

HERNE HILL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HERNE HILL SOCIETY ♣ ISSUE 154 ♣ Summer/Autumn ♣ 2022 ♣ £3.00



ALL CHANGE AT LOUGHBOROUGH JUNCTION

► *See page 14*

A WIN FOR HERNE HILL'S HERITAGE

► *See page 11*

THE POWER OF THE ARCHES

► *See page 17*



The Magazine of the Herne Hill Society



THE HERNE HILL SOCIETY

Chair	Rebecca Tee	chair@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Vice Chair	Laurence Marsh	vicechair@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Secretary	Michèle Arnal	secretary@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Treasurer	Martyn Hall	treasurer@hernehillsociety.org.uk

Committee

Henry Ferguson
Annie Gelly (co-opted)
Rosalind Glover
Ros Jones
Lin Proctor

Magazine	Laurence Marsh (editor)
	Sophia Marsh (design & layout)

COMMENTS & ENQUIRIES

To advertise in the Magazine	advertising@hernehillsociety.org.uk
To contribute to or comment on the Magazine	editor@hernehillsociety.org.uk
To comment on planning or licensing issues	environmental@hernehillsociety.org.uk
To order a publication	publications@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Membership enquiries	membership@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Local history enquiries	localhistory@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Herne Hill notice boards	noticeboard@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Website	webeditor@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Community safety	publicsafety@hernehillsociety.org.uk
Other issues	enquiries@hernehillsociety.org.uk

Postal and online addresses

The Herne Hill Society, PO Box 27845, London SE24 9XA
hernehillsociety.org.uk
Twitter @hernehillsoc
facebook.com/hernehillsociety

Opinions expressed in the Magazine are those of the authors and not necessarily of the Herne Hill Society Committee, which likewise does not approve or endorse the quality or suitability of any goods or services advertised in the Magazine.

CONTENTS

Museum of the Year	3
Brockwell boy	3
A welcome	4
Lambeth Heritage Festival	4
Out and about	5
Herne Hill Society Excellence Awards	5
Could you be our new treasurer?	5
Planning and Licensing	6
Cressingham Gardens	6
A local casualty of Russia's war	7
Auf wiedersehen	7
Transport news	9
Helen Hayes MP	9
Herne Hill Music Festival	10
Danecroft bombs	11
A win for Herne Hill's heritage	11
The power of the Arches	12-13
All change at Loughborough Junction	14-15
The Carnegie in 2022	16
Author events at the Carnegie	17
A history of Herne Hill's street trees Part 2	18-19
Dulwich: Mid-century Oasis	20
A quiet autumn day	21
A visit to Brantwood	21
An insignificant point, situated obscurely ...	22

ADVERTISING

Advertising space is available in this magazine at the following rates for one year:

Quarter page: £60

Half page: £120

Full page: £255, including back page according to availability

Please supply your own artwork.

For further details: advertising@hernehillsociety.org.uk

Front cover photograph by Colin MacInnes

Museum of the Year

The prestigious 2022 Museum of the Year award – and useful prize money of £100,000 – has gone to South East London’s Horniman Museum. The award was announced in July by the Art Fund, formerly known as the National Art Collections Fund, which has since 1903 been involved in assisting in the acquisition of works of art for public collections. Since 2003 the Art Fund has also sponsored the Museum of the Year award. In recent years the Horniman has gone from strength to strength in its remarkable bringing together of the worlds of nature and culture, in ways that celebrate community and diversity and encourage the will to learn. And how many museums can claim to have planted 900 trees and



shrubs? – as the Horniman have done to combat the pollution from the South Circular. The museum is also in the news for its decision – the first by a UK museum – to return 72 artefacts to Nigeria, including prized bronzes looted from the city of Benin in a

punitive raid by British soldiers in 1897. It is hoped that some of these objects will continue to be seen in future under loan agreements.

So where can the idea of a national art fund be said to originate? Who said in a lecture in 1857: “There ought to be a great National Society instituted for the purchase of

pictures; presenting them to the various galleries in our great cities, and watching there over their safety”? No prizes for guessing it was our very own John Ruskin.

The Herne Hill Velodrome has been the cradle for a remarkable range of cycling talent. The latest example is Fred Brockwell Wright – we will come back to that middle name. Born in 1999, Fred grew up in Herne Hill, on Croxted Road. Taken at the age of 8 by his father to see Bradley Wiggins racing at the Velodrome, Fred was initially unimpressed by the sport.



A young Fred at the Velodrome

But that soon changed and Fred won his first national title in the Under-14s Omnium. Fred was educated locally, at Rosendale Primary School and then at the Charter School on Red Post Hill. He secured a place at Bristol University to study psychology, but by now cycling played such an important part of his life he decided to concentrate on the sport, moving to Manchester to join the Great Britain Cycling Team Senior Academy. This year, as cycling begins to recover from the restrictions of Covid, Fred has seen growing international success, in the Tour of Flanders and also the Tour de France, racing with Team Bahrain Victorious, narrowly missing a

Brockwell Boy

first place in one of the stages. He was back home barely two weeks later for the Commonwealth Games in Birmingham where he won a silver medal in the individual time trial, beating pre-race favourite and Olympic gold medallist, Geraint Thomas.

So why the middle name Brockwell? Bill Brockwell, as Wisden enthusiasts will know, was a well-regarded cricketer who played for Surrey and England in the late 19th century. But that is not the connection. The name was chosen, Fred’s father has told this magazine, because of his parents’ affection for their local park – a great tribute to the jewel in Herne Hill’s crown.



Photo: Andy Thornley

Silver medallist at Birmingham 2022

And remember, spectating is always free at Herne Hill Velodrome. There’s a bar and food and it’s a terrific place to spot cycling stars of tomorrow.

A Welcome

The Society is delighted to welcome **Michèle Arnal** and **Ros Jones** to the Committee. Michèle is in fact returning, after an absence of four years and has kindly agreed to take on the role of Secretary of the Society.

Ros has lived in Herne Hill for almost 30 years. After a career in journalism and, until very recently, as a BBC producer, she now works freelance. The Society's planning group also welcomes her as a new member. She will be joining two others who have generously agreed to contribute to the work of the planning group: **Rafael Marks** is a practising architect with wide experience in major educational projects, a Herne Hill resident and trustee of two local schools; **Crispin Tuckley**, resident locally, is a former civil servant with a planning background who worked on national regeneration and land use policies.



Ros Jones

Lambeth Heritage Festival

The month of September offers a rich choice of walks, talks, events and exhibitions – numbering more than 40 – all part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival. Lambeth Archives, with support from the Lambeth Local History Forum, has again assembled this remarkable annual celebration. Full details are contained in the Festival brochure which can be found at <https://beta.lambeth.gov.uk/sites/default/files/2022-08/lambeth-heritage-festival-september-2022.pdf>. Herne Hill's heritage is not forgotten thanks to three guided walks.

How well do you know your Herne Hill? In these walks led by local historian **Robert Holden** you are bound to learn some things that will be new to you about our area. Each walk will last about two hours.

- **Saturday 10 September, 10am**
Herne Hill Heritage Trail - Central

Meeting: Ticket hall of Herne Hill Station 10am

The walk begins at the Grade II listed Herne Hill Station, with a look around Station Square, including the foyer building of the Cinema Grand (1913–1999). You will see the location of Herne Hill's very first cinema, the Picture Palace (1910–1915), meander around Poets' Corner, identify the location of the Wellcome Physiological Research Laboratories, and possibly visit Brockwell Lido. And a chance at the end to rest and recuperate at one of our splendid pubs.

- **Saturday 17 September, 10am**
Herne Hill Heritage Trail - North

Meeting: Entrance to the Velodrome at 104 Burbage Road
Herne Hill Velodrome is the oldest extant cycle track in the UK. Used in the 1948 Olympics, and today still a hive of activity. Explore a sports field, a grand viaduct, and a house that has two plaques but has had no less than three distinguished residents. You will see a folly, an artist's studio and the Grafton Ballroom. The walk finishes at North Dulwich Station, Grade II listed, as is the splendid K6 telephone kiosk inside the portico.



- **Saturday 24 September, 10am**
Herne Hill Heritage Trail - South

Meeting: Entrance to All Saints' Church in Lovelace Road

This tour starts at All Saints' Church, the only Grade I listed building in our area. Stroll down Rosendale Road, passing two schools, four houses built supposedly for the Ideal Home Exhibition in the 1920s, a former dairy, an early social housing development and a Grade II listed, brick-built bridge, the central arch of which is an ellipsis. Ends at the Bullfinch Brewery, just short of the glorious Brockwell Park. The walk from high church to brewery is downhill all the way...

**Book your place for any of these walks via
noticeboard@hernehillsociety.org.uk**

Out and About

The Society, with limited human resources to call on, cannot always take as active a role locally as it would like. However, this did not prevent us having a stall at the Ruskin Park Summer Fete in June, always a very enjoyable occasion. And three weeks later we were in front of Herne Hill Station at the Community Tent on a Sunday market day, selling a few publications, talking to people and handing out our newly minted 40 years anniversary booklet. Pat Roberts was, as ever, on hand to take some photographs. In the photographs shown below Lambeth Mayor Councillor Pauline George joined former Chair Sheila Northover, Rosalind Glover and Lucy Hadfield, Chair of Friends of Ruskin Park, and outside the station Chair Rebecca Tee was busy fielding enquiries.



Herne Hill Society Excellence Awards - open for entries!



There is much going on which enhances this area and creates the community that makes Herne Hill a great place to live. Our Awards feature the people, organisations or businesses contributing to the Society's three priorities of Community, Heritage/History and Environment.

