

HERNE HILL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HERNE HILL SOCIETY ♣ ISSUE 141 ♣ Spring ♣ 2018 ♣ £2.50

Preparing for Spring



▶ *See page 7*

GROWING UP IN HERNE HILL 1914-1918

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NEWS
AND
FEATURES

COWS OR
CORONETS?

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WHAT IS THE VALUE
OF A PARK?

▶ *See page 3*

ALL CHANGE ON THE STREET SCENE

▶ *-Turn to page 5*



The Magazine of the Herne Hill Society



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WHAT IS THE VALUE OF A PARK?

That's the question many locals found themselves asking when it was announced that both Field Day and LoveBox festivals were planning to come to Brockwell. Some might say it's easy to work out; a matter of cost per square foot. But that only provides part of the answer.

As London becomes an increasingly dense and demanding city the value of our parks to the communities that live around them is growing, and it is getting harder to quantify in purely monetary terms. Lambeth is the fourth most crowded borough in London, while Southwark is ninth. Open space comes at a higher premium than ever before and is becoming less accessible. One in seven London children won't visit a local green space in a given year. Children from deprived households, those most likely to be dealing with overcrowding at home, are nine times less likely to have access to safe outdoor play spaces.

Kids aren't the only ones for whom parks make a difference. For adults too they provide a safe and open space in which to get both literally and emotionally some distance. London has the highest number of recorded mental health cases by city (Lambeth is the nation's seventh highest hot-spot). There is now a wealth of proof that parks are one of the most powerful tools we have for tackling this. Evidence given by Public Health England to a parliamentary inquiry into Parks highlighted that urban green spaces increase social interaction, and reduce stress, anti-social behaviour and feelings of isolation.

In a world that is increasingly online and compartmentalised the restorative power of real, open space can't be understated. It was this that, in the end, I believe locals chose to place the most value on when asked if they wanted to welcome mammoth commercial events into our park. We all know that local authorities are under tremendous financial strain, and that new and more imaginative ways of finding funds are needed. But that isn't the same as saying that funds should be found at any cost.

The value of Brockwell Park to those of us fortunate enough to live near it goes well beyond the rental income. Brockwell is a vital component in preserving the health and wellbeing of our community. And unlike gym membership, holidays and hobbies, it is free for all to access. The money these events would raise – comparatively small amounts in the context of Lambeth's overall event or PR budget – for most locals did not weigh against the loss of wellbeing. Or justify the damage done to the underlying principle that a Park is one of the few facilities that is free, equally open for all.

Many were surprised by the strength and volume of local protest. But I don't find it surprising. One of the great things about a park is

that it brings together people of all ages, backgrounds and interests in the same space. So it was that when the Park was threatened people of all ages, backgrounds and interests were happy to unite in its defence. The amount of noise the Brockwell Tranquillity

campaign has been able to create is only a reflection of the amount of anxiety that the proposals created. Only those who don't understand the real value of a park could have expected anything less.

It's worth highlighting, as Tranquillity have throughout the debate, that for most people this isn't a question of banning live music from Brockwell. Brixton and Herne Hill have an amazing heritage of live events, many of them hosted in Brockwell Park. But it is about ensuring the events that take place enhance rather than undermine the value and benefits Brockwell brings to our community: openness, grass roots opportunity, fun for all, and getting things in proportion.

It's hard to see how the events

that have been suggested so far – grossly oversized for the space (twice the capacity of the O2), eye-wateringly expensive to attend, and with most money going to multi-million-dollar, multi-national corporates – fit that ideal.

LoveBox in the end realised that what they were offering was not what locals wanted. Field Day seem earnest in their belief that their package is one locals will eventually get behind. I sincerely hope that is true. To make it true the organisers – and Lambeth Council – need to take the time to understand in more meaningful and sophisticated terms what it is that makes Brockwell Park so precious.

Alice Salisbury Jones



Red outline shows the Field Day festival area



All the area – and more – shown in the photo will be shut off to park users



Few who can fail to raise a smile at the sight of the Street Piano – only to then feel the bonhomie drain at the sight of the tunnel beyond. Since the piano arrived five and a half years ago, the remainder of the passageway between Railton and Milkwood Roads has seemed even more threatening and dispiriting for the thousands of rail passengers and pedestrians who use it each day.

During that time, numerous proposals have been put forward to Network Rail (the freeholder), Southeastern (the franchisee) and Lambeth Council only to fall between the stools or fail for want of funding. Finally, last year the Herne Hill Forum settled on a less adventurous plan (reinstating the arch having been the original goal but deemed too ambitious) to address security, lighting and cosmetic deficiencies. Together with support and some resourcing from Southeastern and the consent of Network Rail, Lambeth Council allocated some £39,000 to permit improvement works to commence.

Then in the autumn of 2017, a local resident, Missy Finegan (aged 10) filled in a card at the Community Tent at the Sunday Market. She asked for the underpass to be made ‘nicer’ and, remarkably, offered to help. To make the project worthy of her input, it was clear that we had to think bigger. The Forum put in a successful application to the Aviva Community Fund and so, with the help of all those who voted for the Project, we will be putting our young campaigner to work.

The additional £25,000 of funding will go towards –

- A full-length mural inspired by the history of our neighbourhood and community. It will be outlined by local artist Victor Szepessy - see sketches below - and coloured and maintained with the help of school children from the area, so linking the community: past, present and future. (And we’re hoping to get into the *Guinness Book of Records* for ‘The World’s Longest Community Colouring in Mural’).
- Community notice boards to allow us all to communicate physically and digitally.
- An *Oral Histories of Herne Hill* sound installation.
- Tuition panels and weather protection for the Street Piano.

Work will start in March with the mural to follow. We apologise in advance for any inconvenience but hope you’ll enjoy the result.

George Hornby



Station Square Shops – Latest

Again, earlier estimates of a completion date proved too optimistic. However, Network Rail have been continuing to make progress on the scheme. It has begun talking to its former tenants about their interest in returning, and has also begun to think about the marketing of vacant units, with some businesses being suggested to Network Rail by local people.

Progress was stymied by at least two problems. One culprit turns out to be that ubiquitous coloniser of our railway network, *Buddleja davidii*. This fast-spreading shrub is a familiar sight on wasteland and all along the margins of our railways, where it evades the careful management that it normally requires. Left to its own devices it will put down robust and penetrative root networks that can damage foundations and brickwork.

Which happened in this case. The Railton Road shops and residential/office buildings are wedged up tightly against the operational railway, and the repair works exposed some significant structural damage caused by buddleia root systems between one of the units and the permanent way. To remove this, it was initially



going to be necessary to close the railway for a disruptive period, but other remedies were found and the buddleia issue has now been dealt with. But it did cause some delay in the works.

That sorted, Network Rail has continued to encounter other structural problems with some aspects of the scheme, including age-related issues in the corner unit. Because of this it is likely that they will do a phased handover of the scheme, with the majority of the new, nearly-completed units (and the new upstairs residential accommodation) being ready before the corner unit. The units are already being marketed and Network Rail continue to say that they don’t want to let to national chains, specifically denying the persistent rumours about Costa Coffee.

The Society’s Committee, along with the Herne Hill Forum and other interested local bodies, expect to have a chance to visit the site in the next few weeks, and we will then report further.

All Change on the Street Scene

After a period of stability, the shops and restaurants scene in Herne Hill has turned dynamic once again. **Pat Roberts** takes a look.

