

# HERNE HILL

THE MAGAZINE OF THE HERNE HILL SOCIETY • ISSUE 143 • Autumn • 2018 • £2.50

*Colour the Tunnel!*



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**PROFIT FROM THE PARK**

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**HERNE HILL CHILLS**

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**THE QUADRANGLE**

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**BATH FACTORY RIDDLE SOLVED**

▶ *Turn to page 16*



# The Magazine of the Herne Hill Society



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# Local Landmark Fully Restored



*The Portico Summer 2018*

of the house at 170 Denmark Hill. The restoration recreates a feature that used to exist: the provision of seats that give shelter from rain or shade from the sun, or simply a quiet place to sit and enjoy the peaceful park setting. One hopes that in time an information board can be added to explain the history of this unique structure.



*The Portico four years ago*

It is especially pleasing, in an era of swingeing cuts to local authority funding, to find that the restoration of a heritage asset is still possible. A few years ago the Grade II-listed portico in Ruskin Park was a sorry sight. One wondered whether it would survive at all. Now, through a partnership between Historic England, Lambeth Council, Heritage of London Trust and the Friends of Ruskin

Park, with support from the Wates Family Enterprise Trust, this distinctive structure has been beautifully restored. What is now Ruskin Park was laid out in 1906-07 — a green space saved from the ever-growing spread of bricks and mortar. The park used the land belonging to a number of large houses on Denmark Hill. These were demolished, apart from the front and rear porches and part of the ground floor walls



## Thomas Lynn Bristowe Memorial Lecture

Our photograph shows Helen Hayes, MP for Dulwich and West Norwood, with the Society's Chair at the Society's public meeting in June. We were delighted that Helen was able to give the Thomas Lynn Bristowe memorial lecture that had been scheduled for last year, but postponed due to the intervention of the 2017 General Election. The theme of the lecture was to compare and contrast the role of the local MP who represented Herne Hill in the later Victorian era with the role of the MP with that task today. The differences are indeed great. For a start Helen has an electorate that is more than 10 times as great as the one Bristowe had in his Norwood constituency. This was a talk of the highest quality, well researched and full of points of interest. It deserves more than a mere summary. Helen has kindly tidied up her notes and provided us with a text of the full talk that we have now published on the Society's blog.

<http://hernehillsociety.typepad.com/blog/>

## Make New Friends by Sharing Interests

The Dulwich & District U3A was set up four years ago. It has proved extremely popular with the retired and semi-retired in our area and now has more than 550 members.



The concept is simple – find a group of people with an interest in common and encourage them to meet regularly to pursue that interest. Groups are kept fairly small (usually not more than 10) to allow everyone to feel able to participate. If a group becomes too popular a second group may be formed. Meetings are generally fortnightly, many in Rosebery Lodge, Dulwich Park, but also in members' homes and other venues, depending on the nature of the activity. There are also

regular talks and events covering a wide variety of subjects as well as opportunities for participation in external research projects. The huge range of interests now covered by the Dulwich & District U3A can be found on their website

<https://u3asites.org.uk/dulwich/group>

– from Crochet to Maths for Fun to Tree Identification plus Sketching and a great deal more, in fact almost 80 groups in all. Membership costs £25 per annum and for that you are entitled to join as many groups as you like.

### New Vicar for the Parish of Herne Hill



The Reverend Ben Goodyear became the new vicar of the parish of Herne Hill on 12 June in a service at St Paul's church led by the Bishop of Woolwich, the Rt Revd Dr Karowei Dorgu. We look forward to interviewing Ben Goodyear for an article in a future issue of the Magazine, and meanwhile welcome him, his wife Rachel and their four children to Herne Hill.



## The Great Underpass Mural

*...will it be a  
World Record?*

As surely everyone must know by now, this is an imaginative project to transform the underpass that runs under the railway lines at Herne Hill Station with a 40-metre mural — created by Victor Szepessy and coloured in by 2,332 local people, including over 1,000 schoolchildren.

The big day, 12 September, was overcast and drizzly. The team of volunteers, comprehensively briefed and marshalled by the brilliant Lucy Reynolds, started to arrive before 8am. It was immediately clear that this was a major undertaking. At 9:15 it was the turn of the first school group, from St Jude's, to start the task of carefully colouring Victor's painting-by-numbers panorama. The children were very excited – their first question: "Are we going to be on TV?" And so it went on. By 8pm the numbers of participants – of all ages – had surpassed 2,000, with more schoolchildren arriving the following day! The Mayors of Lambeth and Southwark had to colour in their bit. And celebrity was there, in the shape of local resident Sir Mark Rylance – and his dog.

The number of participants involved is way in excess of the previous record, held by a Mexican team. But to achieve Guinness World Record status, every aspect of the exercise must be documented and verified. (There were video camera, barcode scanners and iPads everywhere.) Will we get it? We shall see. But of one thing we can be sure: the process of organising and carrying out this project has captured the imagination of Herne Hill and brought together the community in an inspiring way.

The mural project is funded by the Herne Hill Forum, Lambeth Council, Southeastern Railway and Network Rail and the Aviva Community Fund. For more background, read "Tunnel Vision" in the previous two issues of the Magazine.