But we need your help to put in the entries. Do you know of individuals or groups who are exciting, new, having impact, enhancing the community, encouraging local engagement or promoting civic pride in Herne Hill? Perhaps you are involved with something that you think is worthy of an Award? See the Herne Hill Society website

for full details of how to enter in each of the three Award categories:

www.hernehillsociety.org.uk/about-the-society/excellence-awards

The Excellence Awards are open now and it is quick and easy to enter. At the end of December 2022, the judges will decide the winners in each category and the Awards will be presented in March 2023. Each of the three categories of Community, History and Environment will have a winner and two runners-up. Winners will be presented with a certificate and a crystal award and both they and the runners-up will be featured in an edition of our Herne Hill magazine.

We look forward to receiving your entry.

Could you be our next Treasurer?

Our current Treasurer, Martyn Hall, is retiring after more than five years' sterling service. We are looking for a volunteer to be Treasurer and join our friendly Committee. You would look after our healthy finances and contribute fully to our strategic decisions.

For an initial chat contact our Chair, Rebecca Tee at chair@hernehillsociety.org.uk

PLANNING & LICENSING

The Society’s planning group has commented on the following applications:

77 Herne Hill, Southwark 22/AP/1759

We objected to an application for retrospective permission for a permanent canopy over the outdoor seating area built some years ago in front of the parade of shops, something we objected to at the time, but which was permitted after an appeal. We said the bulk and visual intrusiveness of a permanent canopy made the damage already done by the built-out area worse and went against Southwark’s own planning policies. Southwark has refused permission.

73 Burbage Road, Southwark 22/AP/1185

We objected to the part of alteration works that involved the creation of a parking bay in the front garden. We pointed out that attitudes to the loss of front gardens were changing and that further loss in what is a conservation area erodes the quality of the conservation area. Southwark allowed the application but subject to a detailed landscaping plan being provided and approved. The Dulwich Estate, to whom we also sent an objection, have approved the proposal.

53 Burbage Road, Southwark 22/AP/1468

We made the same objection to the creation of a parking bay in the front garden. Southwark again gave permission but also subject to a detailed landscaping plan being provided and approved. A decision by the Dulwich Estate is pending.

8 Shardcroft Avenue, Lambeth 22/02222/FUL

We objected on grounds of over-development of the site out of reasonable proportion both to the host building and the houses around it, giving the side and rear of the building excessive bulk out of scale with its surroundings. We thought the full-width dormer over-dominant and the use of timber cladding in conflict with the brick-built character of the neighbourhood. We pointed out that, contrary to the applicant’s assertion, the

application would not fall within permitted development in the absence of the application including change of use from two dwellings to a single dwelling. A decision is pending.

3G football pitch in Brockwell Park, Lambeth 22/02374/RG3

We have objected to this application. It has aroused considerable interest, not least among the many people who value Brockwell Park for the access it provides to the natural world. At the time of



Proposed football pitch in the park

writing there are some 300 comments on the Lambeth planning website, about 75% objecting. The Society’s planning group is not against a better facility for football than that currently on offer in the park. But this application in its current form, in our view, has fundamental flaws, in particular in failing to address the status of the park both as a historic Grade II listed park and the proposal being within a conservation area, and failing to provide a balanced analysis on the impact of this type of development in the park set against potential alternative sites/ways of providing this type of amenity. We also have concerns about specific matters, particularly the introduction of tall lighting masts, the use of artificial 3G surfacing and the loss of part of the adjacent wildflower meadow and other vegetation and effect on biodiversity. Our full objection can be read on the Society’s website. A decision is pending.

Laurence Marsh

Cressingham Gardens

This estate owned by Lambeth on the edge of Brockwell Park is back in the news, after residents were again successful in securing a judicial review, to be heard in November, of the planning permission given last year by Lambeth for the demolition and redevelopment of the part of the estate known as Roper’s Walk. The Society, along with other amenity groups, were active in opposing the scheme, as they had been in an earlier application by Lambeth. That application was quashed after a judicial review challenge that Lambeth did not oppose. The latest challenge is the fourth time that Lambeth have been faced with judicial review over their plans for Cressingham Gardens. The fear from residents is that their much-loved homes and established community will be destroyed in a scheme for the redevelopment and densification of the site by Lambeth’s housing delivery company, Homes for Lambeth, and that the demolition of

Roper’s Walk is a “salami-slicing” tactic to establish a precedent for a piecemeal redevelopment of the estate.

Cressingham Gardens has many admirers for the quality of its design and architecture and its sensitive response to its location, standing as it does on the boundary with Brockwell Park. It was built by Lambeth during the years (1969-1981) that the legendary Ted Hollamby directed Architecture, Planning and Development for the borough. Many influential commentators have spoken of the estate deserving protection and meriting listed status. Ironically, another branch of Lambeth, its Archives, is currently celebrating the work of Ted Hollamby and the many talented people who worked with him in a highly informative exhibition (running to 30 September as part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival month, see page 4) showing at the Minet Library, 52 Knatchbull Road, SE5 9QY.

A local casualty of Russia's war

Russia's war with Ukraine is creating economic storm waves across Europe, as well as human tragedies on a scale not experienced since World War II. The exploding cost of energy, driving up inflation and probably unemployment all over the continent, is expected to devastate many industries, employers and families, including in this country.

The dramatic shortage of some key foods (wheat, sunflower seeds for example) and other commodities is another dramatic side-effect – one experienced during many international conflicts over the centuries, but alien to most of us in Britain today. The Europe-wide drought hasn't helped.

The crisis ripples ever-wider and now damages SE24. One of the most interesting shops to open in Herne Hill in the last year or so is Unto This Last, which took a lease from the Dulwich Estate early last year. They painstakingly and respectfully refurbished the rundown premises of the former Cafe Provençal, and opened for business in June 2021. It was their second outlet, after many years working from

trendy Brick Lane, hand-making unique minimalist wooden furniture. (See our issue no. 151.)

Now, sadly, they have announced the closure of their Herne Hill premises, explaining that supplies of their key material have dried up because of the war. They use high-quality birch plywood, which used to be an affordable commodity. But this has suddenly

become an “expensive and rare material” – most birch timber is grown in Russia, now under sanction.

They are working to reorganise their business around this new “Precious Plywood”, most importantly by radically reducing waste. This means redesigning their product range and production process. And they are cutting some staff. Their Brick Lane workshop and outlet will stay, but the Herne Hill workshop must close.

There will be many in Herne Hill who wish them, and the growing number of other businesses wounded by the crisis, a deep supply of courage and good fortune in their painful adjustment to the challenging new realities.

Pat Roberts



Unto This Last

Auf wiedersehen

Two other small businesses in Herne Hill are winding up this summer.

Kinderlala, the German-owned toyshop on Dulwich Road, sadly closed in July, reportedly because of rising costs and inadequate sales. They opened in 2016.



And the coffee shop on Norwood Road, The Parlour, which opened back in 2015, ceased trading at the end of August – again because takings are down and costs are up. And maybe (one can speculate) because Herne Hill now perhaps has enough coffee shops.

Not all businesses have recovered from the damaging shutdowns during the Covid



years. And now the economic prospects, including inflation, cost of credit, energy bills and shrinking household incomes as well as rising rents, all combine to deter small businesses from trying to ride out the storm or, in many cases, starting a new business. These closures are disappointing for the owners and sad for Herne Hill; we shall probably see more – a topic we examine more closely in our article about The Arches at pages 12-13.

Pat Roberts

12° CRAFT ICE CREAM

ITALIAN STYLE GELATO & SORBET
 FRESHLY MADE ON SITE
 FINEST NATURAL INGREDIENTS
 BIODEGRADABLE, COMPOSTABLE PACKAGING

minus12degrees

ART WITH GLASS
 THE STAINED GLASS STUDIO

We'd love to help...
artwithglass.co.uk

Bespoke lead light & stained glass panels

Painstaking restoration & refurbishment

Crystal Palace
 020 8771 6845

PARK'S EDGE
 BAR & KITCHEN

Modern British Cuisine, Wine & Drinks

We now offer contactless delivery to your door.

49 – 51 Norwood Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 9AA

Please call 020 8671 0306 to check on timed delivery and collection slots.

ParksEdgeBarandKitchen.com
 @ parksedgebarandkitchen

Transport News

You wait ages for a No.3, then dozens don't turn up

The Elizabeth Line has not only opened up a black hole through central London, but has also left a large black hole in Transport for London's finances. With Government insisting on bus service "changes" (a cut of 4% in bus kilometres) for a reducing amount of financial support, TfL have been consulting on a wide range of proposed bus service changes. A comprehensive and well explained description of the proposals has been published by TfL, with responses invited by 7 August.

The proposals of possible interest to Herne Hillians include:

- No.3 to still go to Lambeth Bridge, but would then route to Victoria, not Whitehall.
- No.12 route would be discontinued, with the 148 extended to serve Dulwich.
- No.24 route from Pimlico to Euston via Victoria would be discontinued.
- No.45 route is also proposed for removal.
- No.68, following the reduction in frequency last year, is unscathed, as is No.36 (Paddington–Victoria–New Cross)

The fleet of buses serving London has dropped by 9% in the five years between 2017 and 2022, Pre-pandemic, passengers had also dropped (9% in the five years between 2014 and 2019) with reduced economic activity and working from home resulting in a continuing drop since then during and after the pandemic.

Transport for London adjusts the Herne Hill junction signals

TfL have published some real data on the impacts of the Dulwich Low Traffic Neighbourhood on bus journey times along Norwood Road and Croxted Road – average journey times in the morning peak towards Herne Hill from on-board bus GPS. They are studiously circumspect about the LTNs ("TfL remain concerned about bus journeys through the Herne Hill area and remain in discussions with Lambeth and Southwark about this difficult section of the network").

The data show bus journey times on Norwood Road initially three times higher on the introduction of the timed 'bus gate'



End of the road for No.12?