Close up against our rejuvenated railway station, and occupying a once shabby unit used by a minicab company, there is now an elegant and intriguing homeware and lifestyle boutique, **Jo's House**. Jo Hill trained as a jewellery maker and spent valuable



years focusing on jewellery in the very upmarket Harvey Nichols Knightsbridge store, but sells much more than jewellery in her alluring new shop. Candles, lighting, cleverly crafted rugs and recycled mats, beautiful ceramics and cards – all brought together with a flair for modern style and a witty personal touch. She opened during the run-up to Christmas, which proved to be perfect timing: some items sold out within days, and many people told her that this was just the sort of shop that they hoped would come to Herne Hill. The shop is perfectly placed for the hundreds of commuters who flood in and out of Herne Hill Station every day and for the many visitors who browse the Sunday Market.

www.joshouse.co.uk

Still at the station... The progressive and popular **Perks & White**, who make early mornings bearable for many a commuter with their locally-roasted, ethically-traded Volcano coffee, rainforest alliance tea, and hot chocolate, are now installed in a shiny



new retail unit leading off the enlarged booking hall, having patiently built their business over the last year or two during the lengthy restoration works from a rustic-looking pop-up unit outside the station, and then from the same unit nestling in a corner of the booking hall. That's tidied away now: their new premises have a proper counter and proper seating, along with Wi-Fi for those who have time to linger. Can we ever have enough coffee?

www.perksandwhite.com

Let's make a short detour south, to Norwood Road. Here, residents and visitors from across London and beyond are discovering an excellent and serious new restaurant, **Park's Edge Bar & Kitchen**, blessed by panoramic views across the green slopes of Brockwell Park. Managed by a couple with deep local



roots and experience in the restaurant business, Park's Edge is fast building a strong reputation around the cooking of its young and ambitious kitchen team. Head Chef Tim describes the food as "modern, inventive, experimental, technical, fresh, flavourful and very palatable". He goes on "Although our menu is modern British at its core, we bring some global influences into our cooking which makes it interesting for our diners".

The restaurant is winning rave reviews on OpenTable. "Who would have thought you could find such a place in Herne Hill?" wrote one enthusiastic diner. (Well, Herne Hill is on the up, surely you knew that?) It's

also nice that 100% of the service charge is distributed to the exceedingly pleasant staff.

Returning to the station we see that the **Milkwood Bar & Kitchen** has closed and appears to have ceased trading. Who's next, then? There have been strong rumours that the premises will be taken over by the very successful and ambitious Gail's Bakers, who began on Hampstead High Street in 2005 and now have 38 bakeries in neighbourhoods in and around London. Dulwich Village boasts the nearest branch. BUT BUT BUT BUT ... Gail's tell us that, while they do hope to open in Herne Hill at some point, "they won't be opening here in the near future". So the mystery persists.

www.parksedgebarandkitchen.com

Finally, old but new. **Lombok Thai**, on



Half Moon Lane, has been a reliable and consistently popular Southeast Asian restaurant for many years. In recent months it has seen a major refit inside, and the installation of a new and grown-up façade. (The highly individualistic, vivid pink paintwork of the old frontage never failed to divide opinion among residents and visitors.) Now under new management, it is more focused on dishing up purely Thai food – and as this is one of the world's great cuisines, this approach is surely a recipe for continuing success.

www.lombokthai.com

And welcome back to Bel Oré, the popular artisan bakery on Milkwood Road whose premises were wrecked by fire in April 2017. Now finally reopened as **Dough**, and looking smart.

www.doughbakehouse.co.uk





Two years ago, in issue 134 of this Magazine, we reported the occupation of the Carnegie Library by those opposed to Lambeth's plans for the building and, more generally, its policies towards library provision in the borough. The occupation ended and the Library was locked up. Lambeth prepared plans for the conversion of the building into a new entity, something combining a library service, a space for a range of community uses, and a gym. Planning permission was given for the scheme. The Herne Hill Society, along with many others, objected to the

scheme. On 15 February the doors opened to the public to reveal the Library's beautiful central hall, redecorated and with books and computers. A welcome sight – except of course dispute about the Library and its future use remains as fierce as ever. Critics of Lambeth's plans say that the sight meeting visitors to the Carnegie is a sham, because the central hall will, once further work has been done on the building, no longer be available for library and study use and will be restricted to an inadequate space at the front of the building. And they say there will be no full-time service by qualified librarians. Lambeth says the converted building will deliver more for local residents, increase potential for grant funding and save the council money. The complexities are formidable and the outlook uncertain, not least with local elections due in May. There is one certainty – the Carnegie story will not be going away.

More information, up to date at the time of going to press, can be found here

<http://friendsofcarnegielibrary.org.uk/>

<https://tinyurl.com/ya8ooesb>

LAMBETH TOWN HALL REFURBISHED

The refurbishment of the Grade II-listed Edwardian Lambeth Town Hall in Brixton is nearing completion – as is a whole host of other building projects in the vicinity, comprising Lambeth Council's new Civic Centre office building on Town Hall Parade, the redevelopment of the early 1960s Hambrook House for a new 14-storey residential tower providing 94 flats, and the conversion of the former Cooperative Department Store on Acre Lane (later known as Ivor House) from offices to flats.

The grand civic interiors of the Town Hall, opened in 1908 and given an additional floor and an Assembly Hall in 1938, have been restored with a radical remodelling at its centre. The modern reception area has been removed and the original lightwell roofed over with lightweight ETFE plastic material (comprising air-filled cushions, similar to the new roof above the Overground platforms at Crystal Palace station) to create a dramatic basement-to-roof atrium. This is crossed by a new walkway bridge between the upper entrance vestibule and a new reception to the rear. The new reception hall fills the space once occupied by the rates hall, converted many years ago to a committee room where planning committees were held; this committee room has been relocated to the basement where there will also be new office space for start-up businesses. The Register Office to the rear has also been refurbished.

The opportunity has also been taken to upgrade the services within this historic building, improving its thermal efficiency by adding an insulated green roof to the 1930s office additions and solar panels to the roof of the Assembly Hall to create renewable

energy generation for the civic complex.

The locally-listed Ivor House now has an additional attic storey in the style of the original 1920s mansard. Retail or restaurant use will occupy the ground floor, with 26 flats on the upper floors. To the rear, the old council printing department (hence its new name The Press) will provide a cycle park, changing and shower facilities for Lambeth Council officers, and a public cafe which will spill out onto the pavement of Buckner Road next to its grand classical archway.

The new six-storey Civic Centre has replaced a 1950s council building on the corner of Town Hall Parade and Porden Road. Its grid-style design incorporates stone and red-brick materials which echo those of the 1908 town hall. The five floors of council offices will house departments currently spread around the borough (such as Olive Morris House on Brixton Hill and International House next to the Brixton Recreation Centre)

allowing these to be redeveloped. A new customer services centre will occupy the ground floor.

The refurbished town hall and new civic offices are due to open fully this Spring.

Edmund Bird



THE CHAIR LOOKS BACK ON 2017

Membership

We lost 10% of our membership at the start of the year – but during the year we recruited 38, thus ending with only 10 fewer overall. Could we do better: increasing our membership to, say, 500? I am not sure; Herne Hill (unlike Brixton or Peckham) is a village. The Dulwich Society does have many more members than we do, but perhaps the population is less transient. If we were starting the Herne Hill Society today, would we do it differently? It would be a lot easier and quicker to grow a network using Facebook, for example. But without member subscriptions we would have to continually crowd-fund or hunt for sponsorship.

