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ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

Wednesday 19th March 2008

The Herne Hill Society's Annual General Meeting will be held Wednesday 19th March at the United Church Hall at the top of Red Post Hill. Please note that we have had to reschedule from the usual second to the third Wednesday on this occasion because of an alternative event in the Hall.

As usual, the current committee will stand down and a new committee will be elected. There is an outstanding vacancy for someone to contribute to our work and to take minutes of meetings. The Committee meets monthly, generally on the first Tuesday of each month, conducting the Society's business with lively, friendly discussions. Please contact the Chair, Vice-chair or Secretary for further information.

Nominations for Officers and Committee members must be made before the start of the AGM. If you wish to nominate someone for the committee, please be sure he or she is willing to stand!

After the formal AGM, and free tea, there will be an illustrated talk on the Royal Pharmaceutical Society Museum (see listings for details). This will be a preview to a possible group visit later in the year.

Please make every effort to attend. See you there.

NEWSLETTER

NO: 102 Spring 2008

80p

Free to
Members

HERNE HILL SOCIETY EVENTS

At Herne Hill United Church Hall, at **7:30 for 7:45pm**, unless otherwise stated.

Wednesday 13 February:

"Mary Seacole" by Daphne Marchant,
Lambeth Councillor and former Mayor.

The life and career of the heroic black nurse of the Crimea. Cllr Marchant's short biography of nurse Seacole appears in Black British - a Celebration. (See review in this issue.)

Wednesday 19 March:

(Please note revised date)

Annual General Meeting, followed by talk

"'An Heirloom to be Handed Down.' Behind the scenes at the Museum of The Royal Pharmaceutical Society"

Briony Hudson, Keeper of the Museum Collections at the RPS's headquarters on Lambeth High Street, will provide an illustrated insight into the history of the Museum and its collections of 45,000 objects relating to British pharmacy history.

Wednesday 9 April:

"Revolt of the Councillors" by Chris Sumner,
Chair of Waltham Abbey Historical Society

The story of 30 East London councillors who went to prison in the early 20th century for trying to get a fairer method of funding local services.

Wednesday 14 May:

"Warmington Road and the Shrubbery Lodge Estate – the Origins of a Victorian Street" by Jeff Segal.

A look at the development of the small Herne Hill road which was to be the home of Richard Church, Joe Ackerley and Sam King.

Wednesday 11 June:

"Introduction to Morden Hall Park" by Maureen Patel

A preview of the National Trust property we shall be visiting for the Society's summer outing in August.

D.T. MacDonald

BSc MCOptom

Optometrist

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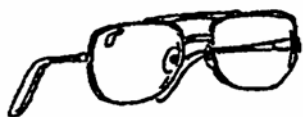
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FROM THE CHAIR

Happy New Year to all our readers.

2007 was a busy year for the Society and 2008 is already promising the same. As you will read elsewhere, the Junction Project is at the very crucial Planning stage, and we look forward to a positive outcome after all the hard work that has been put in. There are also great regeneration opportunities for the centre of Herne Hill around the old Sorting Office and petrol station sites, now that we have our new Conservation Area in place, and we look forward to having influence there.

There are also exciting developments around a long needed community Notice Board for Herne Hill; in a joint initiative with the Herne Hill Forum, the Society received a Grant from Southwark Council and plans are now underway for the notice board to be sited in Half Moon Lane.

The committee continues to work hard on your behalf, and I am delighted to say that a number of people responded to my appeal to come forward to help with events or planning matters. Thank you very much to them all. We still need someone to take the notes at our monthly meetings, and I continue to hope that someone will come forward for this vital role. Please!

Lastly, we celebrated our twenty fifth anniversary in several ways, as you will have seen in the Newsletters; and I am pleased to say we have donated young trees to our two favourite local parks to

continue the celebration for years to come.

The editorial team hopes you enjoy reading your Newsletter and would welcome any comments or offers of help. Please do get in touch, email contacts on the back page.

SN

NORWOOD ROAD TREES

Southwark has recently planted trees along Norwood Road, between the Junction and Croxted Road.

This will make a big difference to a rather run-down part of our area.

However, we will continue to press for further long-overdue improvements – not just to the shopping parade but also to the railway arches to the rear.

LETTER FROM PHILIP REINDERS

Kindly would I like to ask you if you can help me with some research that I am doing at the moment.

I am looking for the relatives of a Herne Hill soldier who was killed during the Battle of Arnhem, September 1944.

Private John G. R. E. WILLIAMS, Age 36, Army No.6107376, he served with 181 Air Landing Field Ambulance, missing since 21 March 1945. He was the Son of Mr John G. and Mrs Elizabeth A. Williams and husband of Mrs B. R. Williams of Herne Hill, London.

Is there any way you can help?

Yours sincerely,

Philip Reinders, Netherlands
Email: airbornecompany@chello.nl

NEW MEMBERS JOIN THE PLANNING TEAM

Two new members have joined the Society's Planning Team. Laurence Marsh, a resident of Fawnbrake Avenue, is a former barrister who now edits art and legal books. Practising architect, Michael Rundell, fairly recently moved to Herne Hill and lives in Dorchester Drive. As a consequence our Secretary, Jeff Doorn, has decided to step down from the Group to be able to focus more on his other Society activities and other interests.

As members will know, we monitor all development planning and licensing applications relating to Herne Hill, that have been submitted to Lambeth or to Southwark. Most applications raise no problems. However, where Group members feel there are issues that should be brought to the attention of the relevant local authority Committee, the Society will either submit comments or object to the application. We always welcome members' suggestions for cases that could merit examination.

MEMBERSHIP

Many thanks to those who have kept me very busy and renewed their subscriptions so promptly this year. The Society is most grateful to those who donated so generously to our funds and signed the Gift Aid form. It appears that the s.a.e. enclosed with the renewal form proved popular and helpful.

I hope to receive all outstanding subscriptions soon, but for those who may have forgotten to renew, there will be a reminder form with this issue.

I am now able to email updates and news of our monthly meetings to over eighty members

And most importantly, welcome to Oliver Stutter, who has joined as a Life Member and to two other new members: Esther Hughes and Rita Mayer.

*Caroline Knapp
Membership Secretary*

HERNE HILL CONTROLLED PARKING ZONE *public consultation*

Those of our members living in the area affected by the proposed CPZ should have been notified of a public meeting to discuss the results of the Stage 2 consultation. The meeting was held on 13th December and over 50 people attended, excellent in view of the cold night and the fact it had been arranged at a week's notice in the run up to Christmas.

The consultation showed strong support for a CPZ in the streets near to Kings College Hospital and around Ruskin Park. There was little support for controls from the roads in the centre of the area, and mixed views from the streets near to Herne Hill station. There had been strong support from this area at an earlier stage; but it seems a number of people changed their mind after they found out the level of the charges. However, Lambeth Officers still propose to introduce controls in this area. This is mainly on the grounds that, being so close to the station and shops, residents have difficulty finding parking spaces during the day, particularly since Southwark introduced controls in nearby streets.

The Society has never expressed a formal view on the proposals, as we felt that it should be down to residents affected to have their say. However, we were concerned to learn at the public meeting that Lambeth were intending to give serious attention to a petition drawn up by a resident opposed to the scheme. Our concern was that, although the consultation exercise had gone to everyone and had been comprehensive and fair in its questions and coverage, the petition was only circulated to a limited number of people and asked questions in a way that encouraged them to oppose the scheme. The Society Committee discussed this at its January meeting and has written to the Council expressing our concern that the results of the formal consultation exercise should not be affected by such a biased petition.

Lambeth has not yet replied.

DT

HERNE HILL SOCIETY FINANCES

The final approved accounts for 2007 will not be published until the March AGM. However, we are pleased to report that the Society's finances remain in a very healthy state.