LTN restrictions (and possibly because of increased car use during lockdown), then a return to the baseline times during the early 2021 lockdown, but with a gradual rise back up to two times above baseline through the rest of 2021. For Croxted Road, the patterns are broadly similar, but less marked, up by about 50% at the end of 2021. This is clear evidence that the general traffic diverted from the LTN has not 'evaporated'.

TfL, responsible for both the broad bus operations, and for the signals at the very critical Herne Hill junction, undertook

numerous discussions and site visits with interested parties, and identified the time available for traffic from Norwood Road under the bridge to turn right into Half Moon Lane as a constraint, and increased that time in March 2022, by stopping the southbound Herne Hill traffic early.

Monitoring since the change has shown a marked reduction in delays to Norwood Road traffic northbound, with reduced blocking back under the bridge, without any increase in the delays to the Herne Hill southbound traffic (in any case often held up getting into the junction anyway). Only a slight reduction to the Croxted Road traffic delays was, however, measured.

It looks like TfL have managed to provide a useful improvement to the delicate balance of the Herne Hill signals, partly, but not completely, mitigating the persistent diversion of traffic from the Dulwich LTN.

Car park spaces may get bigger

The national standard for the size of a space in car parks were last specified in 1976 as 4.8 m by 2.4 m. Cars, however, are getting bigger – the 20 best-selling cars currently are now about 17% wider than the 1998 top 20 models. There is now a proposal that the standard space should get bigger. If this proposal is adopted, it would only apply to new car parks (or those being modified to introduce electric charging points) so care to avoid scratches will still be required in most car parks.

Bil Harrison

Helen Hayes MP

Helen Hayes was unanimously reselected on 12 July to stand as the Labour Party candidate at the next election for the constituency of Dulwich & West Norwood. As explained in previous issues of this magazine, the constituency of Dulwich & West Norwood, should the current proposals of the Boundary Commission for England go ahead unchanged, will cease to exist and Herne Hill will be divided between three constituencies. This Society and the Herne Hill Forum have joined in making representations to the Commission opposing the proposal.

Following further public consultation earlier this year revisions to the initial proposals are expected to be published later this year, to be followed by a four-week written consultation period



on the revisions. The final recommendations of the Commission have to be submitted to Parliament by 1 July 2023. Once Parliament has these submissions from the Commissions for the four UK nations, there is then four months for the

Government to draw up an Order in Council that gives effect to the four Commissions' recommendations. Any general election will then be contested subject to new constituency boundaries. The next general election cannot take place later than 23 January 2025. But will it in fact take place before boundary changes, and will boundary changes see the end of Herne Hill within one constituency? The Chinese wisely conceptualise the past as lying before them and the future as behind them – because you can see what is in front but not what lies behind.

Herne Hill Music Festival 7-16 October 2022

Friday 7 October 8pm – Freddie Benedict and Friends bring you the traditional festival opening night line-up of Jazz with the Junction at the Half Moon pub with breezy Brazilian tunes, jazz standards, some modern classics, as well as original songs you can enjoy alongside a few pints. At Herne Hill United Church at 7:30pm, to commemorate the 400th anniversary of the 1620 sailing of the Pilgrim Fathers on the Mayflower, the Friends' Musick Choir, with full period costume, tell the tale in words and music of the fateful 66-day voyage across the Atlantic.

Saturday 8 October 11am – at Herne Hill Baptist Church, Mrs H and the Sing-along Band bring a unique and infectious blend of musical fun for children, which they guarantee adults will want to join in too! Sing and dance along to a mixture of Folk, Soul, Afro, Latin and Dub music being performed on guitar, banjo, bass, accordion and trumpet. At 3pm at St Faith's Church four local choirs are performing, including Vocollective, the unauditioned, self-proclaimed "friendliest choir in London", the Note-Orious Dulwich Choir, who pride themselves on raising funds for youth health charity Redthread, Raise the Roof who are now based in the Carnegie Community Hub following a 20-year residency at the Horniman Museum and Sing4All who are a friendly and welcoming choir for over 60s in South London. The choirs will be singing hits from Classic Pop, Musical, and Medieval to Millennial. Don't miss out on this as the atmosphere will be buzzing and tremendous fun! At St Faith's Church at 7:30pm the first classical concert of the Festival is brought to you by another local South East London gem, enSEMBle26. Pianist Eleanor Meynell and violinist Ellie Fagg perform the Beethoven violin sonatas that they began working on during lockdown. All funds raised from ticket sales will go to the charity 'Practical Action'. Finally, at 8pm at the Prince Regent pub popular local band Casino Moon will be making a return to the festival with their own indie-folk and Americana-inspired songs with energetic and addictive tunes on voice, rhythmic picking guitar, mandolin and lap steel.

Sunday 9 October 2pm – All Saints Concert Band bring you a free concert outside Brockwell Hall with classical, pop and film hits where you are encouraged to sing along, as well as donate to the Brockwell Park Management Advisory Committee who will be there with collecting buckets. More outdoor bandstand music will also be taking place in nearby Ruskin Park where King Groovy and the Hornstars, one of London's premier big bands will be bringing you the music of Count Basie, Duke Ellington, and Quincy Jones. In Brockwell Park at 3:30pm in the Community Greenhouses, the Siobhán Parr Duo will bring you some classics by the likes of Van Morrison, Lucinda Williams, John Prine and Sam Cooke. Later at 6pm Choral Evensong at St Faith's Church will be making a return with the outstanding chamber choir, Pegasus Choir, performing English Renaissance works from William Smith, Robert Parsons and Orlando Gibbons.

Monday 10 October 8pm – the popular Jazz Jam returns at Off the Cuff led by Roger Humbles, where all aspiring jazzers who would like to display their skills, gain experience or just relax and enjoy a great evening are invited to come along.

Tuesday 11 October 8pm – a Festival debut for folk trio Three Cane Whaleat the Prince Regent Pub. They perform acoustic sets on an alluring collection of instruments with the likes of mandocello,

bowed psaltry, zither and chimes "encompassing both a cinematic sweep and an intimate delicacy" – a new musical experience for all.

Wednesday 12 October 8pm – the Half Moon Pub invites back the acclaimed Errol Linton Band with their full line up and set of original Blues songs, for which Errol has been the three-times winner of the Best Harmonica Player of the Year at the British Blues Awards.

Thursday 13 October 7:30pm – at St Saviour's Hall the South East London Folk Orchestra returns with an evening of toe-tapping tunes, songs you can join in with and some ceilidh dancing. Suitable for all ages.

Friday 14 October 7:30pm – the Gemini trio will be raising funds at St Paul's Church for the church's organ restoration, with chamber works for piano and clarinet by Mendelssohn, Chopin and Hugh Shrapnel. Entry is free but donations to the organ restoration fund the would be much appreciated. At 8pm the Festival welcomes its first salsa band Orquesta Mambarito, who will be setting alight the dance floors of Off The Cuff, burning up live salsa hits and Latin Caribbean groove from 70s New York, Cali Colombia, Havana Cuba, Panama City and beyond.

Saturday 15 October 11am – Herne Hill United Church brings a fund-raising Coffee Morning Music from the Nigel Grice Trio, mellow jazz tunes on flute, saxophone, guitar and bass. Also contributing to the morning's music will be the Calton String Ensemble. Fundsraised in aid of the Norwood and Brixton Foodbank. Later at 3:30pm at St Faith's Church, Lambeth Wind Orchestra (pictured) performs Music for all the Family – songs and melodies from film and stories which children of primary school age and beyond will love. And at 8pm at Off the Cuff the bands Long String Hawkers and Blue Spike will range from finest Americana,



Bluegrass and Country, to indie rock and punk. All funds raised to Herne Hill Welcomes Refugees.

Sunday 16 October 12 noon – the popular Junior Mic Open Concert will be showcasing the musical talent of our local young musicians at Off The Cuff. Later at 3pm, at the Greenhouses in Brockwell Park music from the Oysland Band, a five-piece Klezmer group who embody the new generation of Jewish roots music with an exuberant and soulful cocktail of wedding tunes and lullabies, while echoing a bygone era with depth and authenticity. Finally, at 7pm at St Faith's Church we welcome back the superb Southwark Sinfonietta to close the 2022 Festival with Beethoven's Symphony no. 6 (*Pastoral*), Walter Leigh's Concertino for Harpsichord and Strings and Two Preludes from Elgar's symphonic poem *Falstaff*.

Scott Greig

Visit hernehillfestival.org for more information and to book tickets.

Danecroft bombs

As the war in Ukraine reaches six months since the Russian invasion, residents of Danecroft Road, off Herne Hill, had a stark reminder of another war in Europe. On 17 May at 5pm two rusting objects, each about 50cm long, were found in a garden of one of the houses that back on to Casino Avenue. As reported in *Southwark News* it was work on a rear ground floor extension that revealed the find. Lilian Miron, a builder from Romania, pulled them out of the ground with his bare hands and even cleaned one of them up “to make sure it was working”. They were soon identified as World War II bombs. The owner of the house Deborah Gillies, the mother of two, said “The builders called me saying ‘we’ve got a big problem’. When he said it was bombs I was in disbelief!”. Disposal experts decided that one of them needed to be urgently blown up. It was not considered safe to do so in Ruskin Park, the nearest larger open space, so without further delay the bomb was taken to Dulwich & Sydenham Golf Course. The disposal team tried to contact the manager of the golf course but he could not be found. However, the bomb was safely detonated at 8pm, causing minor damage to a bunker. The second bomb, considered safe to be transported a greater distance was taken to a specialist disposal facility.

Local historian Peter Blair thinks the bombing that badly damaged many houses on Danecroft and Frankfurt Roads took place in a raid on 29 December 1940 when over 100,000 bombs,



Bomb damage map of the area

most of which were incendiaries, were dropped by 136 bombers over London causing what is known as the “Second Great Fire of London”. Bomb damage was carefully recorded and was the basis of compensation after the war. The 1945 map extract shows the houses affected, the colouring reflecting the gravity of the damage, the darkest being the most serious.