We also began to acquire Corporate Members. We greatly value their interest and support. Having signed-up members and money in the bank can make it easier to get things done, as well as providing the robustness to form long-term partnerships. Back to the point ... we were able to hold subscription rates for yet another year. But it will not be for ever!

Publishing and retailing

We published four full-colour issues of *Herne Hill* in 2017. Huge credit goes to the designer, Sophia Marsh, and our contributors, who came up with a range of news stories and features – often at little notice (sorry). Publishing a quarterly magazine is hard work but it is also very satisfying and, readers tell us, a great advertisement for the Society. Do tell your

neighbours they can buy it from Herne Hill Books. I shall take this opportunity to thank our advertisers – as well as Liz Ochagavia, who left the Committee last year. (N.B. We really do need a new Advertising Manager.)

And there was a new book: *A Brockwell Boy* by Jeffrey Rumble (in fact, an extensively revised new edition), sponsored by Oliver Burn Estate Agents. Again, the design and editing was done in-house. We have plans for further titles.

Remembering Herne Hill 1914-18

We made a successful application to the Heritage Lottery Fund's "First World War: Then and Now programme" and developed an ambitious research project with the Charter School. It is inspiring to see such a wide age range of volunteers getting involved. We have made an encouraging start, but there is still much to be done!

Finances and administration

The finances of your Society continue to be sound. We were able to continue our Small Grants scheme, making several awards, including to the excellent Herne Hill Music Festival. Please spread the word so we can do more next year.

For years some members have been storing Society equipment and book stock, often to the extent of not being able to use garages or spare bedrooms. We were keen to alleviate the problems and, last year, a sponsor stepped forward to enable us to



move our stuff into a commercial storage facility. Thank you!

Planning and licensing

A notable contribution of the Planning group was the detailed objection, drafted by Laurence Marsh, to the Dulwich Estate's application for a new almshouse at 68 Half Moon Lane. Southwark Council refused the application. We were less successful in objecting to the scheme to install a gym in the basement of the Carnegie Library. In spite of our objections, and those of other organisations and local residents, the application was passed by Lambeth.

And finally...

We shall greatly miss Jeff Doorn, our Secretary for the last 13 years. Amongst other achievements, he has, without fail, been able to commission a series of popular monthly events. His wealth of experience will be impossible to replace. The Committee wishes him all the best for the future.

Colin Wight



Preparing for Spring

To witness – on the very same piece of land – the scene we show on our front cover you would need to step back more than 200 years. A time before the first large villas appeared on Denmark Hill and the fields behind their houses were turned into spacious gardens, gardens that might have been built over at the beginning of the 20th century but were fortunately preserved to become Ruskin Park. In February there were magnificent Shire horses at work, first ploughing then harrowing a strip of land in the park, to be sown with wheat and beans. The project is organised by Friends of Ruskin Park in partnership with Brixton Windmill and Brockwell Bake Association and will help the Friends develop other food-growing projects in the local community.

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DIARY OF EVENTS

Spring/Summer 2018

For more information please check www.hernehillsociety.org.uk/meetings

Unless otherwise stated, Herne Hill Society meetings will be at Herne Hill United Church Hall, at 7:30 (doors open) for 7:45pm.

Please try to arrive before the speaker is introduced.

Talks

Wednesday 14 March
Annual General Meeting
followed by

“Lambeth’s Victorian Architecture”
by **Edmund Bird, heritage adviser to the GLA and Transport for London**

A talk based on the fifth book in a series, which illustrates the transition from a largely rural landscape to a largely urban one. The survey encompasses public buildings, parks, shops, transport, industry, housing, churches and lost buildings of the borough.

Wednesday 11 April
“Bees Can’t Eat Kind Words”

by **Dale Gibson, Bermondsey Street Bees**

Dale will examine the specific issues affecting the welfare of honeybees in London, including proliferation, forage availability and habitat. It will work through case histories and conclude with recommended remedies for the problems identified.

Wednesday 9 May
“Seven o’clock and not a Baby Bathed – The Story of a Lambeth Midwife”
by **Robert Holden**

Elizabeth Matilda Halston trained as a midwife in the 1920s, culminating in seven years as a domiciliary midwife with the LCC when she delivered hundreds of babies to women in their own homes. An unsung hero of the Second World War, this ordinary woman made an extraordinary contribution to her community.

Saturday 9 June

in the Baptist Church, Half Moon Lane:

“Annual Thomas Lynn Bristowe Memorial Lecture”

Helen Hayes, MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, will speak about being an MP for this constituency in the early 21st century, contrasted with Bristowe’s experience as the first MP for the 19th century Norwood Division.

This event is organised with Brockwell Park Community Partners

Wednesday 12 September

“Respectable Tenants Wanted: Early days of the Rosendale Road Estate”

by **Bob Reeves**

Details of this talk, given as part of Lambeth Heritage Festival, will appear in the next issue of this Magazine and on our website.

Local History Walks

Robert Holden leads three walks based on our book *Herne Hill Heritage Trail* to coincide with Lambeth’s Heritage Festival in September. Walks last up to two hours.

Sunday 2 September, 2:30pm

All Saints Church, Lovelace Road entrance

Sunday 9 September, 2:30pm

Herne Hill Velodrome, Burbage Road entrance

Saturday 15 September, 2:30pm

Herne Hill Station

For more information on our events

http://www.hernehillsociety.org.uk/society_meeting

Redwings in Herne Hill

At the beginning of December I began to notice a few redwings showing interest in the cotoneaster berries in my garden. Redwings are migrants from Scandinavia that arrive on our shores when the berries have run out in their home territory and it gets too cold for ground foraging. Over the next week I noticed the redwings on a number of occasions, flying about in a flock of around 20 individuals and settling on the tall trees nearby before feeding on the berries. They shared the berries with

blackbirds and on one occasion I spotted a fieldfare. Then they all seemed to go away for a few days, even though there were still plenty of berries available.

One Sunday, about 10 days after my first sighting, I counted 45 redwings in the trees nearby and on the cotoneaster berries. This was exciting, and I emailed the birders I know in the Society, and over the next few hours they dropped what they were doing and came with their binoculars and viewed the phenomenon from the safety of my sitting room window “hide”. They were all impressed at the numbers and the excellent view. A few days later all activity ceased as they had cleared the berries - even from the most challenging overhanging branches.



Several weeks later I saw a flock on a quiet slope in Brockwell Park, this time co-existing happily with starlings as they worked on the worms and grubs on the grass. A dog bounded up, and then they were off!

Sheila Northover

Blue Plaques and Urban Myths – a Riposte

The piece in the last issue of *Herne Hill* calls for a response. On the evidence of the voting in the Southwark Blue Plaques awards, it would appear that many still view any connection between Dylan Thomas and the Half Moon as simply another example of one of the many London pubs frequented by the writer. The real story is far more intriguing.