Photos by Pat Roberts

# Profit from the Park

Since our last issue Field Day has been and gone, but questions of how we use our parks, pay for them and use any profit that can be made from them have not gone away. With no end in sight to austerity these questions are even more pressing. There are no simple answers. Clearly there can be a place for popular events that attract large numbers of people, but how does one balance the long-term health of a park against the short-term pleasures and financial profits derived from such events? We can expect the grass to grow again in Brockwell Park – though it is still a sorry sight in many places – but can we trust Lambeth in their stewardship? Alice Salisbury Jones, the founder of Brockwell Tranquillity, thinks Lambeth have failed in their duty to care responsibly for the park. She sets out in what follows why the organisation is now preparing to pursue a legal challenge against Lambeth.



September 2018,  
poor recovery

**F**inding ways to keep the community up to date on the legal situation around Brockwell Park is hard. Legal action takes a long time, information comes in fits and starts, and the devil is in the detail. Below are answers to the questions we get asked most frequently, but get in touch if you'd like to know more.

## What are you taking action against?

We don't believe it's legal to use public parks as revenue opportunities. When events take place in parks it must be for the benefit of that park and its users. We believe confirming this will tip the balance back towards treating parks as valuable in their own right, not as commercial spaces there to generate the most profit possible.

## What's the legal situation?

In the last couple of years there have been several high-profile cases relating to how councils manage their parks. The most recent was a case by The Friends of Finsbury Park. That ruling confirmed that - while it is legal for parks to be used for private events - all the money raised belongs to the host park. At a time when parks are having their budgets slashed we think it's vital this ruling is upheld.

## Will this stop all events?

No, and we don't want to. But we do believe it will put a limit on the number the council has an incentive to hold. While parks-equal-profit the temptation will always be to hold more and more until they become just another commercial venue. The current policy is for eight major event days every year, in every main parks. Plus the Lambeth Country Show. For Brockwell that means at least double the number of festivals we had this year, with no limit on capacity. That's too many. Is this just about Brockwell Park? No. If we win it will have consequences for all major parks in the borough, including Streatham and Clapham Commons.

## Doesn't the money raised help fund parks?

While the money generated through events has been increasing, the same cannot be said for the park's budget. Little more than 10% of money from events is earmarked for reinvestment in our green spaces. We know local authority budgets are under pressure, but this isn't a sustainable approach to funding green spaces.

## Is there another option, other than the courts?

Locals have tried desperately hard to engage the council and councillors to secure, not a ban on festivals, but a limit on the number and size to a level that is sympathetic to the needs of individual parks. But rather than listen we feel Lambeth have flatly ignored residents' views. This legal action is a signal that locals are not willing to be ignored on this.

## Aren't these cultural events?

Commercial festivals are not like the Notting Hill Carnival or the Lambeth Country Show, which are events of immense cultural significance: born out of local traditions, organised by members of the local community, and open for anyone to attend. Field Day is owned by a huge multi-national that makes hundreds of millions a year. Too often now 'Culture' is being defined as what works for big businesses, instead of communities. Parks are already part of our culture, we don't need large corporations to sell them back to us.

## How many people back this move?

We don't have the resources to do a full consultation (though we'd love to). What we do know is that when we launched this legal action we raised the first £3500 needed to brief the legal team in less than a week, and most of the donations were no more than £15. Over 3000 people have now signed the petition against Lambeth's events policy. We couldn't have done that unless there was a real groundswell of support.



The wall goes up, May 2018

## How can I help?

- 1 minute: pledge any amount you can at [www.crowdjustice.com/case/protectlambethparks/](http://www.crowdjustice.com/case/protectlambethparks/)
- 5 minutes: share the page through Twitter or Facebook or just tell your neighbours
- 30 minutes: ask two other friends to do exactly these three things - if the 200 people who have given so far get two people each to do the same we'll be more than halfway there

Alice Salisbury Jones, founder of Brockwell Tranquillity

## SOCIETY SUBSCRIPTIONS

### Membership subscriptions to go up in January

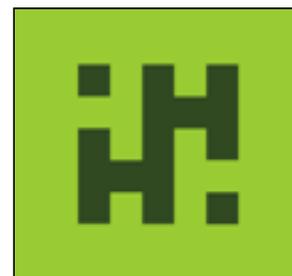
At our July meeting the Committee decided that it was time for a modest increase in our membership fees. Whilst printing and postage costs have gone up considerably in recent years, subscriptions have remained at the same level for seven years. And before that, they had not risen for two decades! Surely that must be some kind of record? For the first time in some years, we are running an annual deficit and it is prudent to act now rather than later.

### Rates applicable from January 2019

<b>Household membership</b>	£10 (up from £8) *
<b>Concessions</b>	£8 (up from £6)
<b>Life membership</b>	£100 (up from £75, <i>but of course this rate only applies to new Life members</i> )
<b>Corporate membership</b>	£25 (no increase, <i>but with two rather than three copies of each magazine</i> )

\* 2018 rates in brackets

We have looked at the rates charged by neighbouring local societies, and nearly all charge £10 a year or more.



### What should members do now?

If you are one of over 100 members who currently pay by Standing Order, we will prepare a new Standing Order mandate for you to send to your bank. If you usually pay by cheque, then please note the new rates as above. If you choose to renew online through our website, the new rates will come into force automatically at the end of the year.

I hope you will agree that membership of the Herne Hill Society, with a quarterly colour magazine delivered at no extra charge to your door, continues to be very good value. We appreciate your support!

Colin Wight

## Lambeth Country No Show



The Society did not exhibit at the Country Show this year — which was interpreted by some as a protest against Lambeth's parks events policy. In fact, this was not the case (although we did vigorously oppose Field Day). Our decision was made for other reasons, as long ago as February.