Provisional accounts show an excess of income over expenditure in 2007 of nearly £1,200, giving us a cash balance at the year end of over £9,000. We are in this position not by accident, but through the efforts of members who have helped and supported our fund-raising and income generating activities. We are very grateful for all their hard work and commitment.

Our financial position means that we can keep membership subscription rates unchanged for yet another year.

In the last Newsletter we asked for suggestions for ways of using some of our surplus to finance projects or activities that will benefit Herne Hill. We have to retain a reasonable financial reserve. However, we would still welcome members' ideas on how we might put some of this resource to good use.

The full approved accounts will be available at our 19th March AGM.

Please e-mail us after that date, using the 'contact us' button on our website, if you cannot attend the AGM but would like a copy.

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Herne Hill Regeneration: Fiction and Fact

A Planning Application has been submitted to Lambeth covering the necessary changes to the Park boundary. These changes are an integral and essential part of the Regeneration Project. However, realigning the Park boundary is only one element of what is a



Our MP, Tessa Jowell (right) and GLA member, Val Shawcross, showing their support for the project during a visit to Herne Hill on 19 January

much wider, holistic scheme that will impact positively on the whole of the centre of Herne Hill. At the time of writing we are still waiting to learn when Lambeth's Planning Committee will be considering this application.

The Herne Hill Society has given its full backing to the Regeneration Project because it will bring great benefits both to Herne Hill and to Brockwell Park. The Project commands wide support amongst local residents and traders. It has been endorsed by all three Herne Hill Ward Councillors, our GLA member, our MP and at a vote of the full Lambeth Council. However, despite the clear and undoubted benefits, some have been opposed. Unfortunately, some of that opposition has been expressed in terms that misrepresent the true position and may have misled others into mistakenly expressing reservations about the project. Here are just some examples:

The project will "drive a road across the Park".

Reality: Rather than the image of a road bisecting the Park, only a very tiny part of one corner (0.2% of the total Park area) will be affected; and that area's current run-down character will be significantly improved.

"24 mature trees will be lost".

Reality: No mature trees will be lost. A mature maple close to the road will be preserved and additional trees will be planted.



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The proposals are a “mega traffic scheme” and a “traffic engineer’s solution”.

Reality: The basic concepts underlying the proposals as well as the overall design itself come from local people, with the main objective being to improve the quality of life and amenity of residents, pedestrians, cyclists and public transport users. A proposal for a real ‘traffic scheme’ was put forward by the consultants W S Atkins at an early stage in the project. It was soundly rejected.

The scheme will result in “a gigantic traffic island”.

Reality: Rather than the image of an enormous traffic dominated roundabout, there will be an attractively designed and landscaped pedestrian area, complete with trees and providing a ‘bridge’ to link the upgraded Railton Road, the pedestrian zone at its southern end and the Park itself.

“There has been no real consultation with local residents since 2004”.

Reality: The current scheme is in all essential aspects the same as that which received wide support in the 2004 public consultation. Throughout the project’s development, Park representatives, residents and representatives from a variety of local organisations have sat on the Project Steering Committee. Regularly updated information has been provided in the Herne Hill Society Newsletter and on our website, the Herne Hill Forum Blogspot and articles in the Friends of Brockwell Park Newsletter. Last year Lambeth issued a newsletter to some 3,000 local residents describing the project. Information on the scheme has been displayed at the Lambeth Country Shows and in many local restaurants and shops. Project updates have been a feature of all Herne Hill Forum meetings. There have also been a number of meetings and discussions held with representatives of Park interests.

“Less of the Park could be taken”

Reality: The position and configuration of the slip road is dictated by pedestrian and highway safety considerations. Mindful of Park users’ concerns, there have been two changes to the proposed position of the slip road, both of which have reduced the impact on the Park. It would be impossible to move the slip road further without seriously compromising pedestrian and highway safety and reducing the potential for high quality design of the pedestrian area.

“The public toilets near the gate will be demolished.”

Reality: The public toilets have been out of operation for years. They are an eyesore and the Park can only benefit from their removal. And, whatever the outcome of the Regeneration Project, they will be demolished anyway under the plans for Phase 2 of the Heritage Lottery Fund bid for the Park. The Junction Project Board is arguing strongly for suitable replacement toilets to serve Herne Hill.

“Other options that take less of the Park have not been properly modelled.”

Reality: Five design options were considered, four of which were modelled by independent consultants. The fifth, that would have had the most impact on the Park, was rejected at an early stage. Modelling of the four options clearly showed that, in terms of pedestrian, cycle and vehicle safety, bus movements, environmental quality, landscape design and smoothing vehicle flows, the design chosen provides the best ‘fit’ between all interests whilst achieving all the project objectives, including minimising the impact on the Park.

There will be “damage to heritage views.”

Reality: The current Park entrance, and the area around, has for too long been an eyesore and a mess. Removing the toilet block and other unsightly structures and replacing them with well landscaped and attractive pedestrian areas can only enhance the quality of the Park entrance and the views of the Park itself from that entrance.

“Traffic will flow past it [the Park entrance] much faster”.

Reality: Restricting the width of the slip road, introducing speed tables and integrating the carriageway design with the pedestrian areas will ensure that traffic speeds are controlled. The priority given to pedestrians will mean that people can cross all the roads at the junction in safety; it will also resolve the current unacceptably hazardous pedestrian access to the Park.

I could go on, but will leave it there in deference to readers’ patience and to lack of space. Without the changes and consequent improvements to the Park boundary, none of the scheme will go ahead. Without these changes we will have lost this opportunity to regenerate Herne Hill. It will be a very long time before we get another chance.

John Brunton

DULWICH HELPLINE

If your New Year's resolution was to help your community, then come and join Dulwich Helpline! We are a small friendly charity, providing services and activities for isolated older people aged 55+ living in south Southwark. These include: occasional tea and chat with somebody, driving someone to a GP or dental appointment, tidying a garden, or helping at one of our activity groups.

No experience is necessary and we offer good support and guidance. If you have a little time to spare, and you would like to learn more, please contact

Louise Greene on **8299 4594**

Email - louise@dulwich-helpline.org.uk.

TREE CONSERVATION AND PLANTING IN LAMBETH

No one likes to see trees lost. However, sometimes they do have to be removed. After inspection, the tree officer may recommend removal because the tree was dead, dying, diseased, implicated in a subsidence or damage to property claim or for health and safety reasons, for example a trip hazard.

There is no overall policy for removals. Each tree inspection is treated individually and on its



London Plane Tree

own merits. For example if tree roots are pushing up a footway, Highways Department and the Tree Officer reach a joint decision as to whether the tree roots can be removed and the footway re-laid, thus saving the tree. If major roots must be removed this would cause the tree to be unsafe, then the tree would unfortunately have to be removed. An apparently dying tree would not always be automatically removed. It may be decided to leave the tree and inspect again, say in six months, to see if it has recovered.

When a tree is removed or lost, for example in a storm, the location is added to a planting list. This list also includes requests from residents. These sites are considered in the order in which they are received with sites carried over from the previous year given priority. All sites are then surveyed for their



Lime Tree

larger spreading tree.

The species of trees are normally chosen on the advice of a Tree Officer who will inspect the location to ensure that an appropriate species is

selected, the actual species used will be subject to availability from tree Nurseries. There is no problem with planting ornamental trees.

However, fruit bearing trees other than those



Maple Tree

with small berries are not planted, and the roots of some cherry species are known to cause problems to paving and thus are also to be avoided. Through the Council's cyclical maintenance the species that are now used should remain manageable

throughout their useful lifetime.

At the present time Lambeth has a budget to plant about 100 trees from the request list. There are currently just under 200 sites on the list.

The practice of reducing trees is often mistaken for pollarding. Pollarding is the removal of the whole of the crown back to what could be described as a bare knuckle. However, a reduction is a part of the crown being removed, between 10% 50%, depending on the recommendation of the Tree Officer. Once reduced, a tree needs re-reducing approximately every 3-5 years. This is because re-growth from the reduction points will be prone to weakness once they reach a certain size. This work is usually carried out on certain species of street trees (London Plane, Lime and Maple).