One of Dylan's friends was the sculptor and London Welsh rugby player Evan Samuel. According to an account published in 1959, based on an interview with Samuel in his home in Tulse Hill, Dylan would watch London Welsh games and then join the teams at the Half Moon "adding lustre to the gathering – he was a great conversationalist". The suggestion is this happened regularly. London Welsh had their home at the Herne Hill Velodrome for 40 years after World War I. The Dulwich Estate landlords did not permit alcohol there, and Vivian Jenkins, the team's greatest player of the Herne Hill era, remembers that the club adopted the nearby Half Moon pub. He recounted, "If I had been given a fiver for every time I sang *Sospan Fach* or *Calon Lan* at the old 'Half Moon' near Herne Hill Station in my playing days in the thirties I should be a millionaire!"

But is there more to this tale? Jon Tregenna is a Dylan authority, and man behind the BBC audiobook *The Road to Milk Wood*. Tregenna has published a letter written by the painter Michael

Edmunds about his friend and fellow artist, Alfred Janes, who told Edmunds he once shared a house on Milkwood Road in Herne Hill with Dylan Thomas. Janes was a contemporary of Dylan growing up in Swansea (they first met in 1931). His 1934 portrait of the writer hangs in the collection of the National Museum of Wales. Janes himself lived in Dulwich from 1963 until his death in 1999.

In relation to *Under Milk Wood*, Tregenna notes that Dylan was originally intending to call his play about small town Wales 'Llareggub' – "bugger all" backwards. However, one night he was riding over Waterloo Bridge on a bus with his American agent (*Under Milk Wood* was first read on stage in New York in 1953), who said the title was too obscure for an American audience. So Dylan suggested,



The Half Moon in the 1950s

'What about Under Milk Wood?'. We shall never know if Dylan was on the Number 68 bus going over Waterloo Bridge, but it seems plausible to suggest that the title relates back to times in Herne Hill.

So a picture emerges of Dylan standing, tousled-haired, dressed in tweeds, and pint in hand, in the smoke-filled Public Bar of the Half Moon. Completely in his element amongst fellow Welshmen, taking centre-stage in the conversation in between the singing, occasionally searching around in his pockets for his little red pencil and surreptitiously making notes on the back of his Woodbine packet. Did he perhaps overhear and scribble down the phrase, "under Milkwood Road" during one of these evenings? Now that would be in the realm of speculation.

Peter Blair

John Clark OBE

John Clark, a founder member of the Herne Hill Society, died on 1 July 2017. He was born on 18 October 1932 in Hackney, and was proud to call himself a Cockney, born within the sound of Bow Bells. He and his wife Judy lived in Stradella Road, then Turney Road, for many years, and were regular attendees at open meetings in the early days of the Society. He remembered attending one of the meetings in the mid 1980s when Sam Wanamaker was speaker, at the time when he was raising money for the Globe Theatre. John was very pleased to win the raffle, as his prize was a signed drawing of one of the early designs.

John read Law at Keble College, Oxford, and was called to the Bar in 1957. In 1961 he became Deputy Secretary and

subsequently Chief Executive of the National Association of Parish Councils, and in 1979 the General Secretary of the National Association of Local Councils. For 25 years he volunteered one evening a week at Toynbee Hall Free Legal Advice Centre. He was appointed an OBE in 1995 in recognition of his services to Local Government, and in retirement worked for 15 years as legal adviser to the Association of Burial Authorities, including clarifying the legal implications of dangerous headstones.

For several years John was invited to be the independent chair to help with the voting at Society AGMs, and when he and Judy moved to West Norwood, he kindly handed over his set of magazines, which went right back to the first edition in 1984.

His well attended memorial service was held at All Saints, West Dulwich, on 25 July 2017.

HERNE HILL WELCOMES REFUGEES – AN UPDATE



As we reported in our last issue, a group of volunteers in Herne Hill has embarked on an initiative to resettle a Syrian refugee family in our neighbourhood under the Home Office's Community Sponsorship scheme.

Since its formation, Herne Hill Welcomes Refugees has established a network of over 100 volunteers in the Lambeth area. The volunteers have been making progress to ensure the Syrian family's most urgent needs like safety and English language lessons will be met on arrival. Now the group is reaching out to the wider community in the hope of finding a property to rent that the refugee family can call home. This is the most vital step that will unlock the process of rescuing a displaced family and help them to start a new life in our community.

Helen Hayes, the MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, said "Our country has a great history of welcoming refugees fleeing violence and persecution. I am proud to see residents in Herne Hill working to support a refugee family from Syria to settle here in our community. I encourage anyone that may be interested in

housing a refugee family to get in touch with Herne Hill Welcomes Refugees."

With the aim of finding this all-important accommodation, volunteers from Herne Hill Welcomes Refugees had a presence in the Herne Hill market in January to talk to members of the community about the scheme, and have been dropping leaflets in streets all around the area. The group have distributed 5,000 leaflets and have been delighted with the overwhelmingly positive response received from the community when they have talked about the initiative.

For more information, please contact hhwelcomesrefugees@gmail.com.



Volunteers spread the word outside the Station

Rob Anderson

We are sad to record the death of Rob Anderson on 16 October 2017. Rob was born in 1944 in South Africa, where he went to school. He won a Rhodes scholarship and took up a place at Trinity College, Oxford to read English. After graduating he moved to London and spent a year supply teaching at a secondary school in Neasden. He then embarked on a two-year post-graduate planning course at University College London. He met Cynthia and they married in 1971 and came to settle in Kestrel Avenue in 1978.

Rob's first job was with a firm

of planning consultants – it took him to France, Italy and Scotland. Thinking that work in the consultancy sector was somewhat precarious for a married man with a family, he changed to teaching: town planning at the South Bank Polytechnic (now London South Bank University). There he became interested in the potential of computers (no desktops in those days) to process large amounts of the information which he thought would be useful for town planners. With a colleague, Rob set about developing computer systems which would capture the information contained in

applications from individuals and businesses, and process it to produce useful data for local authorities.

He went on set up his own business – challenging at first but ultimately successful. His work took him to many parts of the country, which he loved. He was keen to discover "local distinctiveness", and would often return from his travels with some regional speciality, such as a packet of Chorley cakes, or "sad" cakes, or a piece of Lincolnshire chine.

He retired in 2008, and alongside pursuing other interests, not least a passion for bird watching, for more than four years was a valued member of the Society's



Planning Group, to which he brought his unerring good sense and wide practical experience.

Rob's funeral at St Paul's was packed with family and friends. He is survived by Cynthia, their children David, Michael and Katherine and six grandchildren.

GRACE'S STORY – GROWING UP IN HERNE HILL 1914–1918

Since November, volunteer researchers from the Society and the Charter School have been working to discover more about men with links to Herne Hill who lost their lives in the First World War. St Saviour's Church, Herne Hill Road, was demolished in 1981 but a memorial tablet in memory of local men survives. It includes the name F LUCAS. Nothing more was known about him. We have found out that he was Fred Lucas, who lived at 45 Kemerton Road with his wife Charlotte and their five children, Grace, Dorothy, Gladys, Frederick and Vera. Fred Lucas was a motor engineer and with his mechanical skills he found himself working with heavy guns in the Royal Army Ordnance Corps. He died on the Somme on 23 July 1916. Many decades later his eldest daughter, Grace, wrote down her memories of her early life. They draw a vivid and touching picture of that time. We are immensely grateful to Elizabeth Sirriyeh and Frankie Maclean, two of Fred's granddaughters, who have made Grace's remarkable memoir available to us and provided other material. We are publishing extracts here and later this year we plan to publish a short book that will tell the whole story.