The Committee concluded that the expense and effort associated with exhibiting last year was not justified by the results. And with no new title to sell there would have been little of interest for our loyal customers. Some people I spoke to believe the nature of the event has changed in recent years, because the

Country Show now brings in people from much further afield. So, we will look for other opportunities, such as at Herne Hill Market.

It also has to be said that we have struggled to get enough volunteers to comfortably man a stand for one day, let alone two. And it takes a lot of preparation. As the Committee continues to shrink, something has to give. Our commitment to World War I research, which has Heritage Lottery support, has to be given top priority; after all, a centenary only comes around once, and there is still much work to be done. Will we attend next year? The Committee will consider it in the spring.

Public reaction to this year's show was mixed. It was clearly influenced by anger over earlier damage to the park, construction of the Great Wall and introduction of bag searching — as well as the vociferous opposition to Field Day and Mighty Hoopla in June. But other visitors thought it was pretty much the same as ever, with the security arrangements not unduly disruptive. My own view is that it was relaxed and enjoyable, although the heat drove me away after a couple of hours. I was also very thirsty. But £5.50 for a small tin of "craft beer"? That really is a bit steep. Suddenly, the Half Moon seems very good value.

Colin Wight



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# DIARY OF EVENTS

## Autumn/Winter 2018

For more information please check  
[www.hernehillsociety.org.uk\\_meeting](http://www.hernehillsociety.org.uk_meeting)

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

Wed 10 October, 7:45pm

**“The Architecture of the London Underground since 1850”**

by **Edmund Bird**

Transport for London’s Heritage Advisor will give a richly illustrated talk on the architectural history of the tube network appraising the diversity of Victorian, Edwardian and 20th-century station styles employed by architects and engineers from the steam age through to the classic ox-blood designs of the 1900s and the monumental inter-war stations by Charles Holden, right up to the futuristic interchanges of the Jubilee line extension.

Wed 14 November, 7:45pm

**“William and Margaret Huggins, Astronomers”**

by **Louise Devoy**

William and Margaret Huggins had their own observatory in Tulse Hill during the 1860s. Louise Devoy is the Curator of The Royal Observatory, Greenwich.

Wed 12 December, 7:45pm

**“Remembering Herne Hill 1914-18”**

**Speakers from the Herne Hill Society**

A celebration of our Lottery-funded World War I project. We plan to launch our new book, *Grace’s Story*, the memoir of a young girl growing up in Kemerton Road during and after the war.

## Herne Hill Music Festival 2018

The Herne Hill Festival is back in October with a larger and more varied programme than ever. Now in its eighth year, it is an established fixture in London’s musical calendar. The aim is to maximise musical engagement across the community over 10 days and to act as a platform for musicians with very different musical styles.



Amelia Clarkson

The Festival is staffed entirely by volunteers and is supported by main sponsor Herne Hill School, with contributions from City & Country Farmers

Markets, Llewelyn’s Restaurant, Olley’s

Fish Experience, Peterman’s Estate Agency, Fourway Pharmacy and The Herne Hill Society. This year’s festival consists of 22



Mehboob Nadeem

events taking place in 11 venues. A strong concert programme is enhanced by community

events reflecting the wide range of local talent in South London.

Highlights include:

**“Unravelling a Tradition”** A musical journey through 700 years of Indian culture with Mehboob Nadeem featuring sitar, tabla, singing and poetry. Enjoy the different elements of one of the world’s

richest musical traditions (10 October at Herne Hill School)

**“Bring Back Big Ben!”** Pupils of St Saviour’s School perform a musical especially composed for the occasion by Amelia Clarkson and sponsored by The Herne Hill Society (12 October at St Saviour’s Hall)

**“Herne Hill Sings On”** Local choirs come together to sing for enjoyment and your entertainment, with Mind and Soul Community Choir, London Humanist



Choir, Clapham Community Choir and The Cambria Choir (13 October at St Faith’s)

The 2018 Herne Hill Music Festival runs between Friday 5 October and Sunday 14 October. All events, many of which are free, are listed on the festival website at [www.hernehillfestival.org](http://www.hernehillfestival.org)



## REMEMBERING HERNE HILL 1914–18

It will be soon be a year since we embarked on our lottery-funded joint project with the Charter School. As is so often the case, until you get to work you don't really know the size of the task. So we are well aware of how much more could be done, but we can also take pride in how much has been achieved. We started off simply with some 600 names taken from local memorials, from the records of the Commonwealth War Graves Commission and from lists compiled on some WWI

research websites. Through the hard work of our volunteers we have built up a database with biographical information to add to most of these names. They are no longer merely names, they are men with families; we know their ages, where they lived in Herne Hill and their occupations before the war. We are still working on the database, but it will shortly be accessible. In one case, our research even revealed a memoir written by Grace Lucas, the daughter of a local soldier who died in 1916. As part of the project we will be publishing *Grace's Story* about growing up in Kemerton Road during and shortly after the war and we will have a special celebration at our public meeting in

December to launch the book and thank the volunteers who have worked on the project. Through Dan Townsend and colleagues at Charter School *Grace's Story* has already provided key material for an impressive Year 7 presentation last July, including drama, video, art and photography. Also planned, to commemorate the centenary and to make the results of the project more widely known, are display boards in one or more public locations.