*Owen Whelan,
Tree Section, LB Lambeth*

Trees for London (also called Trees for Cities) based in Kennington Park, has also planted street trees in Herne Hill and other parts of Lambeth and Southwark. For example in Brantwood Road, Kestrel and Fawnbrake Avenues, many new flowering trees were planted several years ago to replace mature trees that had died and been removed. The trees were looked after by Trees for London for three years and then handed over to Lambeth Council for future care. This excellent scheme supports the London Boroughs with street tree planting schemes and helps to keep our city green.

SN

SOCIETY WEBSITE - NEW FEATURES

We have added some new features to the Herne Hill Society website – an 'Online Heritage Trail' of Herne Hill; and a list of forthcoming events in the area.

The 'Online Heritage Trail' shows a map of Herne Hill with coloured pins indicating the main places of interest. Click on a pin for a short description and, in most cases, a picture. Yellow pins show churches, blue pins are for community facilities e.g. libraries, the green pins are parks and open spaces. Small 'people' show where lived many of those who are featured in the 'Herne Hill Personalities' book. Click on the icons to find out more about them. To access the 'Online Heritage Trail', go to www.hernehillsociety.org.uk, click on 'Herne Hill History', then on 'Online Heritage Trail'.

The second addition to the website is a list of forthcoming events in and around Herne Hill. There is a tremendous amount that goes on in our area that many of us do not know about but would like to support or participate in if only we knew. This 'what's on' list, updated monthly, is designed to fill that gap. And you can help. If you would like us to publicise your local event please send us an email with full details including date, time, venue and contact number, to info@hernehillsociety.org.uk. To access the list go to www.hernehillsociety.org.uk, click on 'Events and Meetings' and open the file at the bottom of the page.

We would welcome your comments on either of these additions. You can do this by sending us an e-mail via the 'contact us' section of the website.

THE PLANNING BILL

Members may have read in the press about the Planning Bill, currently being considered in Parliament. It has recently had its second reading and is due to become law by the summer. Perhaps the most controversial aspect and certainly the one that has caused most press comment, is the proposal to create an 'Infrastructure Commission' which would decide on major projects such as airports and power stations. This would comprise members appointed by the Government and would mean that such decisions would have more limited democratic scrutiny than happens at present.

This proposal would be unlikely to affect Herne Hill directly. However, of more concern is the proposal to amend what are called 'permitted development rights' whereby certain extensions and changes to houses do not need planning permission. At the moment these are based on size and volume of the proposed extension. But it is proposed to relax the rules so that in the future these will be considered on the basis of their impact. This might mean a very small extension, which could be allowed at the moment, would need permission if it was in a very visible location. But a much larger scheme, if it for example was in a large garden and couldn't be seen from the street, might not. The aim behind the proposal is to cut the number of these small householder applications by about 20% overall. The Society is concerned that it will reduce our ability to comment on schemes that could affect the quality of our local environment. In addition, because it is based on likely impact rather than simply size, it is possible that it might increase the number of applications and have the reverse effect to that intended.

We have written to our MP, Tessa Jowell, asking her to express our concerns to her Ministerial colleagues.

DT



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REBUILDING RED POST HILL BRIDGE

Officials from Southwark Council and Network Rail faced intense questioning at a public meeting at St Faith's Church in November 2007. The meeting had been called to discuss the planned closure, prior to rebuilding, of the 140 year old Red Post Hill railway bridge at North Dulwich station. The bridge closed on 20th January following the necessary road works under the Village Way bridge.

The Network Rail Project Manager and a spokesperson from Southwark Highways together gave a detailed presentation on the background to the project and the scope of the works. But the audience was much more concerned about the lack of consultation, prior information and the lack of forward planning for the likely consequences.

The official line seemed to be that something had to be done about the bridge, which has seen weight restrictions change repeatedly in the past few years. Now that Transport for London funding is available the work will simply go ahead according to the very detailed project plan.

Amongst the audience's many concerns were possible flooding under the Village Way bridge after the road level had been lowered to allow diverted 37 buses to pass; the difficulty of the P4 turning sharp left from Half Moon Lane into Village Way; displacement of traffic from Red Post Hill into neighbouring streets; and traffic congestion on Village Way. They also wanted more information about the likely disruption from the 19-week construction and closure period.

The Southwark Council officer did his best to answer these concerns. However, in many cases he could only say the issues would be monitored while the works were underway.

There is a legal requirement that for any repair work to bring the bridge up to the standard EU weight capacity. This could mean 44-tonne lorries going along Red Post Hill, i.e. six times higher than the current 7.5 tonne limit (which buses only are allowed to breach). There can be no width restriction because buses have to get through. However, there might be other possibilities. On environmental grounds Southwark could restrict the weight limit to 7.5 tonnes. But again, there was no commitment given.

Some asked why the work had to be done at all when the bridge could last another 30 years on current loads. Apparently it is to allow the 37 to cross. The route could not use Village Way permanently because, it was claimed, bus users do not like diversions and because the road surface could only be lowered temporarily.

Lots of other details still have to be resolved, like improving cycle safety over the bridge. Pedestrians and dismounted cyclists will get access to the station throughout the works (except on one or two of the three planned weekend railway closures).

The rebuilt parapet will follow the current design pretty closely, although the bricks will match the station (which they don't do at present). Only the central section between the heraldic reliefs will actually be removed and rebuilt, although the whole bridge deck (right up to the station front door) will be lifted and replaced. All street furniture will be replaced exactly, though there is some question over the splitter kerb in the middle of the roadway. Southwark conservation officials appear to want to rebuild it lower and in brick, though that might deter speeders less than the high structure does at present.

SN

MIDWINTER SWIM BROCKWELL LIDO

A Midwinter Swim was held at Brockwell Lido on Saturday 22nd December in glorious but freezing weather with a water temperature of 3.5 degrees (that's 38.30 in old money). Brockwell Lido Users (BLU) were doing the catering and we didn't know whether to expect ten people and a dog or, as it actually turned out, 120 people including 70 brave swimmers and no dogs at all.

We ran out of milk (twice) and cups, and had to send runners out for supplies. At least three original members of the Icicles Club, of whom Peter Bradley writes so eloquently in his book *Out of the Blue*, were there and one of them took the plunge. Peter gave a short talk about the Icicles, and Henri Bouquiere described being lowered into the pool through a cut-out hole in the ice, during the winter of 1962/3.

At mid-day, after a health and safety briefing, swimmers (aged from 8 to 80-something), some in bikinis, some in full wetsuits, entered the water. Most remembered the advice to wear a swimming cap and to keep their heads above water. Some were more reckless and did front crawl across the pool to minimise their time in the water. All were jubilant when they climbed out. I was a mere spectator, clad in a coat resembling a duvet but, next year, who knows.

I would certainly recommend the occasion for spectators as well as swimmers. I am sure that, thanks to Gethan Dick's fantastic organisation, this event will become part of Brockwell Lido's calendar, so see you there next winter solstice.

Yvonne Levy

NEW CONSERVATION AREA

I am pleased to be able to tell you that on 13th December 2007 following lobbying by the Society, with support from Councillor Jim Dickson, a new Conservation Area was designated on the Lambeth side of Herne Hill. It is at the bottom of Herne Hill itself, and consists of the Old National Westminster Bank (the Three Monkeys), Bank Mansions and Chambers, the Old Fire-station (Sainsbury's), the old Sorting Office, and the two blocks of Herne Hill Mansions. Also included is the new building on the site of the old Post Office, and the empty plot where the petrol station used to be.

There is now a continuous link with the Stradella Road Conservation Area, on the Southwark side, which includes a good stretch of Half Moon Lane as well as the Half Moon Tavern. It was the idea of one of our members, who was previously Lambeth's Conservation Officer, that Lambeth Council needed to complete the protection of their part of the original centre of Herne Hill area by this move, and we are delighted that this has happened.