A win for Herne Hill’s heritage

For those who keep an eye on local events via Twitter news about the house on Dorchester Drive, featured in the last two issues of this Magazine, will not come as a surprise. But even if the news will be familiar we think good news can do with repeating, particularly in times when good news seems in very short supply.

When we wrote about 10 Dorchester Drive in the spring the house was enjoying temporary protection under the Building Protection Notice issued as a matter of urgency by Lambeth. The question was whether Historic England would make that protection permanent by giving the building Grade II listed status. What a relief when on 13 June the 20th Century Society, who had applied for listing, with strong support from our Society, announced the success of the application! The fate of the building had aroused huge interest. The best modernist buildings and artefacts from the interwar period do attract admirers in great numbers. It is still remarkable that the announcement on Twitter by the C20 Society gained over 1,000 likes. And the house now even has its own Wikipedia article.

Securing a future for the house is a major win for Herne Hill’s heritage. We now have four contrasting buildings, within one small area, all Grade II listed and, since architectural historians like to find historic categories that can be nicely placed within one reign,

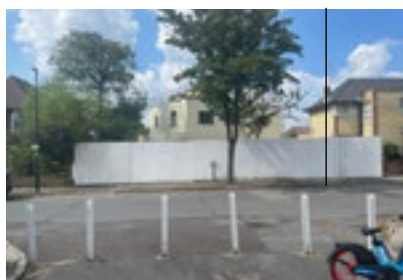
all belonging to the reign of George V. Earliest is The Quadrangle, listed only last year, the Tudor-inspired flats originally built for working women in 1911. Then there are the three contrasting buildings all designed by architects Leslie Kemp and Frederick Tasker: the eight imposing mansion blocks of Dorchester Court, the elegant private residence known as Dorchester House built

by the developers Cyril and Stanley Morrell for their own use and, lastly, the sleek and stylish house at 10 Dorchester Drive. To this nationally listed group should also be added the locally listed modernist house designed by Keller and Kompfner at 32 Herne Hill.

The protection of listing does not of course cover upkeep and repair. That is only too obvious if one looks to the other side of the road and the poor state of Dorchester Court – where a controversial planning application

continues to mark time. But in the case of the less complicated single dwelling at 10 Dorchester Drive one hopes that a discerning owner will be found who will appreciate the special qualities of the building and do whatever is necessary to help ensure its long-term future. In fact at the time of writing an application has just been made to Lambeth for planning permission and listed building consent for an extension to the rear and side of the house and other alterations. The Society’s planning group will of course be studying the application with care.

Laurence Marsh



The current view of the house

The power of the Arches

It was back in 2017 that news burst of Network Rail's proposed sale of its huge estate of railway arches and adjoining properties to the private sector, causing anxiety amongst their over 4,000 tenants.

After a bidding war, the successful new owner was announced early 2019, and turned out to be a joint venture between Blackstone, an American private equity group, and Telereal Trillium, a significant private British property management and investment company controlled by the billionaire Pears family. The consortium paid £1.5 billion for the estate and adopted 'The Arch Company' as the name for the joint venture. It is thought that the sale was on the basis of a 150-year lease.

This made the Arch Company the UK's largest small business landlord, with a property portfolio of approximately 5,200 railway arches, business estates, former station buildings and other properties. This in turn commits them, in their own words, to "serving thousands of business owners who make a unique and vital contribution to the UK economy".

Then in October 2019 the Arch Company issued a Tenants' Charter full of fair words about being an accessible and responsible landlord, working in partnership with tenants and responding to their concerns about rent levels and leases. This included a carefully-worded commitment to tenants: "we are working individually with long-standing tenants who are small businesses or not-for-profits where affordability might be an issue to agree suitable rent or lease profiles, or other measures to help such as turnover rents or support for arch relocation".

What has changed?

This takeover from Network Rail has marked the transition to a more hard-nosed property management style which has resulted in protests up and down the country. The Arch Company's default position is to insist on "market rents" – as defined by them. When challenged they are sometimes willing to negotiate, but even then, the rents they expect can be multiples of what a business was originally paying. As a result many of the small and locally valuable enterprises are facing the end – with little prospect of finding alternative premises. In one of many reported cases, a small long-established car repair business in North London managed, after hard bargaining, to get the rent demand down to just twice what they had been paying!

Amongst the businesses impacted were the tenants of the many units on the Bath Factory Estate in Herne Hill and other local businesses lodged alongside the railway lines such as some of the shops on Railton Road and Milkwood Road. The plight of many of the Bath Factory Estate tenants was highlighted earlier this summer in the *South London Press*.

Commercial property ownership can be a complex and slow-moving business: leases, of many different durations, come up for renewal and rent renegotiation at different intervals. Some properties that

changed hands in 2019 are in practice managed and controlled by third parties under leaseback arrangements. Often the original railway owners sub-leased plots to smaller property companies who negotiated their own contracts with local shops (as happened, it is believed, with some of the shops on Station Square). This can all lead to inconsistency between rent rates, making the concept of "market rent" questionable. In some of these and other cases, the sub-leaseholders are simply being bought out by the Arch Company. But either way, it is inevitable that many such older contracts are now lapsing and are being taken back by the Arch Company. In parallel, where tenants signed a lease direct with Network Rail, some of these leases are also now falling due for renegotiation with the new owners.

The upshot is that many leases are now coming up for renewal. Across the country, tenants are facing unwelcome conversations, especially those who inherited relatively low annual rents under the previous, relatively hands-off ownership of the British Rail Board. As



South London Press 2022

noted above, The Arch Company are a more interventionist owner with their own long-term development plans, as indeed is their legal right.

But now we need to see how the promises made in 2019 are going to be reconciled with income generation for Telereal Trillium and Blackstone.

Local impact

This is the context in which most of the small businesses in the Bath Factory Estate between the railway lines and Norwood Road are starting to face steep rent increases

from the Arch Company.

These small businesses' dilemma is particularly acute where they have invested in equipment and infrastructure within their rented premises. The landlords may be counting on this to persuade them to stay and swallow their new rent demands rather than leave and face the major costs of removal or losing their investments. At the same time, businesses that negotiated a relatively low rent with the previous landlord, maybe on account of the general scruffiness of the Arches, will almost always be facing a new rents more aligned to the so-called "market prices". Others who think that the landlords would rather strike a deal for a lower rent rather than see empty premises are probably seduced by wishful thinking. Landlords on this scale can easily afford to live with void properties for several years (see what has been happening in Station Square) rather than settle for below "market price" rents which might set an unwelcome precedent.

This is the dilemma faced by not-for-profit Local Greens, the Half Moon Studio and several others we know about that don't want to be mentioned at this stage.



Meanwhile it would for instance cost thousands of pounds for the print engravers at the Half Moon Studio to relocate their heavy etching and lithographic printing presses even if they could find alternative premises. With the added expectation of increased electricity costs and new maintenance and other charges, it may soon be time for them to give up. The dynamic Broken Blinds Company (who actually fabricate high quality blinds for customers all over London) are keeping an open mind on what happens next. Following conversations with the Arch Company, the Local Greens actively challenged the increased rent demand and won a reduction which should enable them to carry on. Others, such as Wylie Wood, have already relocated.

Why does this matter?

Herne Hill's estate of railway arches behind Norwood Road, known collectively (for complicated reasons) as the Bath Factory Estate, has historically housed many small and some "light industrial" businesses such as car repair, fabricating, sash window making, creative and artistic businesses, as well as unique enterprises such as the South London Makerspace, a social community workshop. More recently, two excellent micro-breweries have set up here. Over the years this magazine has featured several such properties.

Because they are not on one of our main streets and therefore not visible on a day-by-day basis, many of us forget about them. But they all employ South London and often local people who contribute economically and in so many other ways to the local economy and social fabric. We can view them as part of our lifeblood that helps to make Herne Hill a special and vibrant community. The estate itself is admittedly untidy and could benefit from better management and cleaning. But if the new owners demand an excessive price for such improvements on top of much higher rents, this organic and well-functioning ecosystem will simply close down: the warning signs are already there. And all this at a time of escalating prices for materials, energy, staff and transport, in a business climate that offers little reassurance about the next few years.

Are we Arch-dependent?

But there is a bigger issue. Herne Hill has many more Arch Company properties.

In addition to the Bath Factory Estate behind Norwood Road, Railton and Milkwood Roads also feature commercial properties



managed by the Arch Company. Most, maybe all, the shops and cafés nudging up against the railway lines in Station Square are ultimately part of this estate, as of course are the shops and other businesses within the classic railway arches on Milkwood Road.

After all, Herne Hill grew up around an important Victorian railway

junction which still stands at the centre of our community.

This makes the Arch Company Herne Hill's biggest commercial landlord by a large margin.

So the long-term survival and success of all these businesses, loyal and valued participants in our local economy and social fabric, are at the mercy of an American private equity group and Telereal Trillium. If not a monopoly, then at least a very heavy and, on recent form, rigid footprint.

Of course, landlords, whether residential or commercial, and whether small, large or massive, are generally not charities: people can understand that they need to make a return on their investment. Even



nominal charities such as the Dulwich Estate are generally duty-bound to maximise any income they derive from rents. Rent increases have been a feature of the dialogue between landlords and tenants for many generations.

As we write this magazine, it seems that some small businesses may be able to offset rent increases by absorbing the cost or upping their prices (which in the long term endangers their customer loyalty of course). Others almost certainly cannot. So they'll close. Then what? As recession and inflation looms and the business environment turns more negative, are there queues of entrepreneurs waiting to pounce on these empty spaces? We are not convinced. After all, two of the retail units in Station Square have been empty for years – a blight on our local environment which the landlords could presumably have avoided with more creative and flexible letting policies.