## Transport news

### Herne Hill junction road closure

Lambeth announced they were closing the northbound road under the railway bridge from 10 pm to 6 am for two long weekends: 17-21 August, then 7-10 December. In fact they are taking powers to allow the closure for the full four months, but hopefully this will not happen! This is to enable long overdue repairs to the railway bridge above. Widespread traffic diversions will be in force. No local consultation was undertaken, but hopefully it has been discussed with London Buses. Back in 2014, Network Rail consulted on a much more disruptive scheme, which was abandoned when its wider impacts were appreciated. The repair work has been pending since then, and hopefully NR will now have a less obstructive method for the repair.

### Free-wheeling facility, or fly-tipping folly?

In recent years, a variety of brightly coloured bicycles have been appearing on London's streets (and pavements). Various Chinese companies have been introducing "dockless cycles" for hire – like the Boris/Barclays/Santander cycles, but without the dedicated parking docking stations. All operate on the same, Uber-like, principle: sign up on your mobile phone, use the website to find the nearest cycle, reserve and collect the cycle, travel to where you want to go – and abandon the bike. A variety of hourly, daily or weekly tariffs are available.

The cycles are small by average European standards; come equipped with a built-in mobile phone and GPS locator to report where they are; have front and back lights, and a variety of locking arrangements.

Four companies have operated in London:

- Obike was an early trial in Hammersmith and Wandsworth but were soon banned after bikes started to pile up on the pavements

- Urbo green bikes were trialling in three boroughs in north-east London but withdrew in July 2018
- Ofo bright yellow three-speed bikes are spreading out from Hackney; they have some 2,800 bikes in six boroughs, including Southwark, with further expansion planned
- Mobike has introduced some 4,000 of their single-speed orange bikes in seven boroughs, including Southwark.

The companies are lobbying TfL to give them London wide permission to operate, since the companies currently have to seek permission borough by borough, though the riders often stray across borough boundaries on their travels. Neither Ofo or Mobike have plans to expand across the borough boundary into Lambeth. Bikes should be left in safe, non-obstructing locations, and not on private property. "Cycle marshals" are intended to tidy up abandoned bikes, and Mobike has a points system for rewarding or penalising individual users' good, or poor, behaviour.

There appear to be several issues to be resolved before this concept becomes successful:

- The bicycles need to be physically bigger, and more secure against hijacking and vandalism
- One company needs to achieve London-wide market penetration, to enable sufficient convenient coverage of available cycles with a single app
- Better user parking behaviour needs to be more strongly incentivised
- Cycle marshals need to be more alert and responsive to cycles located in inconsiderate locations.

In the meantime, for central and, increasingly, inner London, the Santander cycle scheme (with more than 750 docking stations and 11,000 bikes in circulation) remains the only practical choice.

**Bil Harrison**

## PLANNING & LICENSING

### The Society's planning group has commented on the following:

#### Southwark 18/AP/1626, land at Red Post Hill

The Society's planning group objected to a proposal to develop part of the garden of 'Lyndenhurst', the 18th-century house at the junction of Red Post Hill and Village Way, a listed building and part of a conservation area. Some would say this is more Dulwich than Herne Hill, but we felt that important principles were involved, and before commenting we also asked the Dulwich Society whether they had anything against our doing so. They did not. We objected because we felt the proposal plainly contravened Southwark's Conservation Area Appraisal for this garden land and their own planning policy with relation to conservation areas and 'backland' development. There were also issues regarding access and loss of amenity for the houses at 1-9 Red Post Hill.

#### Lambeth 18/02303/FUL, 30 Herne Hill

We objected to an application for approval for converting a house in single occupation to three flats. We were of the view that the application was defective in misstating the 'existing' state of the premises and that the applicant first needed full planning permission for extensive alterations to the house that would be required to accommodate multiple occupation. The application has been withdrawn.

#### Lambeth 18/02703/FUL

We objected to a conversion of the ground floor of a shop to residential, on grounds of the poor design quality. Many Victorian buildings designed for shops (with residential accommodation above) are no longer feasible as shops and the shops are turned into ground floor flats. More or often than not the design quality is wretched. The present example is not the worst, but it could be so much better!

#### Dee Dee's 77 Herne Hill Southwark Licence Application Ref 863345

These premises have been a source of contention for many years. We opposed an application by the licence holder to extend the opening hours, on the grounds that the premises are in the wrong position for the sort of late night business that the applicant wants to promote. The application has still to be decided.

#### Lambeth Planning Website – public comments

Until recently the Lambeth planning website, an essential part of the planning process, has made available all public comments for anyone wishing to be informed about planning applications. It is also the way this Society communicates its detailed views on applications. The views published in this Magazine are only short summaries. Lambeth have now withdrawn this facility. Public comments posted on the website cannot be read, unless you apply to the planning officer for permission to read a comment. Lambeth say they are obliged to take this course because of the effect of General Data Protection Regulation. We took issue with Lambeth on this and have since been informed by them that they are aware of the problem this causes, given what is supposed to be an open and transparent process. They assure us the measure is temporary and tell us there will be a "new procedure, which is similar to the approach taken by a number of other local planning authorities. Upon submission of comments there will be a delay of no more than 72 hours before the comment is published on-line on the planning portal. This delay is necessary to allow the council to redact personal information as well as any derogatory or offensive content from the comment. In order to introduce this new procedure the Planning Service has had to procure a new software package, which is being rolled out this week [w/b 30 July]. Staff training will then be carried out and the procedure tested before it is introduced." Southwark Planning have somehow at all times been able to keep public comments available to read on its website. At the time of writing the Lambeth website still blocks the availability of public comments.