We are now waiting for the public consultation on the draft Conservation Area Statement. This will be a detailed appraisal of the special architectural and historic interest of the Conservation Area, providing guidance and management proposals for the existing buildings and for any future planning applications.

SN

SOUTHWARK AND LAMBETH ARCHAEOLOGICAL SOCIETY

February 12th:

Various speakers

Recent Local Archaeological & Historical Work

March 11th:

Dee Cook - Archivist

**The Worshipful Society of Apothecaries of
London, Past and Present**

April 8th:

Gillian Tindall - Author and Researcher

Wenceslaus Hollar, The Man Who Drew London

May 13th:

Chris Constable - Senior Archaeological Officer
A Year in Southwark's Archaeology

June 10th:

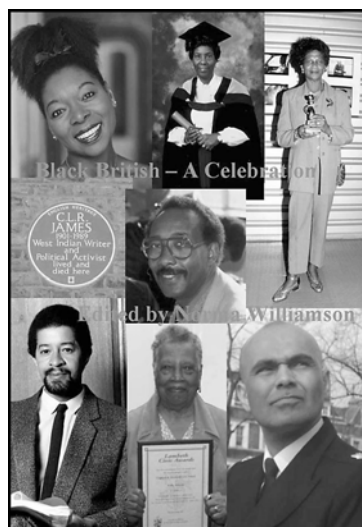
Evening Walk

See SLAS News nearer the date

All lectures Tuesdays at 7:30 pm. at Co-Op Hall, 106 The Cut, Waterloo, SE1 8LN, between Cornwall Road and the Young Vic. Light refreshments are served at 7:00. Visitors £1.00 towards costs please.

BLACK BRITISH – A CELEBRATION

The Brixton Society's latest book was produced as part of the 200th anniversary commemorations of the



abolition of the slave trade. The object was to create a permanent record celebrating the contribution made by black British people to our national and local life.

With an introduction reproducing the speech given by MP Keith Hill at an event in Brixton marking the bicentenary last

year, the Lottery funded book presents the stories of fourteen notable people. They range from short biographies of such famous figures as Mary Seacole and C L R James to reminiscences of people, some widely known, others less so, all of whom have considerable achievements to their credit.

Some of the entries are first person narratives, some incorporate interview quotations, while others are entirely third person reports, including one obituary. This makes for a variety of styles, the different voices contrasting and blending in a refreshing mix.

The article on Mary Seacole is by Daphne Marchant, who is also giving an illustrated talk on the same subject at Herne Hill Society's February meeting. The article concludes with a useful bibliography and list of websites for further study.

C L R James also features in our own book Herne Hill Personalities. The new article complements our longer biography; and there is in addition an outline of the Brixton Advice Centre, above whose current premises James lived.

A constant theme in this inspiring book is the high level of motivation and public spiritedness shown by all. In whatever field of endeavour – shop assistant, bus conductor, writer, educator, entertainer, restaurateur, town planner, police superintendent – they worked hard to make a life for themselves and their families, often in the face of racism and deprivation. What is more remarkable, they found time and energy to "put back" to the community in a variety of voluntary roles.

We have all heard of such luminaries as Floella Benjamin and perhaps one or two others listed; but it is also good to be introduced to some equally selfless people who have made such a difference. Congratulations to Brixton Society for singing these otherwise unsung heroes.

Black British – A Celebration is available from HHS Publications, P O Box 27845, London SE24 9XA at £4.50 + 50p postage.

GOOD NEWS FROM THE FRIENDS OF CARNEGIE LIBRARY

As users of any Lambeth Library will have noticed, many of the staff are noticeably more relaxed after some months of being very worried. The worry was that they would lose their jobs. The Library Service was planning to employ an additional tier of junior managers and pay for them by dispensing with a larger number of non-managers. Happily, that plan has been abandoned.

The change of plan is connected with the resignation of the two most senior officers responsible for the Library Service, the Director of Cultural Services and the Head of Libraries, and the appointment of replacements. The Friends are very grateful to the new Director, Garath Symonds, for finding time at the end of a very full first week in his new post to open our Winter Fair. He stayed for some hours and is very interested in the library and the Friends.

The new Head of Libraries is Sandra Goodwin. She was appointed very quickly without the usual local authority rigmarole of advertising the post and so on and her appointment, at least initially, is therefore temporary. She was previously with the Library Service and we have written to welcome her back.

The Winter Fair was, as always, a great success. The library was crowded with local people obviously having a very good time. The Mayor of Lambeth, Councillor Andrew Gibson, attended and took a very active interest in all the activities, even finding time to chat to every single stall holder.

Stephen Carlill, Chair of the Friends



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VOTE FOR IDA

Glamorous film star, writer and director Ida Lupino is in the running for a blue plaque – and you can help her win. Every year, Southwark Council installs blue plaques in each Community Council area to honour a person, place or event chosen by the people. It's a way of celebrating the borough's heritage; but you don't have to be a Southwark resident to vote.

Ida Lupino was born 4th February 1918 in 33 Ardbeg Road. The site is included in our Herne Hill Heritage



Ida Lupino

Trail. The daughter of dancer Connie Emerald and musical comedy star Stanley Lupino, young Ida showed a flair for acting, writing and stagecraft early on. A child star in England, she left aged 15 for Hollywood, where she rose from ingénue to award winning actress. By 30 she was also writing and producing films, and then broke through

barriers as a highly respected director. Adding TV stardom and direction to her credits, plus music and children's books, she is remembered as a multi-talented pioneer who helped young actors starting out and opened a door for women directors. Ida died in 1995. Further details of her life and career are in Herne Hill Personalities.

Vote for Ida Lupino by email to vote4icons@southwark.gov.uk or write to Blue Plaques, Culture Service, Chatelaine House, 186 Walworth Road SE17 1JJ; postcards are also available in Southwark libraries. Let's celebrate Ida's 90th birthday by bringing a blue plaque to her Herne Hill birthplace.

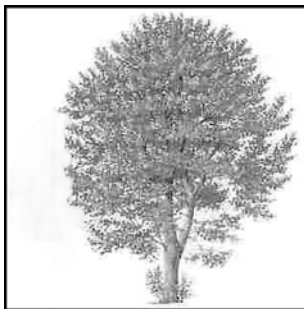
JD

TWENTY FIFTH ANNIVERSARY TREES

The Committee decided that a good way to celebrate the Society's 25th Anniversary would be to plant trees for the future in both Brockwell and Ruskin Parks. We chose Whitebeam, (*sorbus aria*, a close relative of the Mountain Ash). It is a native tree, providing white flowers in spring, orange berries in autumn and, most appropriately, the backs of the leaves are an attractive silvery white colour.

The Brockwell Park tree is one of a new group of three on the main path between the Herne Hill and the Rosendale Road gates, opposite the end of Croxted Road. It joins the now mature Italian Alder planted to celebrate our Fifteenth anniversary in 1997. The date of the annual Tree Celebration is Sunday 1st June so I

hope many of you will come along to support the official 'unveiling' of this new tree.



Whitebeam

the Whitebeam will enhance the existing planting scheme.

When next in either of the parks, do make a point of finding our new trees and wishing them well.

SN

CHRISTMAS LIGHTS 2007 WHAT A TURN-ON!

At 4.30pm on the 30th November, tired and weary commuters wending their way from Herne Hill Station at the end of yet another busy week had their spirits gently lifted by the sound of 50 children from St. Jude's Primary School singing Christmas carols under the canopy of the station forecourt. In this they were ably assisted by Hilary Brindley and friends on brass and wind instruments and assorted parents, passers-by and prospective 'Bing Crosbys' from the Commercial Pub.