The earliest memory I have of my father is in the summer of 1913. I was seven years old and going on a Sunday School outing with about 20 small children. We were going by train

from Herne Hill and in order to get to the station we had to pass my father's workshops which were built under the railway arches. My father was an engineer and across the doors in large letters was the legend F. L. LUCAS, ENGINEER AND MOTOR BODY BUILDER. He was standing at the open door of the workshop and gave each one of us a halfpenny. You could buy a large bag of sweets for a halfpenny in those days.

My father was a tall, handsome man, cheerful and with many friends, particularly in the theatrical world. He maintained and repaired the coaches that transported the music hall troupes, with all their costumes and goods, from town to town. They often slept in these coaches when they could not afford digs. The Lupino family were the group I remember best. There were parties in our house too. A young actor with the impossible name of Oscar Golightly played the piano and the rest talked, and sang, and drank. The next day my mother would grumble at the stains made by beer glasses on her highly polished tables.

During these parties my sister Dorothy and I were supposed to be in bed, but we crept down and sat on the bottom of the stairs trying not to be noticed. Dorothy was a year younger than me; very pretty with golden curls and deep-set blue eyes. I was thin, skinny, with, I expect, my hair in plaits. I remember being very upset one evening when one of the chorus girls caught up Dorothy and carried her round the room singing "My great

big beautiful doll", which I imagine was a hit at the time.

... I do not think we had a very normal upbringing but we grew like Topsy, without noticing all the talk of war and the shouting of



Grace (left) with her father and sister Gladys

the politicians until suddenly war was declared. Then there were posters everywhere of Lord Kitchener with his arm stretched out, his finger pointing to the slogan "Your Country Needs You".

... We children did not have newspapers or magazines but the placards on the hoardings in the streets showed lurid pictures of Germans committing the most awful atrocities which caused us to have nightmares. I was always dreaming of Germans in spiked helmets climbing in through the windows with daggers clenched between their teeth. My sister Gladys was the most affected. She started sleepwalking and twice fell down the stairs. One night she knocked over a basin and a jug of cold water, which was on the washstand ready for our early morning wash. There was no hot and cold running water in those days. You washed in cold water, trying to avoid hurting your chilblains. Friday was bath night. We had a big zinc bath in front of the kitchen range, which had a kettle of water boiling ready to heat the tub up for the next body. A clothes-horse was placed round the bath with towels and nightdresses draped on it. My brother was last. He was lifted in and

scrubbed by Mabel Gain [*the family's maidservant*], always screaming that he would not go into the bath after all those girls. On thinking back I do not blame him.

... Then one day my father came home with his papers. He had joined Kitchener's Army. Being an engineer he was put in the Army Ordnance

Corps. He became an artificer on the big gun called “mother”. It is now in the Imperial War Museum. It was not a very sophisticated gun; when it was fired it sometimes recoiled and wounded members of its own crew. My father invented something to stop this happening. Being in the army he could not patent his invention, but he was awarded a decoration and he had a letter from Vickers offering him a big job after the war.

...Then came the fateful day that changed our lives. The telegram that came simply said my father had been killed. It was July 1916. I cannot remember if my mother cried. She just sat in the chair by the kitchen range holding the telegram. The baby cried and we all stood around not knowing what to do.

I knew about these telegrams. Two of my friends told me about the telegrams their parents had had when their brothers had been killed. Then Mabel Gain ushered us upstairs with tears streaming down her face, and told us to keep quiet. The baby still cried so Mabel picked her up, and with the baby tucked underneath her arm she made a strong cup of tea for my mother and then sat down on the other side of the fire singing to the baby. I looked through the banisters and Mother was still holding the telegram. That night I heard her crying but stayed curled up very tight in bed. I was 10 years old but grew up overnight.

...Mother became quiet and withdrawn, no laughing and singing as she used to, and she scolded us much less. The garden was her great escape and she could always be found there. She had planted nasturtiums, marigolds and hollyhocks from the seeds she had dried the autumn before. The coalman brought us our bag of coal each week, carrying the bags on a little cart drawn by a great Shire horse. Often he brought a bag of stable manure and emptied it into a pit at the bottom of the garden. Mabel did what housework was done and minded the baby, which she loved doing, wheeling the big pram round and round the garden and then to school to meet us.

To earn our Saturday penny we had to do our Saturday jobs. I ran the errands and polished the sideboard in the dining room, a large piece of furniture with a long mirror at the back. I had to stand on a chair to reach the mirror. I have never been fond of cleaning windows since. After that, there were the knives. Some kind of red powder was sprinkled on a knife board and the blade of the knife was rubbed up and down on the board until all the stains were gone. There were no stainless steel knives at that time. Dorothy had to clean knives and forks; I think the same red powder was put onto a saucer and slightly dampened, then rubbed onto the cutlery with a cloth and polished. Gladys polished the teaspoons. Every spring the carpets were taken up and we all banged the dust out of them with carpet-beaters. On Mondays the copper in the scullery was lit at five o'clock in the morning for the washing. I washed all the girls' black stockings in a large tub called a dolly tub, pounding them up and down with a round stick affair. I quite enjoyed that job.

... The Rev. Bayfield-Clark [*the vicar of St Saviour's*] was tall and well fed and was very fond of laying down the law. His large vicarage was beautifully furnished and he drove around in a carriage and pair, which shone with much polishing by a coachman, who was also the gardener and odd job man. The Reverend Bayfield-Clark was married to the daughter of the Bishop of London, a stately and severe person. He looked round the room with its comfortable chairs, the well-polished piano and the shelves of books and suggested that my mother could sell her piano, as she was now a widow and must need the money with five children to look after. My highly emotional mother was standing by a table with a vase of flowers on it and for a moment I thought he was going to get that vase of flowers right in the middle of his well-filled embroidered waistcoat. She was quite capable



Charlotte Lucas, née Finch, Grace's mother

of doing this but instead said quite quietly, in her best up-country voice, laced with overtones of acid, that we managed very well with the small amount of money a grateful country allowed her, and what she earned through sweated labour. You could not embarrass the man, he was too sure of his own importance!

[*Grace went on to win a scholarship to go to art school, but her mother insisted she would never earn a living with art, so she studied at a college to prepare her for the Civil Service examinations and passed them with distinction.*]

... The family were pleased to see me and were full of excited chatter but were not unduly impressed with my great achievement. It was apparently only what was expected of me. Bindle [*the family dog*] put his great paws on my shoulders and pinned me against the wall. This was his usual greeting when I came home from London for weekends. We went out all day and I slept again on the couch with Bindle snoring beside me. Everything was all right again. There were two letters waiting for me when we got home. One was to tell me when and where I went for a medical. The other was a very official-looking form with all the usual things like name and address, age and the nationality of my parents, and ancestors way back, actually to grandparents, also a list of the various Ministries. I had to number them in order of my preference. Board of Trade, Treasury and such grand places got themselves ticked and I ignored the Post Office. So what did I get? I got the Post Office. Apparently, that year they were putting the first 20 into the Post Office as the bright ones were not ticking it. It was then that I gave up God and stopped saying my prayers and going to Communion and started to ask the advice of my big, cheerful, clever father who was buried somewhere in France. I got the answer of course. Every night, with my head on a tear-soaked pillow, I got the answer – “Look after your mother”.

COWS OR CORONETS?

HOW GUERNSEY GROVE GOT ITS NAME (POSSIBLY)

Emails to the Society can throw up interesting lines of enquiry. A recent example came from the Guernsey Society, who were looking at use of the Guernsey name in other parts of the world and asked how Herne Hill's Guernsey Grove came to be so called.