Laurence Marsh



Photo courtesy of Richard Baker

Our last issue introduced a local community energy group, Sustainable Energy SE24, who secured community funding to install solar energy panels on the roofs of Herne Hill United Church and Herne Hill Methodist Church.

Now they have escalated their operation by launching a large array of solar panels on the roof of St Christopher's Hospice in

## SE24 Sun Power Spreads

Sydenham, funded through a community share offer whereby 42 local residents invested in the scheme. It was inaugurated on 23 July, fortuitously taking advantage of our blazingly sunny summer, and is now hard at work generating clean green solar energy and helping to tackle climate change. The Hospice gets cheaper electricity and any surplus is sold into the grid.

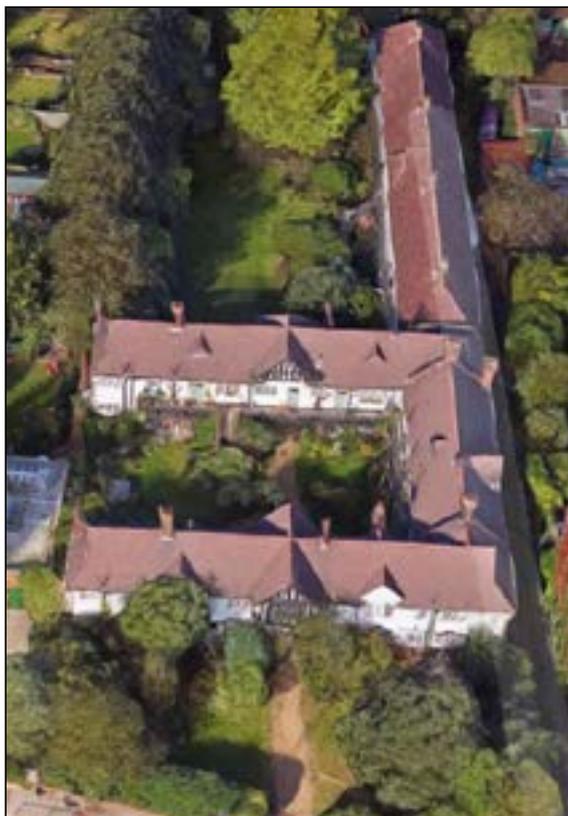
SE24 works in south east London, and uses the finance raised to install solar panels on community buildings, enabling more communities to switch to sustainable energy. The funds generated are used to repay the local investors and surplus revenue will in future fund projects to tackle fuel poverty or raise awareness about saving energy and reducing carbon emissions.

Alan Jones, Chair of SE 24, said: "We hope to support local projects to tackle fuel poverty or raise awareness of sustainable energy. And we're always on the look-out for future possible partners. So if you have a bright idea, or run a community building, do get in touch."



*The Quadrangle c1914 (with kind permission of Lambeth Archives)*

In this centenary year in which we commemorate the passing of the Representation of the People Act in 1918 which for the first time gave women (over 30) in Britain the right to vote, we should surely



*An aerial view of the Quadrangle*

acknowledge an important historic building in Herne Hill which epitomises the growing contribution of

women to the economy in the early 20th century as they joined the professions in ever greater numbers.

The Quadrangle on Herne Hill, which stands opposite the parade of shops near the top of the hill, is an early purpose-built example of a residence designed for single professional women. It was built in 1911 by the South London Provident Society for women who were civil servants, teachers or lecturers or similar, or those that had retired from these professions. The architect was Edward A. Ellis of 18-19 Fenchurch Street and it was built on the site of a pair of 19th-century houses, Nos. 32 and 34 Herne Hill, which were demolished in 1910.

It was completed the year after the social reformer and campaigner for working women's housing, Mary Higgs, published her seminal work *Where Shall She Live? The Homelessness of the Woman Worker* for the National Association for Women's Lodging-Homes (NAWLH) which focused upon the need for bespoke accommodation for the growing number of women in professional and clerical employment. The Quadrangle pre-dates the two notable women's lodging houses on the New Kent Road (Driscoll House of 1913) and Furnival House (on Highgate Hill of 1916), both now Grade II-listed buildings.

The Quadrangle is a highly significant and externally little-altered example of the early provision of what Mary Higgs termed "lighthouses": safe harbours to save working women from lodging houses of dubious repute in our metropolitan areas to prevent "wrecks of womanhood". The 21 residents lived in either bed-sitting rooms

or two room units (bedroom with their own scullery, large and attractive courtyard served which included a slightly late large common room and ten strict, with only residents permitted visitors could be received in the warden was resident to ensure. The lodging house was so successful accommodating a further 15 was designed and approved in not completed until the early World War, raising the number

*Kelly's Directory* of 1912 recorded women (15 unmarried and 5 women) and a male porter. The published in 1925 records that The developer is named on the Archives as Mr R.A. Saunders (constituency in Somerset), was landowner.

In 1963, reflecting the social permission was granted for the residential units to provide full conversion of what had become the Common Room over the boiler room and the common additional units. The application Women's Outer London Residential charitable housing association as being completed in 1964.