At 5.30pm the entire entourage made its way to 'Pizza Piazza' at the junction of Railton and Dulwich Roads and was treated to complimentary pizza for the children and mulled wine and mince pies for the young at heart. Giles Gibson of the Herne Hill Forum



Photograph courtesy of Danny De Costa Studios, Dulwich Road

welcomed everyone and gave a brief outline of our hopes for the plan to link station and park with a pedestrianised area at the end of Railton Road. Then, with the children leading the countdown, the Christmas lights burst into life just before the clouds did the same. A big thank goes to Rasta Santa and Whippersnappers for passing out toys and sweets to the children; and to the Herne Hill Society for supporting the whole event.

*Jim Davidson,
Herne Hill Traders Association*

PLANNING AND LICENSING

276 Rosendale Road

We objected to an application for a three storey block of flats fronting directly onto the pavement of Guernsey Grove and occupying the whole of the site including what is currently a rear garden. Our objection was on the grounds of loss of green space, creation of a sense of enclosure and overlooking to neighbours, the impact on parking stress in the surrounding streets and breach of a number of Lambeth's planning policies.

Lambeth has refused the application.

Bar 127, 127 Dulwich Road

We objected to an application for the extension of an existing license to allow these premises, inter alia, to operate until 5.00am at weekends. The application includes a proposal to use an outside area to the rear where customers will be permitted to drink and smoke. In our view this would cause unacceptable noise and disruption to nearby residents

The application was subsequently withdrawn.

5C Dorchester Drive

An application for an extension to the rear of this property includes a small first floor terrace. Whilst not formally objecting, we have urged that, before reaching any decision on the application, Lambeth Planning Committee is satisfied that this terrace will not result in any unacceptable overlooking onto neighbours or loss of privacy.

Vacant Plot on Milkwood Road

There has been an application to redevelop this long vacant site bounded by railway line and opposite 251 to 275 Milkwood Road. The proposals would involve building nine terrace houses with eleven off street parking spaces.

We have not formally objected to the application. However we have made the following observations to Lambeth's Planning Committee:

- The views of Lambeth's Bio-Diversity Officer should be obtained, on how best to minimise the loss of trees and wild life habitat arising from the development.
- Everything possible should be done to preserve existing trees and maximise the potential for new tree planting.
- To improve the visual quality of the street scene along Milkwood Road, the terrace houses should be staggered.
- There should be no compromise of highway safety for pedestrians and cyclists as well as vehicles using Milkwood Road.
- A substantial 'Section 106' contribution should be obtained from the developers towards the costs of the Herne Hill Junction Regeneration Project.

PATRICIA PLUNKETT – MY SISTER

The author of this article was pleasantly surprised to come across 'Herne Hill Personalities' in a bookshop last year, as there was a familiar face on the cover!

It was interesting to read the short biography of my sister's life in the Herne Hill Society's book of personalities, an impressive list of past residents both famous and notorious. Patricia Plunkett, 'Pat' to her family and friends, was a charming and kind-hearted woman who never became spoiled by her success. Friends and neighbours always admired her for her warmth and friendliness.

The family had lived in 48 Half Moon Lane since 1934. During the war we were scattered at times for various reasons. However, we had assembled again after some comings and goings due to collapsed ceilings caused by flying bombs. My mother and we three girls were back for the VE celebrations in May 1945. Sadly, my father, an Australian veteran of World War I, had died in 1943 and so never saw Pat's great success. He would have been pleased and proud, as he always encouraged and supported us in all we did.

By 1945, Pat had left school and been accepted by the Royal Academy of Dramatic Art. She had been keen on acting as a small child when, with sisters and



friends, she took part in plays in the large room at the top, which ran the length of the house. Pat was not at RADA for the full term as she was picked out at a student performance by an agent and offered a part in Stage Door, a theatrical

drama with a large cast. In this production she was noticed by critics and managers and her career took off. From drama school straight to the West End, it was a very quick rise.

While she was at the Academy, however, Pat made many friends and was part of a very talented year, which included Roger Moore, Aubrey Woods and Jill Bennet. Moore visited No. 48: invited to supper as just another student, he sat at our kitchen table and drew cartoons. He was a talented artist as well as a would-be actor. Who would have guessed the fame to come! Later, we became used to answering the door to visitors we had seen previously in the newspapers and film magazines. We had always

enjoyed the cinema, and eventually Pat entered films, starting with the Ealing drama *It Always Rains on*



Sunday. She began to attend premieres and other social events, meeting many celebrated Hollywood stars including Douglas Fairbanks, Dana Andrews, Maureen O'Hara and Jane Wyman.

Her first leading role in the theatre, *Pick Up Girl*, by American playwright Elsa Shelley, came unexpectedly. The play, controversial for its time, caused a sensation when first staged at the New Lindsey Theatre Club by director Peter Cotes. Queen Mary, widow of George V, had seen the production. Culturally the 1940s were a different world. There was strict censorship under the autocratic control of the Lord Chamberlain's office; but with its tragic social realism, the play was licensed for staging in the West End. However, the leading lady was contracted elsewhere, affording an excellent opportunity. After many readings and auditions, Pat won the part, a great achievement for a young actress who had appeared only once before in the West End.

I remember well, before the first night, Pat sitting in the dining room in Half Moon Lane in tears, saying 'I'll never be able to do this.' The prospect of playing in the large Prince of Wales Theatre before critics and audience had become too much. The family responded with tea and



encouragement; and the following night, amid flowers, telegrams and first night excitement, she gave a sincere and touching performance applauded by audience and critics alike. To those of us who were there, it was like a familiar scene from a film – the one where the local girl realises her dream to

become a 'real actress'.

Pat went on to do a great deal of work, both in theatre and film. I was looking through my souvenirs the other day and was impressed by the number of charitable events actors took part in at that time.



Among her films, *For Them That Trespass*, with Richard Todd and Stephen Murray, is one of my favourites. Ernest Raymond, author of the novel on which the film is based, wrote her a congratulatory letter which

she always prized.

After Pat married actor Tim Turner in 1951, she moved away from Herne Hill, but never left for good, always coming back for family celebrations. For those interested, a quick search of the Internet will reveal numerous sites listing her films – the cast lists are like a roll-call of British talent in those early post-war years.

Lorraine Greenslade

SILVER ANNIVERSARY READINGS

Ten intrepid members chose and rehearsed material to read for our 12th December meeting. On the night we faced a crisis, as one reader had lost her voice and was unable to attend. But the show must go on, and thankfully Ros stepped into the breach at virtually no notice. Whew!

We offered just over 40 pieces mixing prose, poetry, speeches, drama and song. Beginning with headlines from 1982, the year our Society was founded, the programme presented 'silver' in a variety of contexts from Poe to Yeats, Hamish Hendry to Walter de la Mare. We also covered hallmarks, silver spoons (in the mouth), thimbles and a Shakespearean casket.

Anniversaries were explored by the likes of Hopkins, Larkin, playwright Dodie Smith and the ever popular Ogden Nash. We commemorated Auden, MacNeice, Blake, Sibelius, Elgar and Whittier, himself marking the anniversary of the end of slavery by Britain and calling for its abolition in America. Herne Hill writers Wendy Cope, H D Lowry and Joe Ackerley also received a welcome airing.

The audience received our efforts with laughter and applause. They also joined the silver-clad readers singing 'By the Light of the Silvery Moon' before the delicious interval punch and hot mince pies, and 'Look for the Silver Lining' at the evening's end.

JD

THE ROOM OF LOST THINGS

Herne Hill author Stella Duffy's previous novels have taken readers as far as California, New Zealand and fairytale fantasy realms. This new book is firmly set here in our own South London. The focal point is the Loughborough Junction shop, a re-imagined Super Dry Cleaners, where Robert Sutton has worked, man and boy, for 50 years. Intending to retire, he takes on young Akeel Khan as apprentice-partner and potential owner. Over the course of a year, as Akeel learns the business, the two men learn about each other, their family histories and themselves. Akeel must also gain the confidence of his customers and become acclimatised, discovering as he commutes from East London that 'a regular river crossing is the gift of South London'.