A visit by John Brunton to the London Metropolitan Archives established that an architect acting for Francis Fearon was in correspondence with the London County Council in 1895 about the laying out and naming of two new streets, those we now know as Hawarden Grove and Guernsey Grove. Fearon's proposal was to name the streets "Florence" and "Stanhope" respectively, but this was rejected since other London streets already bore these names. "Stanhope Lodge" (since demolished, probably in the 1950s) was the name of a large house on Norwood Road, the home of Francis Fearon, and adjacent to the land where the two new streets were built. The involvement of Francis Fearon indicates that he was the owner of the land to be developed. In the course of 1895 the LCC approved the names Hawarden Grove and Guernsey Grove. But why Guernsey? The LMA records did not answer that question.

Further research suggested two possible explanations.

In 1895 the land behind the houses that had by now lined



the Norwood Road was still agricultural. Contemporary advertisements show that the Express Dairy Company Limited not only had a farm at Herne Hill but also a dairy on Rosendale Road. To this day there is a decorative dairy building (now, sadly, semi-derelict) that the Express Dairy built at the Norwood Road end of Rosendale Road, though probably not quite as early as 1895. The site is directly opposite what became Guernsey Grove.

So the first hypothesis is that in searching for a name for the new street and having his first choice rejected, the landowner, Francis Fearon, chose something associated with the area – the Guernsey cow.

The second hypothesis is less direct, but certainly intriguing. Francis Fearon was a successful solicitor who was involved in one of the most scandalous legal cases of late Victorian England, the Aylesford Peerage case. He represented Lady Aylesford, wife of the 7th Earl of Aylesford. The earl, known as "Sporting Joe" Aylesford, also had the ancestral title Baron Guernsey. The Aylesfords were part of the notorious Prince of Wales "set", who spent their time frequenting



Francis Fearon

the watering-holes of continental Europe and country houses at home. The set included the Marquess of Blandford, heir to the Duke of Marlborough. The Aylesford marriage broke down and a Deed of Separation was entered into between the earl and his wife in 1877. Fearon was the trustee under the Deed. In 1884, in the case of Fearon v. Aylesford, he successfully sued Lord A, a womanising spendthrift and alcoholic, for failing to pay his wife the maintenance provided under the deed.

The reason for the public interest in the case was that Lady A had been conducting an affair with the Marquess of Blandford and indeed bore him a son, born in Paris in 1881. The legal action caused gossip about the Prince of Wales and his coterie, and there was even talk of the Prince of Wales being called to give evidence in court.

In the event this did not happen, but Francis Fearon did give evidence and he was particularly questioned as to whether he had referred to Lady A's infant son as "Lord Guernsey", which would be the normal title of the male heir of the earl. As a good lawyer Fearon would have wanted to defend his client's interests, which included the possibility of her infant son being entitled to the title of Lord Guernsey and the Aylesford inheritance. She was, after all, still the lawful wife of Lord A. So Fearon said he may well have referred to the child as Lord Guernsey.

There was in fact overwhelming evidence that the child could not be Lord A's and was the illegitimate son of the Marquess of Blandford. The following year (1885) the brother of Lord A – Lord A having sold what was left of his property, left England and gone to America and dying in January on a cattle ranch he had started at Big Springs, Texas, apparently of cirrhosis of the liver – began an action that was heard by the Committee of Privileges in the House of Lords. Lord A's brother claimed the Aylesford (and Guernsey) peerage on the grounds that Lord A had no legitimate male heir. Lady A was represented in this trial and sought to retain the peerage for her son. As far we know Fearon continued to act as her solicitor. Given that the evidence of the relationship between Lady A and the Marquess of Blandford was overwhelming, it is not surprising that the House of Lords allowed the petition of Lord A's brother.

The Aylesford Peerage case was almost certainly the most high-profile case that Francis Fearon was involved in during a successful career. He failed to preserve the Aylesford/Guernsey title for his client's infant son, but ten years later, when looking for a street name – his first choice having been rejected – might he perhaps have thought, possibly with a sense of mischief, "I will find a way of commemorating the shenanigans of the ruling class"?

Laurence Marsh



Countess of Aylesford

THE STREATHAM SKETCHBOOK

In *A Dulwich Notebook* Mireille Galinou could be said to have chosen a soft target – one of London’s naturally picturesque “villages” with culture and history in plentiful supply. Streatham, the location for her second London excursus, written together with the Japanese-born artist Jiro Osuga, is an altogether grittier choice. I will probably not be the only South Londoner whose trips to Streatham steadily dwindled after Pratts closed down almost 30 years ago. So it is most welcome to find a book that celebrates Streatham’s sprawling diversity in such a lively and original manner. In the Preface Galinou explains that the artist in the city is a central theme of the book, and of more books planned in future, so it is not surprising that Jiro Osuga’s pictures occupy more than 60 of its pages. He is a painter rather than an illustrator and for this reason one probably learns more about him than directly about Streatham from his pictures. This should not be seen as a fault, because the book deliberately sets out to have two

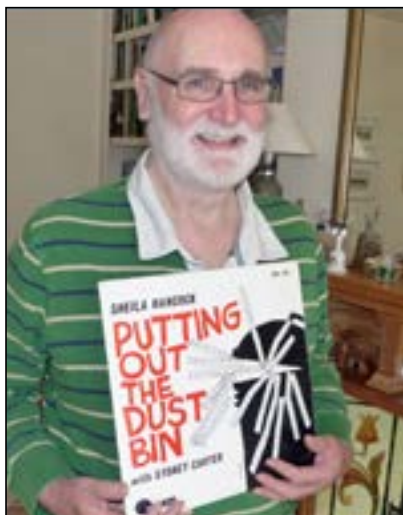


contrasting styles for its subject matter: the one viewing Streatham obliquely through an artist’s eyes, the other using the more conventional tools of art history and local history. This makes for a stimulating

approach and is enhanced by impressive quality in terms of book design and fine photography by Torla Evans. An inventory of the architectural variety of Streatham Hill and Streatham High Road is especially fascinating, so easy to overlook when one drives down that busy road, though it will be more difficult to concentrate when next I do so! The Thrales and Dr Johnson may be reasonably familiar – so too “Madame Cyn” (Cynthia Payne of luncheon vouchers for sex fame). But supermodel Naomi Campbell and artist Winifred Knights being natives of Streatham, a young van Gogh sketching on the Common, the superb “Dixcot” by the architect C.F.A. Voysey, or the exquisite stained glass by John Hayward in St Leonard’s Church installed after a terrible fire in 1975: these are just a few of the many lesser known aspects of Streatham that can be found in this engaging addition to books on London.

Laurence Marsh

The Streatham Sketchbook by Jiro Osuga and Mireille Galinou is published by Your London Publishing, 2017



Although Sydney Carter (1915–2004) has a well-deserved place in the Society’s excellent publication *Herne Hill Personalities* and is very well known for the hymns *Lord of the Dance* and *One More Step*, I have always thought that where he lived for many years should be marked with a Blue Plaque. He lived at 39 Holmdene Avenue for many years with his devoted wife, Leela Naur.

Songwriter Sydney Carter

We knew her as “Mrs Carter”, a learning support teacher at Bessemer Grange Primary School who was very kind to our daughter. They met again at Sydney’s funeral, a splendid occasion, where a number of famous musicians, including Martin Carthy, were present.