The Quadrangle therefore provided



*Quadrangle interior court c1920*

# THE QUADRANGLE

## SOCIAL HISTORY IN THE MAKING

and living room), each  
 er and WC, grouped around  
 d by communal amenities  
 r kitchen block (1913), a  
 ded gardens. Rules were  
 mitted to enter the flatlets;  
 the Common Room. A  
 re these rules were kept.  
 ccessful that a rear wing  
 women's bed-sitting rooms  
 n 1914 (also by Ellis), but  
 r 1920s due to the First  
 er of rooms to 36.  
 ords the names of 20  
 married/once-married  
 the same directory  
 e names of 36 residents.  
 he plans held at Lambeth  
 s MP (for the Yeovil  
 ho was a prominent local

l changes of the time,  
 he remodelling of the  
 ill bathrooms and for the  
 me the Library (presumably  
 e front carriage entrance),  
 munal bathroom into four  
 nt for these works was the  
 idential Association, a  
 n. The works are recorded  
 layed a key part in



providing safe, secure and homely  
 accommodation for professional working  
 women who were entering the workplace  
 in growing numbers during the struggle  
 for female emancipation during the  
 suffragettes campaign in the years leading  
 up to the First World War and the “Votes  
 for Women” Representation of the People  
 Act of 1918.

The frontage is set back from the road  
 behind a large front garden. The three-sided  
 well-landscaped quadrangle is entered  
 beneath an imposing half-timbered gabled  
 bay with a large mullioned window of  
 diamond pane leaded lights. The first-  
 floor flats are reached via a gallery with  
 dark-stained timber balustrades. A second  
 carriage arch leads to the later rear wing,  
 which is a long linear structure with a  
 modest central half-hipped gable and the  
 same first-floor balcony access gallery  
 served by a central staircase beneath the  
 gable. The units in this 1920s wing and  
 those in the original rear wing have a  
 most attractive aspect looking out over  
 landscaped gardens.

The whole complex (1911 and c.1922  
 wings) has external walls of white-painted  
 render above a red-brick plinth with red  
 brick quoins on all of the corners. Below  
 the eaves is a classical dentil course  
 with hipped clay tiled roofs and a dozen

substantial chimney stacks  
 above. Two further half-  
 timbered gables face into the quadrangle.

This historic building appears to be  
 extraordinarily well preserved and  
 maintained, and obviously cherished by its  
 residents given the individual gardening  
 that takes place in the courtyard and to  
 the rear. It has an interesting group-value  
 relationship with two nearby slightly  
 later Grade II-listed residential buildings  
 erected in the 1930s: Dorchester Court, a  
 much larger complex of flats to the north,  
 and Dorchester House whose grounds  
 immediately abut to the west, a large private  
 residence — both designed by the noted  
 architects Kemp & Tasker. The social and  
 architectural importance of the Quadrangle  
 has been recognised by Lambeth who



*The Quadrangle in 2018 (photo by Harry Oseni)*

have added it to their Local List citing the grounds of  
 its notable architecture, contribution to the history of  
 the borough and townscape significance. It has yet to be  
 added to the National Heritage List for England.

**Edmund Bird**

### Footnote

A newspaper report from June 1914 refers to No. 28  
 Herne Hill, the childhood home of John Ruskin, being  
 “in the hands of the housebreakers” and to the bricks and  
 stones from the house being used for an additional wing  
 to the “adjoining flats for bachelor girls”. It seems likely  
 that, just as the building of the Quadrangle’s additional  
 wing was delayed until after World War I, so too was the  
 demolition of Ruskin’s house. Whether its bricks and  
 stones were used in the Quadrangle wing history does  
 not relate, but perhaps the ghost of the infant Ruskin  
 does reside within its walls.

**LM**



## EVERY STATION TELLS A STORY

The Victorians loved narrative paintings. Just look at W.P. Frith's "The Railway Station", packed with human incident and one of the most popular paintings in Victorian England. Frith took Paddington Station as his setting, but Herne Hill Station, which first opened in 1862 — the very same year that Frith's painting was first exhibited — has its own stories to tell.

It is easy to forget that Herne Hill Station once played a key role in this country's connection to the continent of Europe. The railway provided the link to the steam boats plying the route across the Channel. It also passed through Herne Hill. Older readers will recall the "boat trains" from Victoria, but in the Victorian era they ran from both Victoria and Ludgate Hill. They then stopped at Herne Hill and were combined or, when coming from Dover, divided.

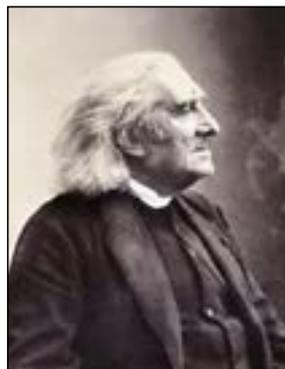
On 29 April 1872 a 29-year-old Belgian woman, travelling from Paris, left the train in some secrecy at Herne Hill. She was accompanied by two English and two French police officers. They were met by three Scotland Yard detectives who then conveyed the woman by cab into central London. The woman was Marguerite Dixblanc and she had been extradited from France, accused of the murder of her employer, Madame Caroline Riel, in Park Lane, by strangulation. The case had attracted great popular interest and the police wanted to avoid unruly crowds upon arrival at Victoria. This interest continued through to the trial of Dixblanc at the Old Bailey, enhanced by the appearance in the witness box of the 3rd Earl of Lucan (of Balaclava fame — or notoriety). Madame Riel had been the Earl's long-term mistress. Dixblanc was convicted and sentenced to death, but she eluded the hangman because