Given the culturally diverse area, there is a rich array of characters who regularly pass by, visit the shop or



have a connection with Robert, and in some cases with each other: the two homeless men sharing a beer on a discarded sofa on the pavement, the health visitor and her clients, the Australian au pair and her employers, the drug dealer and his family, the gay fitness instructor and his would-be boyfriend, the Poet of the 345. They are acutely observed, from speech

patterns to innermost thoughts and feelings; and the streets, shops, parks and other amenities they use are lovingly described. As well as we think we know our neighbourhood, an accomplished novelist like Duffy reveals details and aspects we might never have noticed. She plays with perception, too, allowing characters and readers to make false assumptions about someone's race or type, or suddenly to see the beauty in a previously ignored or disdained building. Perspective is a recurrent motif, with views through windows, from hill tops, through trees or from bridges; and there is an amusing take on whether the view from South to North or vice versa is better.

The location is a character in itself; indeed the novel was originally to be called Loughborough Junction. As Robert says, '...there's something about a crossroads, people coming through, traffic all the time.' It is also a most apt symbol. Here, 'exactly halfway between Brixton and Camberwell', where SE24 meets SE5 and SW9, all the characters are at a crossroads in their lives.

Robert's shop is a hub, the place people bring their clothes to have stains removed so they can start afresh. They often leave things in pockets – the ephemera of daily life, items perhaps once important or valued, but now dismissed, overlooked, forgotten. Robert keeps them all,

continued on Page 14

catalogued in boxes, along with a few secrets of his own, in the room of lost things. But apart from the coins, jewellery, wedding speeches, tickets, lists and letters neatly filed away, there are other losses: youth, freedom, purpose, loved ones, confidence, memory. Particularly poignant is Patricia Ryan, elderly former nurse, who wanders from her Denmark Hill flat through Ruskin Park, stopping into St Philip and St James, bringing her bills to Robert to sort out or sitting in a warm bank trying desperately to remember where she lives.

The novel's setting will give it special resonance for members of this and other local Societies and Friends groups. There is a hauntingly lovely chapter on Ruskin Park, as well as scenes in Brockwell Park and Lido; the Carnegie Library and even this newsletter get a mention. For all that, the book's humanity and universality will ensure a far wider appeal; and if you crave the exotic, there are flashbacks to Brazil and Pakistan. But it is good to know that our part of London will, through this absorbing novel, be introduced and made better known to readers far and wide. Who knows, just as there are 'Da Vinci Code' tours of Rome, we may see people visiting our neighbourhood clutching copies of *The Room of Lost Things*.

JD

STOP PRESS: Stella Duffy will be reading from her new novel and signing copies at Carnegie Library on Monday 10th March at 6.30pm for 7.30pm. Free refreshments. All welcome.

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MURDER BY CHLOROFORM: THE TRIAL OF ADELAIDE BARTLETT:

The October talk by Robert Flanagan

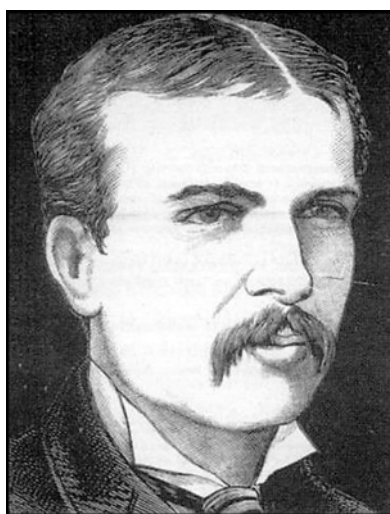
Chloroform was discovered almost simultaneously by Samuel Guthrie in New York in 1830, and by Eugene Soubeiran in France in 1831. It was produced by mixing distilled alcohol with bleaching powder, and sold in the U.S.A. as "sweet whiskey".

Scientists had been searching for suitable substances for anaesthesia. Humphrey Davey (1778-1829) had discovered the intoxicating effect of nitrous oxide, or "laughing gas" and became something of a star as a result. Chloroform was used extensively by Sir James Simpson from about 1849. It was safer than ether but still dangerously cardio toxic. By 1930 100,000 deaths had been directly attributed to chloroform. It can be ingested or inhaled, causing vomiting, burning of the mucous membranes, hypoxia and heart failure, with liver and kidney failure following on behind. Not a substance to trifle with then.

We now move to the story of Edwin and Adelaide Bartlett, so well described in the 'Herne Hill Personalities' book. Edwin was a partner in a grocery business with shops in East Dulwich and Herne Hill. In 1875 he met and married Adelaide Blanche de la Tremouille, a pretty 19 year old Frenchwoman, and moved to a flat over their shop in what is now Railton Road. Edwin, though only 29, had little interest in sex, only once, in fact, according to Adelaide. Nevertheless she had a child although it died at birth.

Edwin's father accused Adelaide of having an affair with her brother-in law, always denied by Adelaide. The couple now moved to Lordship Lane and then to Merton Abbey, where they met a 27 year old Wesleyan minister, George Dyson. An affectionate relationship now developed between Adelaide and

George, apparently with the consent of Edwin. By 1885 husband and wife were sleeping in separate bedrooms, probably because of Edwin's severe halitosis. Some years previously he had had all his teeth sawn off at the gums, resulting in serious decay.



Edwin Bartlett

In 1885 they moved to furnished rooms in Pimlico, where Edwin became ill with "sub acute gastritis". His rotting stumps were removed by a dentist, but Edwin was still ill and unhappy. In December 1885, George Dyson bought three small bottles of

chloroform, at Adelaide's request, from various chemists. At that time chloroform had domestic uses, as a liniment and stain remover.

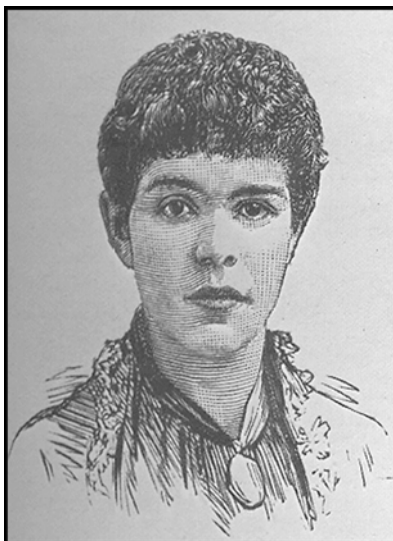
On New Year's Day 1886 Edwin suddenly died. The post-mortem examination found his stomach to contain liquid chloroform, later confirmed as the cause of death. Strangely, no traces of chloroform were found in the mouth or throat, or evidence of



The Bartlett Shop, Railton Rd.

burning of the membranes. Adelaide was accused of Edwin's murder, causing a huge sensation. The charge against George Dyson of being an accessory was later dropped, and he vanished into obscurity. Adelaide was defended by the renowned barrister Edward Clarke QC MP, who based his case largely on the lack of evidence on how the chloroform had been administered. Despite the judge's obvious belief in Adelaide's guilt, the jury decided to acquit her, "on insufficient evidence, though with the gravest of suspicions". After the trial Adelaide returned to Orleans, and is thought to have then emigrated to America. The Queen's surgeon, Sir James Paget famously remarked "Now the case is over, she should tell us in the interests of science how she did it".

Robert's talk ended with some fairly grisly details of cases of rape and murder involving the use of



Adelaide Bartlett

chloroform. One described the death of a young girl, known to be an amphetamine abuser, whose body was found pathetically sprawled on the frozen ground one winter night recently. It was assumed that she had died of cold, but unexplained burns on the mouth led to the finding of chloroform in the stomach. A person has been charged with her murder, though an appeal is still in progress - a sobering end to an excellent and most interesting talk.

