be available at Wandsworth libraries and on line early in May, and some highlights will be shown in our June newsletter.

Beer and Bread Festival

On **Monday 1 May** from 1 pm to 5 pm Brixton Windmill's Mayday festival offers a selection of ales, beers, breads, pastries and cakes from local businesses, including the Brixton Brewery, Canopy Brewery and the London Beer Lab, the Old Post Office Bakery and Parissi Café.

Inside the windmill visitors can meet volunteer millers, who will be busy operating the electric-powered millstones and bagging up freshly milled flour that will be available to buy on the day. For more details email info@brixtonwindmill.com

Bedroom Farce

To celebrate their 30th birthday Southside Players are performing Alan Ayckbourn's *Bedroom Farce*, which was their first production in 1987. Thirty years on, Southside is a thriving theatre group staging three main productions a year in Balham. This anniversary production features Roderick Murrey who was in the original production and is directed by Liz Steer, one of the founders of the group. Performances are from **Wednesday 31 May to Saturday 3 June** (half-term) at Chestnut Grove School Theatre, Boundaries Road SW12 8JZ. Tickets £10, £7.50 concessions (Wednesday and Saturday only). Performances at 7.45 pm Weds-Friday, Saturday at 5.00 pm. Box office: 07914 657524 or book online at southsideplayers.org.uk.

The Arts Society Clapham Common

The next lecture is on **Wednesday 17 May** at 11 am at the Clapham Picturehouse when Peter Medhurst's subject is *Vivaldi in Venice*,

The first visit will be to the St Pancras Renaissance Hotel on **Monday 26 June**. Places are limited and issued on a first come, first served basis. Further information available at theartsociety.org/claphamcommon. Membership is still open and new members are warmly welcomed.

Royal Trinity Hospice

On **Saturday 20 May** Royal Trinity Hospice will celebrate its 125th Anniversary with a service at Southwark Cathedral. The service will be led by the Bishop of Southwark who is the hospice's patron. For more information and to apply for tickets email southwarkcathedral@royaltrinityhospice.london.

42 Clapham Manor Street: London Russian Ballet School Planning Appeal

Following a great deal of work by both local residents and the Society resisting this damaging development (our reasons are explained in the article in the February 2016 newsletter), we are very disappointed to announce that the appeal against Lambeth's refusal to grant planning permission for the extension to the Ballet School has been upheld and planning permission granted.

Having been refused planning permission by Lambeth at the end of 2015, the Ballet School appealed to the Secretary of State. The appeal was finally heard at a Public Inquiry this January and both the Society and local residents presented evidence to it. However the Planning Inspector concluded that there was no harm to the listed Dispensary building (because it had already been much altered internally), and while he agreed that there was some damage to the character of the conservation area (notably the loss of the open aspect at the rear of the buildings), he considered that this was outweighed by what he saw as the public benefits arising from the enlarged ballet school. He considered that the impact of the development on the amenity of neighbours was acceptable. On the basis of these conclusions he upheld the appeal and granted planning permission.

He also decided, harshly in our view, that costs should be awarded against Lambeth on the grounds that the Council had behaved unreasonably in the way it had handled the decision to refuse the application and the subsequent appeal.

This means that the Ballet School can now go ahead with construction once they have complied with the necessary planning conditions, one of which is a Construction Method Statement, designed to manage the impact of the construction process on surrounding residents and streets.

Murderous Maths Show

On **Saturday May 13** from 10 am to 1.30 pm Kjartan Poskitt, author of the hilarious children's Murderous Maths books will be doing a show of Maths, tricks, strange facts, jokes, illusions, making magic squares and flexion activity, and tons of audience participation! Aimed at age 9 to 12, but all welcome age 9 and up. The Glebe House, 6 Rectory Grove, SW4 0DZ. Tickets £15 from theglebehouse.london.com/events

Up in Smoke

We had a very full house for our March meeting when Peter Watts talked about the history of Battersea Power Station, as told in his recent book *Up in Smoke: The Failed Dreams of Battersea Power Station*.

He first showed the view of the power station, familiar to so many approaching Victoria Station by train – now obscured by new blocks of flats. Peter then outlined the early plans for the power station, showing us pictures of several designs which did NOT get built, and spelling out the many objections

which included the allegation that the power station would ‘kill every green thing within two miles of Battersea, rot all the buildings and bleach all the babies’.

We then heard and saw the details of the power station we did get, built to the designs of Sir Giles Gilbert Scott, architect of Liverpool Cathedral and the K2 red telephone box. Digging began in 1929, the foundation stone was laid in 1931 and by 1937 the completed half of the power station (A Station) was already being hailed as a wonder of world engineering. Construction of B station continued more slowly during the war, so that the fourth chimney only finally went up, to complete the power station, in 1955.