Think about the community, not just individual properties!

Faced with such a dominant presence in a small area, not just their tenants but also the communities in which they operate expect a landlord to exercise a sense of realism and a duty of care going beyond glib words. In practice don't we have a right to expect that rent demands are realistic given the sometimes fragile nature of the businesses and the type of unfancy properties they inherited? And shouldn't we question the unaccountable power that some landlords can have over the economies and social character of the communities they sometimes dominate? Should they try to charge a not-for-profit business the same as a neighbour with a healthy turnover? Do they indeed want to attract and retain tenants or are they happy to have units standing empty for years, as on Station Square?

At least, would it be possible for community organisations representing Herne Hill's long-term interests to have an ongoing dialogue with this major commercial player which exerts such influence over the character of our neighbourhood?

Pat Roberts

ALL CHANGE AT LOUGHBOROUGH JUNCTION

Colin MacInnes explains

Herne Hill is no mountain but it's definitely a hill – and one which determined the location of neighbouring Loughborough Junction. In the early 1860s the London, Chatham & Dover Railway company was busy building a line that would connect its existing network, reaching into Kent, with the City of London. Running north to south, it needed to avoid the steep gradients that would be involved in crossing the high ground of Herne Hill. So it skirted it to the west, creating part of the route we now know as the



one that carries Thameslink trains to and from Blackfriars. Meanwhile, another line, running west to east, was being planned and it needed to find a route between Brixton and Peckham. This one traced the very edge of the flat land that extends southwards all the way from the

Thames and consequently skirted Herne Hill's northern slopes, at the bottom of what we now know as Ruskin Park.

These two routes had to cross each other somewhere, and that somewhere happened to be right above Hinton Road. Today we can still enjoy the minor drama of two railway bridges stacked above each other at this point. Trains can connect between the routes by means of two curving viaducts, which enclose a triangular area, easily recognisable to anyone looking for Loughborough Junction on maps or aerial photographs

150 years ago this year, in July 1872, the second of those curving connections was completed, along with a new railway station with seven platforms offering services to destinations on three diverging routes. And it was in that year that the name "Loughborough Junction" first appeared in railway timetables, displacing a much smaller halt known as "Loughborough Road".

Loughborough Junction's station was not built to serve a distinct locality – on the contrary the locality became known by the name of a junction which appeared in a certain position dictated by wider topography. What were agricultural fields amongst scattered hamlets were transformed in little more than a decade into the scene of an interchange between major transport corridors serving what had become the world's largest city. They conveyed people and goods to and from a multitude of places including distant ones in continental Europe and beyond.

A century and a half later, London's international status has faded somewhat, and rail passengers for Paris now use a high-speed line departing from north of the Thames, instead of winding their way through South London towards the channel ports. But freight trains from mainland Europe still traverse the same viaducts above Loughborough Junction's streets, as do thousands of commuters every morning and evening.

In 1872 development on those streets was proceeding at a furious pace as part of London's rapid expansion. Tightly packed terraces of housing appeared. New buildings on Flaxman and Padfield Roads replaced others that had been demolished within just 10 years of their construction, to make way for the expanded station and additional viaducts.

Residents of the large houses strung across the top of Herne Hill would have eyed this rapid urbanisation at the bottom of the largely undeveloped slopes leading up to their leafy gardens with some trepidation – while the landowners they leased those houses from would have seen opportunity.

Some of those leafy gardens ended up as part of what is now Ruskin Park. Standing today at the top of Ruskin Park, looking towards central London, you might notice some new intrusions onto the skyline, sprouting from that same place where the railway viaducts first crossed each other amongst meadows and market gardens. These are the cranes and towers of the "Higgs Yard" development now being built on the piece of land between Herne Hill Road and Loughborough Junction station. Part of the development will reach a height of 16 storeys and its



Loughborough Junction rooftop view 2022 - Photo: Colin MacInnes

construction marks a turning point in the character of Loughborough Junction – the most significant since the frenzied development of the later 19th century.

Of course, much has happened between 1872 and now, including two world wars and the complete rebuilding of large areas to the north of Loughborough Junction station. But – if measured by density of buildings, population and activity – the central part of Loughborough Junction, wrapped around the triangle of viaducts that define it, reached the peak of its development soon after the beginning of the 20th century and then entered a long period – a century or more – of gradual decline.

The first development on the Higgs site was a terrace of houses with generous back gardens, fronting Herne Hill Road. Behind that, reaching into the corner between the railway viaducts an area of warehousing and workshops was gradually built up by F. & H.F. Higgs, building contractors. In 1900 the site was already densely packed with their various facilities including several cranes and a chimney rising above a boiler house.

By 1980 all of this had been replaced by the light industrial, commercial units that stood on the site until it was cleared recently – and which were typical of post-war development in central Loughborough Junction. Some WW2 bombsites stood vacant for years: one, now the location of the Junction Pharmacy, remained empty until as late as 2015.

It might be a stretch to compare this low-key industrial landscape with the sleepy farmland that was so suddenly disrupted by the coming of the railways in the earliest days of Loughborough Junction's history. But it in turn is now being rapidly replaced by something of a completely different nature; high rise residential development meaning that many more people than ever before will call this piece of ground their home.

The 2020s, perhaps, are the years when we will watch a second wave of population growth – one in train since the late 1990s – change the physical form of this corner of South London. New, tall buildings have been rising from the ground in places like Vauxhall and Elephant & Castle in the last twenty years. More recently, albeit at a slightly smaller

scale, the same has been happening closer to home in Stockwell and Brixton.

An increasing acceptance of high-rise development in areas where it previously would have been ruled out is being written into London-wide and Lambeth planning policy. We are seeing the first local results of this materialise in the Higgs towers and blocks. It's unlikely that it will be the only site in the central part of Loughborough Junction to be developed in this fashion.

Not for the first time in history, changes are afoot at the bottom of the hill – changes that not all will welcome, and which may signal things to come on the other side of those viaducts that encircle Herne Hill's lower slopes.



Hinton Road c1905 - Photo: The Brixton Society

Colin runs an architectural practice on the border of Loughborough Junction/Herne Hill. He has created for his project at <http://colin-m.com/lj4d> a detailed 3D model of the development of Loughborough Junction over the last 150 years. The 3D model images shown in this article are taken from the project.

THE CARNEGIE IN 2022

For well over a decade, the Carnegie Library in Herne Hill, a Grade II listed Edwardian building, has been the focus of debate (to put it mildly) about its future role, purpose, management and long-term viability.

Moves by Lambeth Council to change the way the library operated and the way the rest of the building was managed provoked a vigorous community campaign led by the Friends of Carnegie Library (FoCL): actions

included a sit-in that caught the attention of national media. Then the council's decision to allow their chosen gym and leisure facility providers, Greenwich Leisure – GLL for short – to have rent-free use of the newly (and expensively) excavated basement for a gym was opposed by some local residents, even by some trustees of the Carnegie Community Trust (CCT) who had been chosen by Lambeth as their preferred partner in the plan to create a “community

hub” which would include library services. Without the potential income from the basement, the CCT argued, any ambition to make the building less dependent on recurring council funding would be undermined, jeopardising its long-term viability. In 2017, two senior members of the Trust, both former Labour councillors in Lambeth, actually resigned in protest. Relations between Lambeth and the CCT as the new operating model got off the ground were sometimes uncomfortable and those between the Council and the FoCL were at times toxic.

(Important caveat: the paragraph above doesn't pretend to do justice to the twists and turns of this drama!)

Where are we now?

Matters have moved on since then. Mutual suspicions have perhaps started to fade a little. Talk of a fresh start no longer appears unrealistic. From 2018, and now more visibly after the grievous impact of Covid closures, Lambeth have run a full library service albeit from one room, with a librarian on duty during the opening hours. The Friends now stage regular events (see the article on the next page). Lambeth have announced that their borough-wide contract with GLL is coming to an end (with the services to be taken in-house) which must raise questions about the use of the basement in future and possibly the financial arrangements between the Council and the Community Trust. Meanwhile Lambeth is now committed to paying the Trust the same sum per annum that the GLL had agreed to pay as rent. This is an important source of the Trust's income.

And the Trust, now with new Trustees and volunteers, is pressing ahead with growing success to attract support and usage from the wider community. Their aim (see <https://carnegiecommunityhub.org.uk>) remains unchanged: to offer a thriving sustainable centre of local activity attractive to the whole community for developing employment opportunities, learning, fitness and wellbeing, cultural and social activity. To this end, the elegant and spacious rooms on the main floor have been hosting an increasingly ambitious series of

- regular craft workshops every Tuesday during term time
- dance classes for children
- sessions by Raise the Roof, an inclusive Community Choir
- weekly and monthly karate, yoga and gong bath classes
- away days, life-drawing classes, local charity meetings, refugee support sessions, local church and prayer groups and NHS training events.



In addition the first floor of the building hosts a light and roomy co-working office space with speedy wifi and 15 desk spaces for hire.

In managing these activities and developing more, the Trust depends heavily on volunteers and of course more are needed, whether as Trustees or to help with regular events and activities such as opening and closing the premises, setting up and supporting events, cleaning and gardening.

But since October the Trust have been able to pay experienced professionals responsible for the day-to-day running of the hub. Their new Centre Managers Leah Hargreaves and Geoff Holden share the role. The Trust have also recently recruited Amy-Rose Holland who works part time updating social media, working on events and marketing the hub.

And the future?