I have been aided by Jeff Doorn, Herne Hill Society Secretary, and now have the information to proceed with the Blue Plaque application. I am deliberating whether to apply to English Heritage (even though Sydney has not been dead for 20 years), though Southwark Heritage Association might provide a quicker if less prestigious route. Whichever, I will be looking for support from the Society and its members so that Sydney can be honoured appropriately.

It may not be widely known that the house was owned for some time by Donald Swann, with whom Sydney often collaborated. *Herne Hill Personalities* mentions that, and also that Sydney and

Sheila Hancock made an album in 1962 called *Putting Out the Dustbin*. I was very keen to obtain a copy and was delighted when my clever wife, Fay, used eBay to acquire it from Australia for my birthday. She struck gold, because not only did the LP actually arrive, but with it came a CD of Sydney on stage in 1972. Rob Smythe, who kindly added the CD, said the intention had been to produce an album, but that it never came to pass.

I have recently been listening to Sydney’s music again and, although probably an acquired taste, his gentle tenor voice suits such interesting, comic and tuneful numbers as *Putting Out the Dustbin*, *The Devil Wore a Crucifix*, *My Mum was a Woman* and *The Vicar is a Beatnik*. Sydney’s prowess needs to be reassessed. I will leave the last words to him: “I never sing the same song twice. It’s different every time, so am I. Nothing will be fixed and final till I’m dead; and, I hope, not even then.”

Michael Stirling

THE DIVA OF HERNE HILL

In 2017 we saw the bicentenary of the death of Nancy Storace, one of the most eminent of all Herne Hill's former residents. At the Society's November meeting, Emmeline Leary treated us to an account of her detailed research on Storace. Anna Selina (often known as "Nancy") Storace was born to an Italian musician's family in London in 1765. She became one of the most important English sopranos of the second half of the 18th century. Her family moved to Italy, where she trained; she subsequently performed in many continental cities, including Vienna. She sang the role of Susanna in the first performance of Mozart's *The Marriage of Figaro*. Anna returned to London in 1787. She was, by this time, extremely wealthy. After many lovers and an unhappy marriage, she settled down with John Braham, another famous singer. They lived together for many years and had one son, Spencer.

In 1808, when Nancy retired from the stage, she bought Herne Hill Cottage – situated where 5 Dorchester Drive stands today. There were extensive gardens and land (4.5 acres), which would

have stretched between the current streets of Herne Hill, Dorchester Drive and



Storace (left), performing in Vienna 1786

Brantwood Road. It was on part of this land that John Ruskin's house stood later in the 19th century.

Emmeline shared a huge amount of detail about life in Herne Hill Cottage and the tempestuous ending of Nancy's relationship with John Braham in 1816. There were wonderful summer parties, incorporating musical performances, dinner, dancing and fireworks, and fine views towards the city across what were then fields. Detailed descriptions of these parties have survived. The architect and antiquarian Sir John Soane was a friend and regular visitor.

In July 1817, a year after the end of her relationship with Braham, Nancy fell ill and died, probably from a stroke. It is surprising that so little has been published about her. The Society is aware of one book published in French, but nothing substantial in English. There is, of course, an entry on Nancy in *Herne Hill Personalities*.

Emmeline was congratulated on her painstaking research, and encouraged to write more on the diva of Herne Hill. Her talk was fascinating: full of detail, contemporary drawings and paintings, as well as musical examples.

Val Suebsaeng

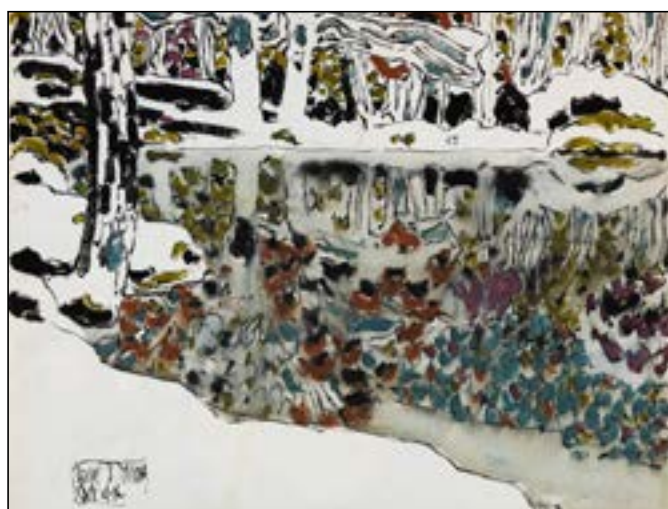
Ceres Dandridge, describing herself as "McGonagall's Apprentice", was inspired to break into verse after the talk about Nancy Storace. It is rare that we are offered a poem to publish, and we do so with pleasure and our thanks to Ceres.

*Emmeline Leary came to talk
of Nancy Storace, her life and her death.
She owned a smart Cottage, down a long walk
and guests on foot landed up short of breath
from traversing three hundred yards plus to the house.
In long, trailing dresses and tight pantaloons.
That was enough to provoke them to grouse,
But they came to her parties in Julys and Junes.
They came to her wonderful parties
in droves, and in chariots, and laundelettes.
Starting at four, these soon became soirées,
where old English dances replaced minuets.
And where now is the site of these revels
house, garden, conservatory, shed,
the pig-sty, the landscaped levels,
the five-foot mahogany bed?
Noble guests and plump opera singers,
and Nancy herself, are now gone.
Not a stone, not a flower lingers
to show where they danced until dawn.*

*But where was the Cottage, or Lodge, situated?
There's a path down the side of Dorchester Court,
one hundred and fifty yards (estimated,
I just may have paced it too long – or too short).
And where was the garden –
somewhere in Dorchester Drive?
Perhaps overlapping a Brantwood portion,
when she was in love and alive.
If so, it's quite pleasant to think it.
I thought Brantwood Road was a blank,
empty for ever, a lost bit,
of field, of hillside, of wild-thyme bank,
where Victorian children bought fairings
and played games in which clay pipes were broken.
But now I've got my bearings,
and understand all that was spoken.
This could be the place where she sang long ago,
but she's dead now, as Virgil and Horace!
Well, tonight I learned something, and now I know
that her name was STO-RA-CHAY, not STORACE.*

DAVID MILNE – A CANADIAN COLOURIST

Regular visitors to Dulwich Picture Gallery, or readers of this column, will remember how we were introduced to the Group of Seven several years ago; followed more recently by a celebration of Emily Carr. We now have the chance to experience a third Canadian exhibition, discovering the works of David Milne.



Born in rural Ontario, Milne went to New York in 1903 to study commercial illustration; but drawn to the city's many museums and galleries, he soon turned his attention to fine art. The bustling street scene provided ample subjects, and he captured all the exuberance and excitement. From the bright lights of *Dreamland Tower*, *Coney Island* reflected in the water below, to stately scenes in the newly opened New York Public Library, with elegantly dressed patrons in a white and cool blue interior to a contrasting chocolate coloured setting, he experimented to achieve his effects.

Influenced by Monet, Milne painted a series of views of advertising billboards, one grey with a passing green bus, one yellow with more distinct letters and a horse-drawn cart. Together with the lively *Fifth Avenue*, *Easter Sunday* and *Columbus Monument* with white paint thickly applied, these were included in the prestigious Armory Show of 1913 alongside Matisse, Braque, Van Gogh and Monet himself.