*Dixblanc in the dock*

her sentence was commuted to 20 years' penal servitude. Fourteen years later Herne Hill saw a very different traveller pass through the station doors. The cult of celebrity was in its infancy, but Franz Liszt was the great rock star of his day. Now aged 74, his visit to London in April 1886 was to be his last, for he was to die three months later. He stayed as the guest of the successful music publisher Alfred Littleton, and such was Liszt's fame that, on his arrival,

the train specially stopped at Penge to allow him to alight for readier access to Littleton's mansion in Sydenham. Liszt's days of public performances were over. For many it was enough just to see the great man as he was feted at numerous London concerts held in his honour, including two at the Crystal Palace. However,



*Franz Liszt c1880*

an invitation to perform for the Queen at Windsor Palace was one he was unable to refuse. After 17 days in London Liszt joined the "Continental express" at Herne Hill. The *Daily News* reported how "notwithstanding the early hour and the uninviting character of the weather, a considerable number of friends and acquaintances of the veteran composer assembled on the platform to bid him farewell". At Dover he was greeted by the Mayor and civic dignitaries and presented

with bouquets before embarking on the "mail-packet".

Finally to 1898, and news that the Duchess of Albany, after five weeks in Cannes and accompanied by her son, the young Duke of Albany, had arrived at Herne Hill from where a "special train" took them on to Esher – conveniently close to Claremont, the family's country house. "The Duke of Albany goes back to school immediately," reported the *Pall Mall Gazette*. He was one of the many grandchildren of Queen Victoria and the school to which he was returning was Eton. But his time there was cut short, because the following year, in view of his anticipated succession as the ruler of the Duchy of Saxe-Coburg Gotha, he moved to Germany aged 15 to complete his education. The Duke, having chosen his German patrimony in World War I, not only lost all his British titles and honours as a result of the Titles Deprivation Act of 1917 but also his German throne when



*Charles Edward, Duke of Albany, 1900*

the war ended. Siding with the conservative-right after the war, he was an early sympathiser with the Nazis, joining the party in 1933 and becoming the "respectable" figurehead to lead the German Red Cross. He attended the funeral of his cousin George V in his Nazi SA uniform and up to 1939 enjoyed a close friendship with the Duke and Duchess of Windsor. Arrested after World War II, he was, after long drawn-out legal proceedings, fined a sum of 5000 Marks in 1950. Is he the only old Etonian to have joined the Nazi Party? To that I have yet to find a definitive answer.

**Laurence Marsh**

# Chill at Minus 12

Well over 2.5 million passengers enter and exit Herne Hill Station every year, according to the official estimates. During the morning and evening peaks, the commuter flood now overwhelms the train operators' capacity to accommodate them in any sort of dignity or comfort.

But in the mornings they can at least fortify themselves with caffeine from the many coffee shops in and around the station.

And now in the evenings, as they trudge down from the platform stressed, hot and bothered, they can head for immediate relief in the form of an exquisite ice cream crafted on the spot in the new Minus 12°C ice cream kiosk that has taken possession of an empty corner in the refurbished booking hall.

Gavin James caught the ice cream bug when he lived in Australia. There, Sicilian immigrant families, led by the trend-setting Gelato Messina, have built up a following for hand-made luxury gelati put together in small batches using techniques handed down through the generations in Italy, and

assembled with top-quality materials. Of course, the outdoor lifestyle and the climate help.

Back home in London, months of research convinced him that there was an opening for Italian-style craft ice cream. Further learning experiences involved attending the Carpigiani Ice Cream



reputedly healthier and lower in fat than ice cream, made in small batches using fresh, natural ingredients and served at a temperature of -12°/14°C, which is 6° less chilly and therefore more flavoursome than industrially-produced ice cream? So finally, Gavin turned his back on the day job and took the plunge into the business of gelato.

The kiosk now sitting in our station was designed by his architect friend, Liven Jansen, and built off-site by Gavin and his father before being transported to Herne Hill and reassembled in the station, where Gavin and his team serve gelati five days

a week. Ten flavours are on offer, some old standards and some original mixtures, each recipe being individually balanced between sweetness, creaminess and bespoke flavouring. He also offers takeaways in insulated containers. Gavin is committed to bringing out two new flavourings each week, so none of us should get bored. On top of which, all their packaging is either biodegradable, compostable



University in Bologna (Yes! there is such a thing, which is joyful news), and careful study of the techniques of mixing, pasteurising, storing and serving gelati and vegan sorbets at the right temperature and with the best consistency. Did you know that Italian-style artisan gelati are

or reusable.

And if you had to choose a season in which to launch a new ice cream venture, when better than the torrid summer of 2018?

**Pat Roberts**

<http://www.minus12.co.uk/>

**Instagram/Twitter: @minus12degrees**

## UNSUNG HEROINE OF HERNE HILL

Elizabeth Matilda Halston was born in 1881 and died in 1975 at the age of 94. Her grandson Robert Holden described her as “an ordinary woman who made an extraordinary contribution to the community in which she lived”. Robert saw her as a true heroine, particularly for her work during the Second World War in Lambeth, Clapham and Wandsworth. In promoting her memory, he recognised the many women who, although not awarded medals for bravery, showed tremendous courage, hard work and fighting spirit during the dark days of the war.

Elizabeth Halston's husband died in 1922, leaving her with three children and very little money. She decided to train as a midwife, and from 1924 until 1938 she worked as a domiciliary midwife, delivering babies to women in their own homes rather than in a hospital. Prior to the establishment of the NHS, people employed a midwife and paid her directly. It tended to be the less well-off who relied on midwives, as those who could afford it would pay a doctor. However, the Midwives Act of 1936 made local authorities responsible for establishing a midwifery service. The London County Council (LCC) set up a service for London in 1938, and Elizabeth was employed by the LCC until she retired in 1945.