The next few years were Battersea Power Station’s golden age, when it supplied power to one-fifth of London and had around 1000 employees. This was not to last long. With aging equipment and the advent of the nuclear age, Battersea’s A station was decommissioned in 1975, and final closure came in 1983. One incident in the final years, fondly remembered by many locals, was the Flying Pig, when Algie the inflatable pig attached between the chimneys for the cover photograph of the rock band Pink Floyd’s album, broke loose and caused chaos in the skies over London (including the closure of Heathrow airport) before crash landing in Kent.

The 35 years since the closure of the power station have seen many plans for its use, and Peter showed us a variety of fascinating photographs of proposals. Winner of the initial competition to develop the site was John Broome, chairman of Alton Towers theme park, who confidently named the opening date of his new theme park as 21 May 1990. After years of problems and protest he admitted defeat. Over the next 13 years the Hong Kong developer Victor Hwang commissioned one scheme after another from starry architects, but nothing got built. Later plans included a proposal by Roman Abramovitch to relocate Chelsea Football ground to the power station, a roller-coaster wrapped around the building and many more. Finally the site was bought by the Malaysian developer, now responsible for the present work. Many of us have followed the progress over the last four years, with varying reactions.

The story, with all its twists and turns, objections and approvals, ups and downs, is totally fascinating and told clearly and entertainingly in Peter’s book. *Up in Smoke: The Failed Dreams of Battersea Power Station* by Peter Watts, price £20 is available from Clapham Books, 26 The Pavement, or on Amazon.

We need your help

The Clapham Society will have a stand at the following local events this summer and urgently needs volunteers to help. If you have an hour or two to spare on any of these dates please contact the organiser shown below for details.

Saturday 27 May Common People, Peter Jefferson Smith (peterjrs1@mac.com)

Saturday 10 June St Paul’s Fair, Bill Emmett (bill-sue@perlem.demon.co.uk)

Saturday 17 June Holy Trinity Fayre, Jennifer Everett (jeverett@waitrose.com)

Saturday 24 June Abbeville Fete, Christine Armstrong (christinearms52@hotmail.com)

Saturday 2 September Lambeth Archives Festival at St Leonard’s Church Streatham, Alyson Wilson (alysonwilson.sw4@gmail.com)

Saturday 2 September Clapham Old Town Fair, Jennifer Everett (jeverett@waitrose.com).

Could you Mentor a Child?

Award-winning charity, Chance UK, supports primary school children experiencing emotional and/or behavioural difficulties. We encourage children to develop their strengths, self-esteem and life aspirations through a year-long mentoring programme. We are looking for individuals interested in the exciting challenge of becoming a volunteer mentor. Could you be a role model for a child who would really benefit from your time?

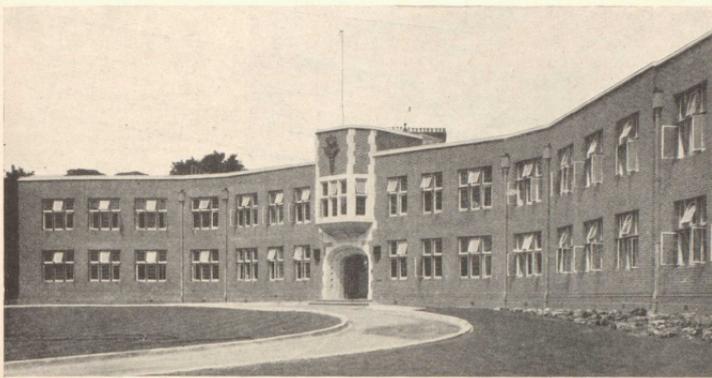
Our volunteers commit to mentoring for a whole year, enjoying fun 1:1 sessions with their matched child once a week (after school or at weekends). All volunteers receive comprehensive training before becoming a mentor and support from a Chance UK Programme Manager throughout the mentoring year. No previous experience working with children is necessary. We look for people who are committed, resilient and have a great sense of humour!

To find out more, please visit chanceuk.com or contact me at volunteer@chanceuk.com / 020 7281 5858 ext 211.

Sophie Hay

Volunteer Recruitment Officer, Chance UK

HEADQUARTERS FOR THE UNION OF POST OFFICE WORKERS, CLAPHAM
MESSRS. L. A. CULLIFORD AND PARTNERS F. AND A.A.R.I.B.A., ARCHITECTS.



Wandsworth Arts Fringe

This festival which runs from **Friday 5 May** to **Sunday 21 May** includes theatre, exhibitions and events throughout the borough. The full extensive programme is available now from Wandsworth Libraries, Omnibus and on line at wandsworthfringe.com.