In response to Matisse, *Red* has a blue-clad woman leaning against a blue chair in a ruddy-coloured studio with blue highlights and white windows. This paring down of form and use of limited palette is also seen in *Interior with Paintings*: a woman in black sits reading, brown walls and table top set against a crazy-pattern carpet.

Milne and his wife Patsy left the frenetic city for a village near woods where he further developed his system of colour values in brilliant landscapes. He used white, either paint, cut paper or blank canvas, to produce a "dazzle spot" to draw the eye. His views through trees and reflections in still water are particularly telling. He also used camouflage as a device, in three pictures of Patsy

blending into the landscape as she sits reading.

Enlisting too late to serve in WW1, he became a war artist, recording the training camps, devastated battlefields, wrecked tanks, craters caused by explosives, abandoned huts and scattered equipment. There are harrowing ruins, broken brush strokes evoking stark destruction, people with black umbrellas passing Arras Cathedral. Display cases contain postcards of Ypres, which Milne noted had become a tourist attraction; Stefan Zweig later wrote of this phenomenon.

Rereading Thoreau's *Walden*, he built a hut, living and painting in austere style. Frozen scenes segue into pink reflections of early spring, or the occasional industrial ruin found on lonely wanderings. Moody, spooky photographs reflect his isolation.

Returning to Canada, he lived near a mining town where he painted water lilies, other still-life floral studies, pools and flooded mineshafts. Contrasting nature with blast sites harking back to wartime blight, he also playfully juxtaposes nature and art, as in *Flowers and Easel*.

Moving again, his marriage over, Milne had a burst of creative energy, painting village houses, lake scenes and still life pictures of anything to hand: flowers, his bowl, jam jars, even a paper bag. Display cases show sketches used to spur memories for stunning cloud pictures, stars, smoke, lake and forest. Renewing his connection with the art world, he was finally to establish himself. His later works are not included here; but there is a sad



photograph of the burning of paintings he thought unworthy.

This important exhibition reveals a great artist virtually unknown in this country, bringing together works from many galleries and private collections. Don't miss this rare opportunity to acquaint yourself with the work of David Milne.

Jeffrey Doorn

David Milne: Modern Painting, which opened 14 February, continues until 7 May.

Open Tuesday – Sunday and Bank Holiday Mondays 10am-5pm. Entry: £15.50 (including voluntary Gift Aid donation); seniors £14.50; students, unemployed, disabled, Art Fund £7; children and Friends free.

Safer Neighbourhood Policing

Safer Neighbourhood Policing was introduced into London in 2004 as a three-way partnership between the police, the council and the community. The newly-formed teams comprised a sergeant, two PCs and four PCSOs (Police Community Support Officers) – who are not police officers but work among the community without powers of arrest. At first, many members of the public were sceptical about their role and usefulness but the PCSOs quickly won the confidence of the public and demonstrated that they were invaluable to the neighbourhood policing model. Herne Hill ward was among the earliest to form in London and the second in Lambeth (7 June 2005). It numbers 14 Herne Hill residents, of whom six are original members; and at least one PC, and often a ward sergeant, attends. A ward councillor also attends on behalf of Lambeth Council.

There is close contact between the chairs of Herne Hill (Lambeth) and Village ward panels (Southwark). The panel members from the Herne Hill community each represent a constituency such as a residents' association, a neighbourhood watch or other community group; there is at least one Herne Hill representative on the Village Panel.

Over time the strength of the police team (SNT) has been reduced again and again, so that we now have one sergeant for four Lambeth wards, two PCs (dedicated ward officers) and one PCSO; but there are now also a number of specialist teams, such as drugs, firearms, knives, robbery, theft, violence against the person, moped robberies and burglary. These can be called upon, so all is not gloom. There are 21 wards in Lambeth: each has a ward panel (SNP) a police team (SNT) and a ward councillor who meet quarterly. The 21 wards are divided into three Clusters: Northern,

Southern and Central. Herne Hill is in the Central Cluster, along with Brixton, Brixton Hill, Tulse Hill and Coldharbour. Each Cluster is operationally managed by an inspector who sets the three priorities for all wards within a cluster. At each quarterly panel meeting the three priorities for the SNT to focus upon are reviewed for results with documentary evidence available. In addition, the ward panel chooses up to three promises that the SNT will seek to address during the current quarter. These are also reviewed and other promises set for the next quarter. Burglary was one of the two promises chosen at December's meeting following a spate in one area of the ward; Cycling on Pavements being the other. Pedestrians everywhere are suffering injuries from collisions.

The operational structures and methods within the Southwark borough command unit are quite different from those of Lambeth. The two borough command units are set to merge later this year, with the Southwark Borough Commander taking charge of policing in both borough; so there will be changes of method and structure although the ward panel structures will not change.

The current priorities set in December were: Anti-social Behaviour; Drug Dealing and Usage; and Violence with Injury.

The Community Road-Watch scheme was introduced into Lambeth in 2016 and began in Herne Hill ward. Members of the public may join with police officers to monitor traffic speeds on stretches of roads where speeding occurs. The next sessions in Lambeth will be at Herne Hill Road near St Saviour's School on Tuesday 13 March at 11:00 am; and the junction of Milkwood Road with Lowden Road on Thursday 19 April at 2:30 pm.

If you live, work or study in Herne Hill and wish to join the Herne Hill or the Village ward panel, please e-mail the chair

johnfrankland42@outlook.com

John Frankland

Listen: 140 Years of Recorded Sound



The British Library has mounted a free Entrance Hall exhibition which looks at the significance of sound since the phonograph was invented in 1877.

I was invited to attend the Press Launch on 5 October as a special guest, as I had donated a "Wireless Log" written in a school exercise book by my uncle, Alfred Taylor, aged 16 in 1922. That was the first year of broadcasting and the start of what became known as the BBC. My uncle kept a log in an old exercise book of every

broadcast made during that year, and recorded his comments about reception (whether good or bad) and his enjoyment of orchestral concerts and artistes such as Dame Nellie Melba singing arias. This log book is the only known existing record of what was broadcast in 1922 (the *Radio Times* hadn't been thought of in those days!).

This is a very well put-together exhibition, which tells the story of sound recording and explores the importance of sound in capturing history, how radio transformed

society in the 20th century and how the way we listen has changed as new technologies have emerged and old ones become obsolete. You can step into a listening booth to hear an eclectic mix of sounds from the archives, including many rare and unpublished recordings.

The exhibition is free and well worth a visit. It's open every day and runs until May 2018.

Annie (Bright) Gelly (née Taylor)
<https://tinyurl.com/y83datpv>

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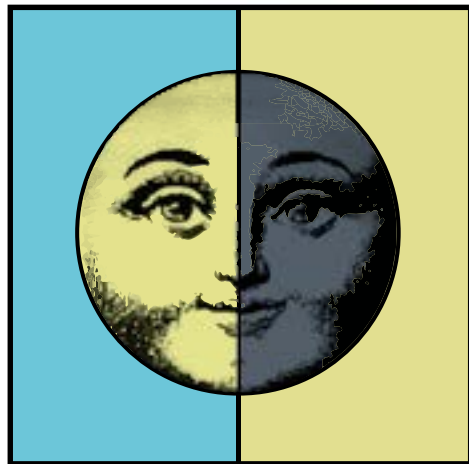
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