DC

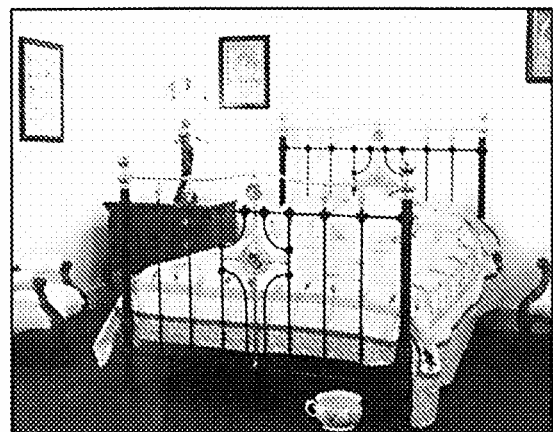
FROM THE ARCHIVES

The following letter was printed in "The Norwood Press and Dulwich Advertiser" newspaper in the edition of March 6, 1915. The microfilm of the paper is at the Lambeth Archives.

Golf in Brockwell Park

SIR,- I am pleased to inform the 500 local inhabitants who signed the petition last year to play golf in Brockwell Park that the London County Council have sanctioned the game being played there every week-day, weather permitting, from the opening of the gates until 9 a.m., subject to the players conforming to the regulations laid down by the park superintendent. A nine hole course has been designed, and will be ready shortly. A club has been formed, with a 5s subscription [about £18 at today's prices], for social purposes, competitions, and to maintain the course, and I shall be glad to hear from intending members. I thank the supporters for their co-operation in obtaining this concession for the locality. Hoping the pastime will further the interests of the sterner game now on in teaching the players to shoot straight. - Yours, &c.,

A.W. WEBB



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THE STORY OF BANKSIDE

The November talk, by Leonard Reilly

Strictly speaking, Bankside is no more than a short street, one of Southwark's oldest, running from Bank End, where the Cannon Street railway crosses Clink Street, to a point between Blackfriars Bridge and Tate Modern. It now usually describes the riverside from the Oxo Tower in the west to Southwark Cathedral in the east and much of north Southwark.

Southwark was a late developer, though some Neolithic remains have been found. The low-lying, marshy nature of the area, frequently flooded, meant that Roman settlers preferred the higher land on the north side of the river. Though there is evidence of buildings on the drier part along Borough High Street. After the Romans left Britain in 410 A.D., London was gradually abandoned. An early document of 914 mentions Southwark and a minister there. By 1106 an Augustinian Priory was established, later known as the Priory of Saint Mary Overie, and finally to become our Cathedral in 1905.

In the 13th century, demand for land was high enough for embankments and drainage ditches to be built. The frequent floods spoiled crops and pasture, though ten tide mills made use of the tidal flow. The population of Southwark grew, reaching about 2,000 before the dramatic fall caused by the Black Death in 1381.

There were two docks, St. Mary Overie Dock, a natural inlet at the east end of Clink St., (which is still there) and Moulstrand Dock, where Tate Modern stands today. Goods were transported by Thames

lighter-men, as distinct from the watermen who carried passengers. Access to the river was by a series of stairs. By the 18th century there were 13 stairs, the oldest being at the end of Stoney Street.

By the early 16th century, the population of Southwark had risen to 10,000, with about 3,000 of these in Bankside, partly as overspill from the City. There, the authorities prevented non-English immigrants from plying their trades. Southwark became a popular place for haberdashers, goldsmiths, glaziers, printers, and shoe workers. With them came criminals and prostitutes. Southwark became notorious for its stews and bordellos, and was viewed as immoral, polluted, poor, unruly and industrial by those on the other side of the river. The City felt threatened by the lawlessness of Bankside, apart from the fact that none of the trades contributed to its revenue. It responded by buying up areas of land, notably St. George's Fields, which was then still divided into strips in mediaeval fashion. This became

AMITY READING CLUBS

Amity Reading Clubs meet twice a week, on Monday evenings 7-9pm and now, on Wednesday afternoons 2.30-4.30pm at Carnegie Library. Adults are helped to read and write on a one-to-one basis.

We would welcome committed volunteers for the afternoon sessions. The library is warm, the atmosphere welcoming and quiet, and the students are very grateful for our support.

Please call Caroline Knapp on **020 7274 2443**
or e-mail: cknapp@btinternet.com

a popular place for recreation and gatherings. In 1780 the Gordon Rioters met here and started on their four-day rampage, not omitting to sack the King's Bench and the Clink Prison on the way.

Bankside has a strong theatrical tradition, with the Rose, the Swan, the Hope, and the Globe theatres. They were circular and purpose-built, and famously frequented by Edward Alleyn, who used his profits to buy up the manor of Dulwich. The theatres had another use, as arenas for bull and bear baiting.

Frost Fairs were held on the Thames, the last one being in 1739. Now with milder winters and a fast-flowing river, we have to make do with a revival on the river bank. In 1755 the Borough Market was started, now once more flourishing.

Bankside now began to change significantly, with the breaking up of the Bishop of Winchester's Estate. New roads were laid, new bridges built, and industrialists acquired land close to the river. Warehouses and riverfront wharves arose, and coal and timber yards appeared where houses had stood. Charities were set up to care for the poorest of Southwark, the sick and the elderly, and schooling became more widely available.

Some imposing homes were built in the Stamford St., Blackfriars and Nelson Square areas. But mean little dwellings proliferated in St. George's Fields, lacking sanitation or refuse collection, and frequently flooded when the sewers flowed backwards at high tide.

Industry expanded apace with the busy wharves supplying brewing, glassmaking, engineering, food

processing, power generating and many more. Overcrowding was rife and living conditions often Dickensian and it seemed Government had neither the finance nor the desire to do any thing about it.

Here Len ended his talk, packed as it was with anecdotes and historical titbits and much appreciated by his audience.

DC

JUST WHO ARE THE EXPERTS HERE?

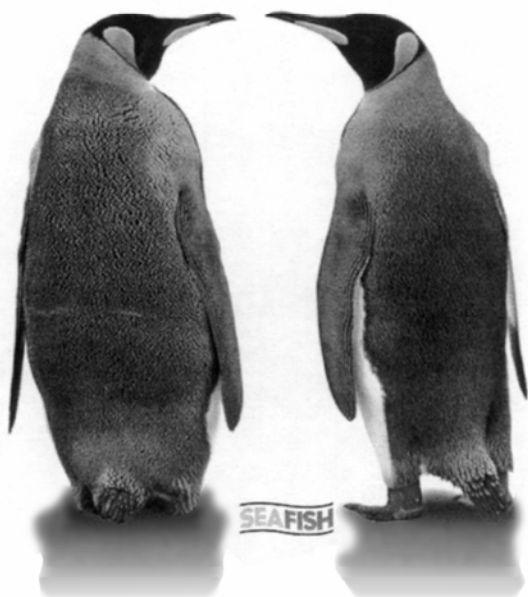
Herne Hill is about to undergo some transformations. There are many sites that are either being developed or are in line for developing. The centre of our community may look very different in a few years time.

The old post office site is being rebuilt, the old garage and sorting office is up for development. Network Rail has been making noises about the parade of shops in Railton Road between the station and Dulwich Road. Many railway arches and surrounding areas are ripe for change. Subject to planning approval, the changes to the junction and surrounding areas will also bring much welcomed change to the local environment.

All of these sites represent a major development opportunity and therefore register on the Council's radar.

continued on Page 18

*"Think I'll go for
the fish!"*



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Left alone, each site could be developed in any way the developers wish. After all they invariably say they are 'experts' and they know best, present their plans and ignore any feedback. There is unlikely to be any coordination between the various sites, no common style or attention to local needs and wishes. We may end up with a hotchpotch of unsuitable buildings that miss the bigger picture, leave out critical aspects of what a community needs.

Are we waiting for developers to come forward with a plan or are we stepping forward with a vision of our own?

It isn't just the centre of Herne Hill that needs a vision. The surrounding areas are crying out for change and improvement to create an environment that we want for the future, one not just our generation but future generations would feel proud of.