Our latest Green Plaque

Following the recent unveiling of our Green Plaque celebrating the change of the Union of Post Office Workers Headquarters in Crescent Lane, to apartments by Galliard Homes, we have now put a brief history of the building on our website. Go to claphamsociety.com/Articles/Plaque9.html to read this and see some interesting pictures of the building soon after completion in 1937.

Westminster Attack: death toll includes Leslie Rhodes from Clapham

On Wednesday 22 March, when Khalid Masood drove a hired car at pedestrians on Westminster Bridge, two were killed on the bridge and 50 were injured.

Leslie Rhodes was mortally injured as he crossed the bridge after an appointment at St Thomas's Hospital. He died the following day at King's College Hospital. Seventy-five year old Les Rhodes, a retired window cleaner, lived in Macaulay Road. He moved to Clapham from Battersea with his family in the 1970s, but lived alone since his parents and brother died some years ago.

Rhodes worked for a window cleaning company in Croydon for many years before setting up his own business with a friend he met at The Sun in Old Town. In an *Evening Standard* interview, his friends reported that Les was proud that one of his clients had been Winston Churchill, whose windows he cleaned at Chartwell.

Les was fondly remembered and described by neighbours 'as nice a man as you could meet.' It was his neighbours who went to King's College Hospital to keep a bedside vigil for him until his death.

His next door neighbour Michael Carney, who had known Les for decades, told *The Guardian* 'You couldn't let someone like that die alone... My wife, Christine, and my two daughters [Emma and Rachel] went up there and stayed with him. The doctors got us to take his favourite music, which was Queen... He couldn't have got better care than the hospital. They were all amazing. The doctors kept on past their shift to stay with him.' Les Rhodes died on the 23 March.

Exactly a week after the attack, a ceremony on flower-strewn Westminster Bridge commemorated all of Masood's victims, the injured and those he killed: PC Keith Palmer, Aysha Frade, Kurt Cochran and Leslie Rhodes.

On 6 April another victim was added to the death toll. Andreea Cristea, the Romanian woman who fell into the Thames during the Westminster attack, died of her injuries.



Photo: Chris Matthews

Dana Kubick

Clapham Chamber Concerts

On **Friday 12 May** TROUPE returns to Clapham Chamber Concerts to perform a recital of music old and new for cello, piano and voice interspersed with poetry readings. Catherine Carter, Jessie Maryon Davies, Sophie Rivlin and Kate Wakeling will perform Shostakovich's *Cello Sonata*, songs by Dowland and Berio, and original compositions by Catherine Carter. The concert starts at 7.30 pm at St Paul's Church, Rectory Grove, SW4 0DX. Tickets on the door at £12, £10 concessions and Friends of CCC, £5 children. For further information email claphamchamberconcerts@gmail.com.

Clapham History Articles

As reported in the March newsletter members of the Local History Sub-committee have been contributing regular articles to the *South London Press* since January. We have now started adding these to our website. Go to claphamsociety.com/Articles/localhistory.html and scroll down the list to find one that interests you. So far you can read about Adam Worth: The Real Moriarty and the story of the painting Flaming June, and very soon you will also be able to see all about Dr Ward and the Wardian Case as well as Fu-Manchu, and many more articles will follow.

If walls could talk... On **Wednesday 31 May** at 7 pm, **Saturday 3 June** and **Saturday 10 June** at 11 am and 3 pm volunteer guides will be leading tours of Battersea Arts Centre uncovering the rich layers of the building's history and sharing some of their own personal connections. There are limited spaces so book in advance on 020 7223 2233.

Town Hall Talks On **Wednesday 31 May** the free talk at 6 pm is entitled *Boom time: The Social Impact of the Industrial Revolution in Wandsworth and Battersea*. Tickets are free but must be booked in advance at bac.org.uk/townhalltalksbooking. Complimentary drinks will be provided. BAC Lavender Hill, SW11 5TN.

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

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

Annabel Allott Meetings and Events

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

Maev Sullivan Planning Matters

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

David Brown Roads and Transport

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

Jennifer Everett Newsletter and Publications

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

Christine Armstrong

Philip Ashford

Mark Leffler

Alyson Wilson

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

Cut here

TICKET APPLICATION FORM

Summer Party in the garden of Annabel Allott on Clapham Common West Side on Tuesday 27 June from 6.30 pm to 8.30 pm. Drinks and canapés.

Please send me tickets @ £12 each. Cheque, payable to the Clapham Society, for £..... with a stamped self addressed envelope to: Alyson Wilson, 22 Crescent Grove, SW4 7AH.

Name.....Telephone number.....