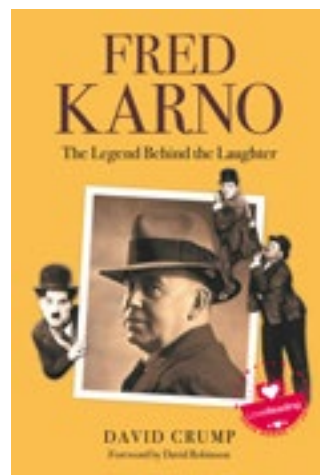
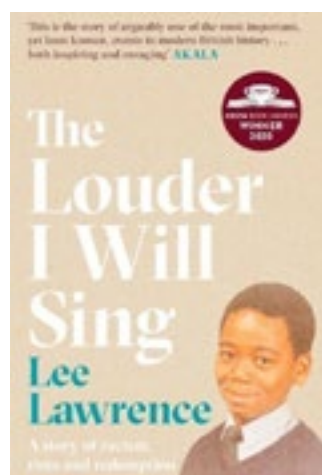
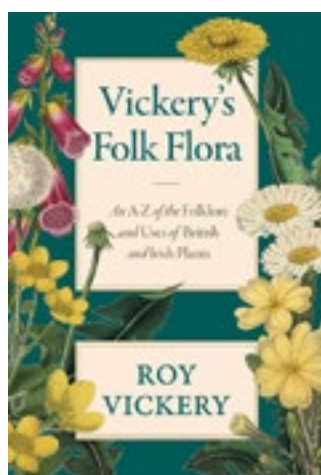
Alongside their other activities, the Trust are canvassing for proposals for a community cafe at the Hub, to be established in the spacious room just on the right of the main entrance. This would undoubtedly be an attractive asset for many users and potential users of the Community Hub, and of course the Library itself.

More generally, Lambeth has now earmarked funds for essential works to the building, including repairs to the roof. Work is due to start in October: an important start. That said, there seems no doubt that in due course many other elements of the complicated Edwardian structure will need to be seriously assessed and repaired: ongoing capital-intensive projects will be necessary.

The Carnegie opened in 1906. Now, after nearly a century operating as a classic public library, its long-term future seems in a firmer place (with Lambeth guaranteeing the future of the library): the traditional role of public libraries has evolved, the cost of maintaining and refurbishing heritage buildings has rocketed, the financial and social demands on local authorities' budgets are not going to diminish.

So it seems essential that the Carnegie Community Hub succeeds as a community-led and -run venture, with the widest possible support. Realistically there is a better chance, the Trust argues, for keeping the whole enterprise afloat if widely used and modest revenue-earning activities can be enmeshed with the fate of the building's fabric and of a popular and viable public library. The old ways are not coming back. Was it not Bob Dylan who declared “The times they are a-changin’”? And that was back in 1964 – almost a lifetime ago.

Pat Roberts



AUTHOR EVENTS AT CARNEGIE LIBRARY

For several years, the Friends of Carnegie Library have been organising monthly author events, giving people the opportunity to meet authors, hear about their writing journey, enjoy readings from a range of books and perhaps purchase a signed copy. When lockdowns precluded in-person gatherings, the events were offered on Zoom. Though this excluded those without internet access, it did allow people to join from further afield. Now all the events are in person and also livestreamed for those who cannot come to the Library. Recordings are then made available on the Carnegie Library Facebook page: <https://www.facebook.com/Carnegie-Library-184665781553496/>



Local authors or books about local history always attract a large audience. Andrew Hill's *Ruskinland: How John Ruskin Shapes Our World* in September 2021 proved very popular, as did Jon Newman's presentation in May 2022 of *Sunset over Herne Hill: John Ruskin and South London*, written in conjunction with this Society's Laurence Marsh. In July, David Crump travelled from Birmingham with *Fred Karno: The Legend and the Laughter*, including readings, PowerPoint images and film clips. Karno's Fun Factory, which fostered Stan Laurel and Charlie Chaplin, is now Clockwork Studios in Southwell Road, just a few streets north of the Library.

Locally based authors who have introduced their books include Stella Duffy, Louise Candlish, Adam Mars-Jones, Alan Taylor, Dave Gelly, Roy Vickery of South London Botanical Institute and Patrick Humphries with *Cradle of Writers* about six authors who were alumni of Dulwich College. Other authors presenting their works have come from as far away as Hastings and Derbyshire.

The Friends are members of Lambeth Local History Forum and always include a suitable book event for Lambeth Heritage Festival. This year, Tracey Gregory brings *Loughborough Road Histories: The Stories of a South London Street* on 13 September.

Other tie-ins include Holocaust Memorial Day, LGBT History Month, International Women's Day and Black History Month. Last October, Lee Lawrence gave a moving account of his quest for justice after the shooting of his mother, Cherry Groce, in *The Louder I Will Sing*. As that month can get very busy for authors of black interest books, historian Stephen Bourne was glad to come in April with his fascinating and well-illustrated *Deep Are The Roots: Trailblazers Who Changed Black British Theatre*. Happily, he will return for a special daytime presentation of the children's version of his best-selling *Black Poppies: Britain's Black Community and the Great War* on Saturday 15 October.

Authors are lined up for the next few months. On 11 October, journalist Celeste Hicks presents *Expansion Rebellion: Using the Law to Fight a Runway and Save the Planet*. For 8 November, Keith Khan-Harris brings *The Babel Message: A Love Letter to Language*; and on 13 December a different take on language comes from Paul Baker with *Fabulosa! The Story of Polari, Britain's Secret Gay Language*, a romp through the development of slang once used by actors, circus and fairground folk, merchant sailors, etc. and known today not only by older gay people but also anyone who remembers *Round the Horne*.

Jeffrey Doorn

Details of forthcoming events can be found on the Friends' website: www.friendsofcarnegielibrary.org.uk and their Twitter account @FrndsofCarnegie as well as Lambeth Libraries monthly listings and website. Notices are of course sent to the Friends' membership and wider mailing list.

The author events are always on the second Tuesday of the month starting at 7pm, with tea or coffee and biscuits available from 6.30pm. Free booking on Eventbrite is advisable, so that the librarians have an idea of how many chairs to put out; but walk-ins are also welcome. Presentations are followed by Q&A, and the evening finishes by 8.30. If you have suggestions for future authors and books, please send them to folchair@gmail.com, or put a note in the Friends' red post-tray in the Library.

HISTORY OF HERNE HILL'S STREET TREES

Jeff Segal completes the story – PART 2

In the last issue of the Magazine we looked at the development of street trees in Herne Hill through the Victorian, Edwardian and interwar years. There were ambitious planting schemes on main roads and some residential streets before the Great War, but then the momentum seemed to slow. The Great Depression, the need to rebuild after the Blitz and post-1945 austerity meant other spending areas had priority, while rate-capping in the 1980s and 1990s and council funding cuts since 2010 put the brakes on again. But tree planting goes in cycles and public demand is now driving



Top of Herne Hill shops 1984

another upswing. The statistics on trees planted since the bleakest years speak for themselves.

You can get a good idea of the increase in numbers on the Southwark side of Herne Hill from the catalogue of black and white photos of streets taken in 1984 by George Young, who contributed to the Society's *Herne Hill Heritage Trail*. At the Half Moon Lane end of Burbage Road, for example, there were just four street trees in 1984 between no.1 and no. 23. Now there are 10. Casino Avenue had only two or three trees along the main strip, but in 2022 there are 17 magnolias and half a dozen others. Howletts Road was empty, but today it hosts three sweet gums (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) and a stunning tulip tree (*Liriodendron tulipifera*). There wasn't a single tree in front of the Norwood Road shops facing Brockwell Park, but presently we have ten. On the



Winterbrook Road 1984 ...

odd-numbered side of Stradella Road there stood only one old tree, but now it's end-to-end Yoshino cherries (*Prunus x yedoensis*), like neighbouring Winterbrook Road.

Curiously Danecroft, Elfindale and Hollingbourne Roads have fewer trees now than in 1905, when there was one for every pair of newly built houses, but numbers are climbing again. And Herne Hill itself, which was virtually bare in 1984, now has London planes right to the top, including a new batch planted last November.

Postwar images in the Lambeth photo archive also show how the tree cover has grown, and not just in the better-off streets. Back in 1958 Herne Hill Road had a number of semi-mature pollarded limes, of which maybe one survives near Carnegie Library, but now there are about 40 trees of various species along the road. Ten years later there were no trees on a stretch of Lowden Road looking towards Milkwood Road, but now there are six or seven in that spot and another 20 further up the road. In 1975 no trees were visible in Chaucer, Mayall, Railton, Regent or Wanless Roads, whereas now there are three in Chaucer, about 18 in Mayall, 20 in



... and 2022

Railton, six on the pavement in Regent (plus more in the grounds of the social housing) and 11 in Wanless.

Some of this expansion has been down to neighbourhood action. Fawnbrake Avenue was given a huge boost six years ago with the



... and 2022



Mayall Road c1974 ...

planting of 40 new trees paid for by residents and match-funded by Lambeth. And Winterbrook, which had only four trees in 1984 – all limes – is now lined with cherries that burst into exquisite blossom every March. The last 10 gaps along Winterbrook were filled this spring with trees donated by Japan as part of the Sakura Cherry Tree Project in an initiative organised by David Langley, a resident who's been nurturing the Yoshinos since they first arrived on the street in 2006.



Wanless Road c1974...

As the tree canopy has widened, so has the number of species. Interestingly the two boroughs have taken quite different approaches to tree selection. On the Southwark side pink-flowered Kanzan Japanese cherries (*Prunus Kanzan*) were popular in the 60s and 70s, along with early-flowering cherry plums (*Prunus cerasifera*) and Norway maples (*Acer platanoides*). In the eighties the preference was for silver birches (*Betula pendula*) and in the nineties compact, upright Chanticleer pears (*Pyrus calleryana Chanticleer*). Then came white-barked Himalayan birches (*Betula utilis Jacquemontii*), American sweet gums (*Liquidambar styraciflua*) and ginkgos (*Ginkgo biloba*). All of these are probably over-planted now.