Should the local residential roads have through traffic restricted to give some safety and space back to children and pedestrians? Where are the cycle lanes, the safe routes to schools? Are we designing out crime or building it in? How high could the new buildings be – single storey or tower blocks?

However without a plan, a vision is just a dream. We have to work with Southwark and Lambeth to create the development plan against which any future planning application must be considered. This plan becomes the policy for the area and a map of how we get to where we want.

After all it is the local residents and traders who really know what is required on a day to day basis. They are the experts, not remote planners or council officers. If anyone tells you otherwise remind them that the Titanic was built by professionals but the Ark by amateurs.

*Giles Gibson
Chair: Herne Hill Forum*

SAINT SEBASTIAN IN DULWICH

Guido Reni (1575-1642) painted seven versions of Saint Sebastian, one of which was the focal point of Dulwich Picture Gallery for most of the 19th century and has become so again following its restoration in 1997-98. From 5th February to 11th May, 'The Agony and the Ecstasy: Guido Reni's Saint Sebastians' reunites the Dulwich painting with those from Genoa, Rome, Madrid, Ponce (Puerto Rico) and Auckland; the Louvre's version is too fragile to travel.

These six masterpieces have never been shown together before, so it is a rare opportunity to compare a range of views of the same subject by a great artist, all in one room. The images unite

religion and sensuality as the youthful martyr gazes towards the eternal. This beautiful and inspiring show is the first 'in focus' display in a new series concentrating on individual Dulwich Picture

Gallery paintings in a wider context.

Shown in the main gallery, normal admission prices apply: £5; seniors £4; Friends, children, disabled and students free. Dulwich Picture Gallery is



open Tuesday – Friday 10:00-5:00; weekends and Bank Holiday Mondays 11:00-5:00.

If you hurry, you can still catch 'The Age of Enlightenment' exhibition before it closes 17th February. That will be followed, from 14th March to 8th June, by 'Coming of Age: American Art 1850s to 1950s'. A review will appear in our next issue.

JD



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OTHER SOCIETIES' EVENTS

Continuing to 11 May Dulwich Picture Gallery:

"The Agony and the Ecstasy: Guido Reni's Saint Sebastians"

Sunday 17 February at 3:00pm Peckham Society:

"Recent Archaeological Finds in Southwark"
by Dr Christopher Constable, Archaeology Officer
at Goose Green Centre, St John's Church,
East Dulwich Road SE22

Monday 18 February at 8:00pm Streatham Society:

"The Brixton Windmill"
by Richard Santhiri
at "Woodlands", 16 Leigham Court Road SW16

Thursday 21 February at 8:00pm Norwood Society:

"Early History of Scouting in Surrey"
by Michael Gilbert, Crystal Palace Foundation
at Phoenix Centre, Westow Street SE19

Thursday 13 March at 6:30 for 7:00pm Friends of Carnegie Library:

Annual General Meeting
Join or renew and help improve provision & service;
NB New committee members needed.
Carnegie Library, 188 Herne Hill Road SE24

Friday 14 March – Sunday 8 June Dulwich Picture Gallery:

"Coming of Age – American Art 1850s-1950s"

Monday 17 March at 8:00pm Streatham Society:

"The Day it Rained Cats and Frogs" by Ian Currie
at "Woodlands", 16 Leigham Court Road SW16

Thursday 20 March at 8:00pm Norwood Society:

"The Evolution of the Postal Service"
by Brian Bloice, Streatham Society
at Phoenix Centre, Westow Street SE19

Thursday – Saturday 3 – 5 April at 8:00pm Dulwich Players:

"Accidental Death of an Anarchist", Dario Fo's
riotously satirical comedy of conspiracy & cover-up.
At Edward Alleyn Theatre, Dulwich College SE21.
£8 from boxoffice@dulwichplayers.org.uk

Thursday 17 April at 8:00pm Norwood Society:

"History of Post Cards and the Local Area" by John
Gent, Croydon Natural History & Scientific Society
at Phoenix Centre, Westow Street SE19

Sunday 20 April at 3:00pm Peckham Society:

Annual General Meeting; then at 3:30pm
"Peckham People & Places South of the Railway
Line" by John Beasley, Author & Local Historian
At Goose Green Centre, St John's Church,
East Dulwich Road SE22

Saturday 17 May at 11:00 – 5:00pm The Friends of Nunhead Cemetery:

Open Day. Local Societies' stalls, guided tours,
refreshments and more.

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Copy deadline for the Spring issue is Friday 18th April 2008.

Opinions expressed in this Newsletter are those of the authors, and not necessarily those of the Editors or the Herne Hill Society Committee.

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**Please contact: Brenda Jones
020 7771- 1409**

**THE HERNE HILL SOCIETY
Committee 2007 - 2008**

Chair	Sheila Northover	020 7274 2638
	Email: sheila.northover@virgin.net	
Vice Chair	John Brunton	020 8678 1757
	Email: johndbrunton@yahoo.com	
Secretary	Jeff Doorn	020 7274 7008
	Email: doornjeffrey@hotmail.com	
Treasurer	Rosalind Glover	020 8678 1757
	Email: rosalinglover@yahoo.co.uk	
Committee	Diana Chadney	020 7274 7210
	Email: diana.chadney@btinternet.com	
	Robert Holden	020 8674 5101
	Email: robertjholden@btinternet.com	
	Brenda Jones	020 7771 1409
	Bill Kirby	020 7274 0532
Membership Secretary	Caroline Knapp	020 7274 2443
	Email: cknapp@btinternet.com	
	David Taylor	020 7733 5031
	Email: davidjtaylor13@btinternet.com	
	Colin Wight	020 7733 2573
	Email: colin.wight@bl.uk	
Archivist	Vacant	
Newsletter Production	John Smallwood	020 7401 3561
	Mobile:	07956 468 466
	Email: johnvsmallwood@btinternet.com	

Editorial Address and Membership subscriptions:
Herne Hill Society, PO Box 27845, LONDON SE24 9XA
Website address: **www.hernehillsociety.org.uk**

**ENVIRONMENTAL
PHONE NOS.**

Lambeth Streetscene (cleansing, rubbish removal, pot holes, abandoned vehicles, graffiti removal etc.)

Phone number: **020 7926 9000**

Southwark Streetscene (equivalent):

Phone number: **020 7525 2000**

YOUR COUNCILLORS

Herne Hill Ward, Lambeth:

Jim Dickson (Lab.) jdickson@lambeth.gov.uk (07932 792 435)

Kirsty McHugh (Lab.) kmchugh@lambeth.gov.uk (020 7924 9038)

Becca Thackray (Green)
rthackray@lambeth.gov.uk (07946 219394)
c/o Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, SW2 1RW.

Thurlow Park Ward, Lambeth:

Irene Kimm (Con.) ikimm@lambeth.gov.uk (020 7926 2149)

Clare Whelan (Con.) cwhelan@lambeth.gov.uk (020 7926 2149)

John Whelan jwhelan@lambeth.gov.uk (020 7926 2149)

c/o Lambeth Town Hall, Brixton Hill, SW2 1RW.

Village Ward, Southwark:

Robin Crookshank Hilton (Con.)
robin.crookshank.hilton@southwark.gov.uk (020 8613 6046)

Toby Eckersley (Con.)
toby.eckersley@southwark.gov.uk (020 7701 3112)

Nick Vineall (Con.) nick.vineall@southwark.gov.uk (020 7358 3524)

c/o Town Hall, Peckham Road, London SE5 8UB

Your GLA Member

Valerie Shawcross AM (Lab.)
valerie.shawcross@london.gov.uk (020 7983 4407)

GLA, City Hall, The Queen's Walk, London SE1 2AA

Your MP

Tessa Jowell MP (Lab.) jowellt@parliament.uk (020 8333 1372)

House of Commons, London SW1A 0AA