In Lambeth, meanwhile, there was a push for British native and naturalised trees around 30 years ago amid concerns about introducing alien species. There are 12 big beech trees (*Fagus sylvatica*) now at the top of Herne Hill Road, and sycamores (*Acer pseudoplatanus*) on Berwyn Road, Chaucer Road, Croxted Road, Fawnbrake Avenue, Milton Road, Regent Road, Shakespeare Road and Spenser Road. There are lots of Norway maples too, and many native whitebeams (*Sorbus aria*) and rowans (*Sorbus aucuparia*).



... and 2022

There are even two English oaks (*Quercus robur*) on Wanless.

But Lambeth has a taste for exotics too, like the tamarisks (*Tamarix*) on Fawnbrake – though now removed – the oriental plane (*Platanus orientalis*) in an unlikely spot on Railton, and the two dozen or so Chonosuki crab apples (*Malus Tschonoskii*) dotted around, almost half of them on Mayall Road.

Overall, sycamore is now the commonest tree on the Lambeth side, followed by cherry, Norway maple, Japanese cherry, the related rowan, whitebeam and service tree, and lime. In the Southwark streets the list goes: London plane, silver birch, Himalayan birch, Chanticleer pear, American sweet gum and Yoshino cherry.

In both boroughs, though, there's been a major change in emphasis, driven by the twin threats of climate change and imported pests and diseases. They're both increasing the tree cover to help mitigate CO₂ emissions and improve air quality, but they're planting in a smarter way. Trees chosen now need to be able to tolerate the higher temperatures and lower rainfall that we'll



... and 2022

be facing in 20 years' time. They'll have to be resistant to attack from destructive insects and viruses that aren't here yet. They'll need to be able to withstand flash floods and violent storms. Some of them will have to be tall and fast-growing to produce a bigger leaf canopy. And they'll have to come from a much wider range of species to encourage more wildlife and protect our stock from diseases that target one particular tree. Some of our current favourites – especially natives that already struggle on city pavements – simply won't be suitable. By 2040 our leafy streets could look very different from the way they do now.

DULWICH: MID-CENTURY OASIS

Reviewed by Edmund Bird

The Dulwich Estate was at the vanguard of the highest quality residential development from the 1950s to the 1970s – a period of rapid change in Dulwich and Herne Hill when large 19th-century houses were demolished and replaced by new higher density estates. Most other neighbourhoods of London experienced the same transformation during this era, but this was largely at the hands of local borough councils and the London County Council (superseded by a much larger Greater London Council in 1965). Camberwell Borough Council (incorporated into Southwark Council in 1965) had similar designs on our community, planning comprehensive clearance areas to lay out new council housing estates. However, the powerful Dulwich Estate realised that if they were to preserve the great character of Dulwich and its environs, they would have to produce a radical new housing strategy themselves which would thwart the Council's ambitions.

Three authors, Paul Davis, Ian McInnes (former Chair of the Dulwich Society and Chair of the 20th Century Society) and Catherine Samy have written a new book which charts the extraordinary building programme undertaken by the Dulwich Estate between 1955 and 1977 which comprised over 30 housing developments designed by their architects Austin Vernon & Partners, mostly built by the housebuilder Wates. Three of these lie in Herne Hill – Nos 175-199 Half Moon Lane (built in 1962) which occupies the prominent corner opposite North Dulwich Station, Donne Court on Burbage Road (1959) and the adjacent Courtmead Close (1972).

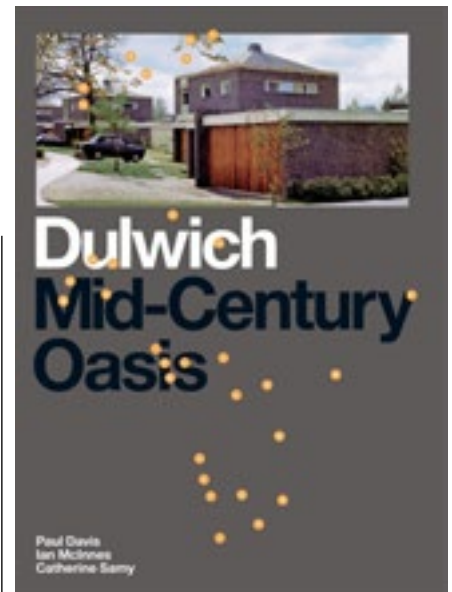
The 31 projects are described in detail – they vary hugely in scale and nature – from high-rise (for Dulwich) blocks of flats on the Dulwich Wood Park Estate which won a Civic Trust Award in 1964, to terraces of townhouses, single-storey ranch-style homes, highly distinctive copper-roofed 'pyramid' style houses, mews, courtyard and pavilion homes. The strong American influence is

explored too, such as the 'Radburn' inspired layouts which achieve a separation of cars and pedestrian areas. There are a few omissions such as the attractive early post-war designs e.g. Royston and Cobb Court on Burbage Road and the Festival of Britain style Hitherwood Court off Kingswood Drive.

The book is a delight to read – a fascinating account of the local politics of the day, an insight into the outstanding quality of design of new homes and the way the architects worked in harmony with the undulating topography and natural landscape, the choices of attractive, durable materials and the highly intelligent planning of the layouts of both the estates and the individual houses. It is lavishly illustrated with very good present-day photographs of both exteriors and interiors, original architects' drawings, perspectives used in sales advertising brochures, layout plans and photos from the archives of early residents and their furnishings. The human dimension is a key component of the book: there are interviews with present-day residents and their thoughts and experiences of living in homes which are now 50 to 60 years old (although a greater diversity in terms of race and sexuality would have been welcome).

These very attractive and well-planned homes did come with a heavy cost to the built heritage of Dulwich and its borders with Herne Hill as the developments necessitated the demolition of hundreds of fine largely Victorian villas (including pairs on both the Half Moon Lane/Red Post Hill and the Burbage Road sites) and some photos of the lost historic houses would also have been interesting to see. The tide began to turn a decade into the redevelopment programme as opposition to the loss of old houses grew as did appreciation of the Victorian era of architecture which was frequently derided in the 1950s and early 60s.

In 1968 Dulwich Village became one of Southwark's earliest conservation area designations, Dulwich Wood following in 1985, which instituted a presumption that historic buildings within these areas would be



preserved rather than demolished.

Interestingly, just as Victorian architecture was under-valued 60 years ago, very few of these exemplary 1960s housing developments by the Dulwich Estate are protected today by conservation area status – only 7 of the 31. It is high time that both Lambeth and Southwark councils took stock of their post-war heritage and recognised the historic and architectural importance of these estates and their place in our social history. Thankfully the Dulwich Estate has extensive planning control powers through its Scheme of Management which has successfully maintained the original character of these developments, but conservation area status for South and West Dulwich is long overdue.

It is a tribute to the architects Austin Vernon & Partners that the ingenuity of their forward-thinking designs has ensured that these homes remain extremely popular and highly sought after today. They have kept pace with changing lifestyles with subtle adaptations such as more open-plan living and conversion of garages to additional living space. This book is a valuable, beautifully presented and illuminating addition to any library of architectural and social history and is recommended to all.

*Paul Davis, Ian McInnes and
Catherine Samy,
Dulwich: Mid-Century Oasis,
ISBN 9781916361003, cost £25.*

A QUIET AUTUMN DAY

This photograph of Dulwich Road, Herne Hill, evokes a quiet autumn day in the final decade of Victorian England.

There is no traffic, the horse and cart have stopped and the driver is not to be seen, two workmen are taking a break from their labours and having a chat, while a small boy stands by a lamppost and stares at the photographer. The leaves have begun to fall. The particular quality of the image comes from the skill of the photographer, William Strudwick (1835-1910), a resident of South London almost all his life. Strudwick is best known for the valuable early photographic record he made of London topography, in particular the Lambeth waterfront and narrow Thames-side streets before they were swept

away by the Albert Embankment built in the 1860s. Sadly in older age Strudwick suffered increasing hardship and he died in penury in the Croydon Workhouse. Charles Woolley (1846-1922), a Lambeth Alderman with a great interest in Lambeth's history – and a resident of Dulwich Road in later life – was fortunately able to preserve many of Strudwick's photographic plates and have high



quality prints made from them. They are now in Lambeth Archives.

This image of Dulwich Road, also in Lambeth Archives, comes from another source. Dating is made easier by the fact that the building on the right is the Prince Regent pub, not the earlier Victorian manifestation which only lasted some 20 years, but the

building we still see today, showing all the confident swagger of pubs constructed in the 1890s, the heyday for London pub-building. It was built in 1895 and numbered 69 (visible in the glass above the door), the number it retains today. The railings on the right belong to front gardens of houses that disappeared when the Meath Estate was built in the late 1950s. Curiously, the access to Regent Road, running along the side of the pub appears to be blocked off and piles of building materials

are stacked. Could this have something to do with the laying of tramlines? Is this what the two workmen had started work on? Trams by now were running along Milkwood Road and Norwood Road and they soon extended into Dulwich Road. One senses the tranquillity of this scene, captured in the dying years of the 19th century, would not last much longer. **Laurence Marsh**

A VISIT TO BRANTWOOD

When my family moved into a house on Brantwood Road in the mid 1970s, I had no idea why the road was thus named. I had little idea at the time about the story of John Ruskin and his relationship with Herne Hill.

As time went on, through my involvement with the Herne Hill Society, Ruskin became far more familiar to me and I realised my road was named after Ruskin's home in the Lake District, to which he retired in 1872. So it has long been an ambition of mine to visit Brantwood on Coniston Water, and in 2019 I booked a



holiday which would include an outing to visit Brantwood. Then along came the pandemic and the holiday was postponed, several times, but eventually in June this year it became possible.

The house is much larger than I imagined and in fact the rooms that can be visited are confined to those on the right-hand side of the picture shown. The living rooms downstairs were attractive and full of interest, while upstairs Ruskin's bedroom was much as I had seen in pictures. There was little in the house to reference directly back to

Herne Hill, except a small display of finger plates from the doors in the (demolished) house at 28 Herne Hill, the home of his childhood and early youth.

The house is surrounded by hillside gardens, in June colourful

and fragrant.

In the bookshop it was good to see on sale the Society's publication *Sunset over Herne Hill*, and the staff there were interested to

hear we had come all the way from Herne Hill – my companion Robert called it a pilgrimage. We enjoyed lunch in the cafe and then drove back down the narrow country lane to the village of Coniston. There we found Ruskin's grave in the quiet churchyard, but didn't have time to visit Donald Campbell's grave in the churchyard extension at the other end of the village. Campbell died in 1967 at Coniston Water in his fated attempt to create a new world speed record over water in his jet-propelled Bluebird K7. The speed exceeded 300mph but not over the measured kilometre. The contrast between the two famous men most often associated with Coniston is a striking one.



Sheila Northover

"AN INSIGNIFICANT POINT, SITUATED OBSCURELY ..."

As subscribers to the *Times Literary Supplement* will be aware, it is not unusual for publishers to have to wait some time before their book gets reviewed, but a delay of more than 50 years is tardy by any standards. Let's put that right.

Herne Hill Record issue 1 (1975, 30p), hand-typed and with drawings by Anna Nyburg, was privately published by James Wright, a resident of Stradella Road. It begins thus: "To outsiders, Herne Hill is an insignificant point, situated obscurely between exuberant Brixton on the one side and elegant Dulwich on the other. Yet..." No need to be so self-effacing today. This issue opens with a well-researched, if brief, introduction to the locality and relates some entertaining anecdotes, such as the Great Ape of Brockwell Park (never captured).

It contains much topical information which, in the pre-internet age, would have been useful to those who dipped into it. Churches, public transport and libraries are among services listed. There are also entries (snigger) on where to obtain family planning advice and, a few pages later, how to find a baby-sitter. It is revealing to compare the retail options of a bygone age with what is available today. In the mid-1970s Herne Hill boasted seven butchers, six greengrocers, six furniture shops, three banks, three coin-operated laundrettes and six second-hand shops. There are four bakers but no mention of coffee shops. Older readers may recall F.J. Graham's record shop.

Issue 2 (1976, seemingly the last to appear and, thanks to inflation, 35p) is dedicated to the eating and drinking establishments of Herne Hill. Gourmands might have hoped for something more enticing. No punches are pulled in this verbal demolition of Stevens Cafe (sic): "Pinball machines, travel posters and a couple of glum-looking goldfish in a jar on the counter are features of this large cafe. The service is less than welcoming and the food is doled out on battered crockery". The Wimpy is damned with faint praise: "... a bright and clean-looking establishment. The Wimpy culinary style is well-known – bland, casual and predictable – but the Herne Hill branch has a more wholesome atmosphere than some others". The Windsor Grill (Barbara? Duke of?) is described as "rather cheerless ... though the prints on the wall ... of the Impressionist school endow the atmosphere with a certain Gallic quality. The food is unexciting." It would be good to have a couple of examples, but no.

Of the four "licensed restaurants", one is the Fox on the Hill, whose Pizza bar makes "a valiant attempt to evoke the atmosphere of Venice", another is a Turkish kebab joint and the third is the "unprepossessing" but "sensibly priced" Kwaliti Indian restaurant (which also offers English food, almost certainly omelette and chips). In first place comes Dania (in the building now occupied by Llewellyn's), with its "portraits of the Danish Royal Family" and "faintly audible soft jazz", and whose service praised as

"meticulous". Fine dining, fit for a King, Danish or otherwise, it may have been. With the UK's recent entry into the Common Market, this was clearly the shape of things to come. But what was on the menu? It is frustrating not to be given a clue.

There are, of course, fish 'n' chip shops (four) and Chinese takeaways (two) for those with smaller budgets. And more greasy spoons, where servings are often "generous".

Now for the boozers. The Commercial (Charrington) is "not by any means pretty but lively and cheerful". The unique selling proposition of the Fox on the Hill (Charrington again) is that you can drink outdoors. The Brockwell Park Tavern (you guessed it, Charrington) – today The Florence – was, in 1975, "a nicely set out pub, though the atmosphere sometimes seems tense rather than friendly". I laughed out loud because this brought to mind an incident recounted by an Irish friend.

Some decades ago Marcus, recently arrived in London, was lodging with his brother in Kestrel Avenue. One evening they went for a pint

in the Brockwell Park Tavern. No sooner had they sat down than a gentleman walked into the pub, picked up a stool and threw it violently over the bar, smashing dozens of bottles and glasses. The barman dodged out of the way. No-one else, apart from Marcus, showed the slightest interest. His brother ordered him to sit still and stare at the floor like everybody else. "What the **** was that about?", he eventually dared to ask. His brother replied, "Oh, there's a war going on between the Maltese and Italian gangs. Someone else's pub will get done over tomorrow night in revenge." Benvenuti a Herne Hill.

To continue, the Hamilton Arms (Watney, for a change) is "surprisingly clean and friendly" despite the muzak and plastic flowers. I love the patronising "surprisingly". It is now a mini-market, sad to relate. The best that can be said of the Prince Regent (Truman) is that it is "more attractive and comfortable" than it was. And what of the majestic Half Moon (Courage, for the record)? "From the outside, the building's aspect is imposing, but inside things are a bit scruffy. There is a billiards table in the saloon bar". It is also said to be haunted.

And that's it. No mention of pub grub, or of a range of ales, because this was 1976 and, with a few exceptions such as Draught Bass, pub beer was generally weak and fizzy and nothing to write home about.

The best thing about 1976 from a personal viewpoint was that I was 21 and living in Spain. Back in Blighty the PM (Harold Wilson) had resigned in office, there was double-digit inflation, industrial unrest, an economic crisis and a worrying drought. Plus ça change. At least chorizo is now readily available in Herne Hill.

Colin Wight



View from the Half Moon c1980



'Clock Tower, Brockwell Park, Autumn' by Matthew Berry. – Limited edition 'Giclée' print available.
Other prints and original paintings by Matthew Berry and other artists, including Peter Forsyth,
Mark McLaughlin, Ken McCalla, Su Au, Max Rush and John Bateson-Hill are also available.

Virtually all our pictures
are available online
and can be seen at:

www.brockwellgallery.london

"Outstanding" Quality care in your own home



Rated "Outstanding" by CQC. Our Caregivers deliver high quality care services that you can trust.

Services include:

- Dementia care • Home help
- Companionship • Personal care
- Overnight & 24 hour care • Respite care



CALL US TODAY 0208 0225 238

e: wandsworth@homeinstead.co.uk | www.homeinstead.co.uk/wandsworth



THE FAMOUS
O'Leary's
FISH EXPERIENCE
Established since 1987



VOTED
No.1
IN LONDON

The Home of Seriously Good Seafood



Fancy Award Winning Fish & Chips at your event!

We can cater at your fund raiser, quiz night, wedding etc...

Call Harry 07956 465 629

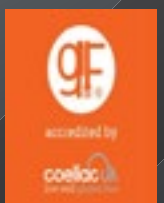
Takeaway Restaurant

65 - 69 Norwood Road, Herne Hill, London, SE24 9AA

For Orders Call: 020 8671 8259



MSC-C-53712-3



available
everyday



Retired or Semi-Retired?
Over 90 interests to choose from!

Genealogy - Photography - Music
- Cycling - Singing - Languages - Art
Computers - Politics - Opera - Quizzes -
Poetry - Ukulele - Creative Writing
Environment - Crosswords - Crafts
and much more!

Most groups currently meet using Zoom, but are looking forward to meeting normally again soon.
 More details at www.dulwich-u3a.uk
 Email: outreach@dulwich-u3a.uk
 Tel. 020 8670 5975

Registered Charity Number 1188529



0207 733 2525
07930 374 164

297 Ralston Road, Herne Hill, SE24 0JP
 (in front of Herne Hill Train Station)



flowers for all occasions
open 7 days a week
free delivery within 3 miles



12B Red Post Hill SE21 7BX
020 7733 3697
www.dulwichpots.co.uk

POTS
 Traditional and contemporary
 Exterior and Interior
 Terracotta, Glazed, Polystone, Metal, Ceramic, Terrazzo, Fibreglass

PLANTS
 Trees, Shrubs, Roses, Grasses, Herbaceous, Perennials,
 Annuals and Herbs

COMPOSTS
 Multipurpose, Peat free, John Innes, Ericaceous,
 Pebbles, Slate, Gravel, Grit

SHOP
 House plants, Indoor pots, Tools, Seeds, Bulbs and
 horticultural supplies

Local delivery available

Free parking outside North Dulwich Station

DUGARD
 BUTCHER & LARDER
DAUGHTERS

RARE BREED BEEF
 DRY-AGED ON SITE

FREE RANGE AND ORGANIC POULTRY **GLOUCESTER OLD SPOT PORK**
ORGANIC CHEESES **SALT MARSH LAMB**

FRESH ORGANIC VEGETABLES

Arch 286, Milkwood Road, Herne Hill, SE24 0EZ
 T: 020 7733 2608 www.dugardanddaughters.com

For homes you want to live in.



Specialists in Herne Hill & south-east/south-west postcodes.
Specialists in conservation areas.
Award-winning & industry accredited.
Since 1999.

www.oliverburn.com
info@oliverburn.com

Herne Hill
0207 274 3333

Clapham
0207 622 1121



pedder

Selling South East London



Sales | Lettings | Mortgage Specialists
#thepeddergroup | pedderproperty.com