Robert showed us the metal box delivered in advance to a pregnant woman, containing all the equipment the midwife might need during labour: sterilising dishes, a small bottle of brandy, a net and scales used for weighing the baby etc. There was also a curious object which looked like a toffee hammer, very heavy with lead at each end, which Robert believed Elizabeth may have carried with her to defend herself, if necessary, when she walked to her next job.

Robert's moving tribute concluded with a wedding photograph from 1948, including no fewer than five people, all of whom – including himself – had been delivered as babies by his grandmother.



**Val Suebsaeng**

# THE BATH FACTORY ESTATE

## PART 2



We can now continue our journey through the gritty arches of the Bath Factory Estate, lurking behind the familiar row of shops and restaurants on Norwood Road. As we saw in an earlier article, this semi-industrial, somewhat ramshackle zone harbours some intriguing and successful business operations. Their songs deserve to be proclaimed.

We might think, not unnaturally, that the era of light industries flourishing among the shops and residential streets of Herne Hill disappeared before the war. As we are seeing, and have noted in previous issues, we could scarcely be more wrong. But because most of the businesses are masked from the main thoroughfares, we often remain ignorant of them; and in any case, it is not usually their aim to promote themselves to non-specialist audiences. But they are here because the railway arches still offer a cost-effective operations base for small businesses who find it useful to be close to the centre of London. And they create economic activity and valuable employment in SE24.

### Setting the stage

This summer we met Steve Wylie, owner and director of Wyliewood. No, unless you work in the television, retail or event design and production sectors, you almost certainly won't have heard of them. Wyliewood fabricate and install bespoke structures, sets, furniture and props, sets, stages, high-end window displays



*Steve Wylie and twin*

and retail installations for clients in the UK and across Europe. As we spoke, Steve's teams were setting up installations in Levi's flagship stores in Berlin, Paris and London – made with sophisticated fabrication skills here in Herne Hill, often to very tight deadlines, then erected on site within hours. You could call

them carpenters, but this would be a painful under-representation of their skills and capabilities. They have experience and specialist knowledge in joinery, carpentry, lighting and metalwork, using a plethora of traditional and high-tech materials. And their services range from conception through design development, CAD drawing and prototyping to full manufacture and installation. All from our humble Bath Factory Estate.

Steve – who ended up here via Glasgow Australia, Brixton, and Loughborough Junction – lives in South London and as a regular swimmer is particularly fond of Herne Hill and Brockwell Lido.

[www.wyliewood.co.uk](http://www.wyliewood.co.uk)

### A Bath Factory or what?

So shall we now return to the intriguing issue of the origins of the Bath Factory Estate, which we tentatively raised in our last issue, without resolving? Was It a Bath Factory or a different sort of factory, and did it belong to a Mr Bath?

No; and Yes; and Not, is perhaps the answer.

Well, we can definitely confirm that this was not a site for the making of baths. The main activity on the site, even before the shops were built on this side of Norwood Road facing the park, was the fabrication of wooden sheds and garden furniture. The owner's name, at his death, was William Cooper. By that stage, his business was called Bath's Works, and was registered as T Bath & Company Limited, and had branches and sites across South London including three in Brixton as well as Peckham and Herne Hill. The Herne Hill site continued to be used for the manufacture of wooden buildings, albeit in slightly more confined premises, even after the parade of shops was built on Norwood Road in the 1920s. So at this point the logical enquirer might ask why Mr Cooper called his company "Bath".

### Busk becomes Cooper

"William Cooper" was born in 1866 and his family name at birth was Busk. But just before the turn of the century he bought an existing company trading as William Cooper Ltd, manufacturers of wooden buildings, including sheds, and assorted garden furniture in a rustic style. This business seems to have been started in the 1890s by a Mr Riley, though why he traded as William Cooper Ltd is not known. When the company was acquired by Mr Busk, and for reasons obscure to us but must have been compelling to him, he decided to change his own name by deed poll to William Cooper.

However Mr Busk/Cooper was a man of parts and not concerned merely with making and selling wooden structures. He had another string to his bow. The end of the 19th century and the early years of the 20th century witnessed a boom in the demand for Turkish baths. And Mr Cooper owned several sites, trading as

Savoy Turkish Baths Limited.

Turkish baths could be found all over London: the nearest to Herne Hill was at 461 Brixton Road, belonging to Mr Cooper's Savoy Turkish Baths chain. Nine baths in London were at one time or another owned by the company, the most lavish being

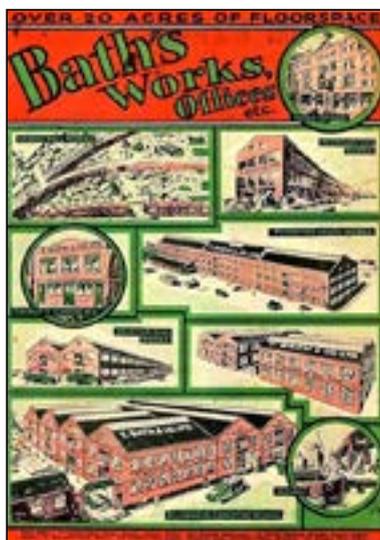


*Taxi for Mr Bath?*

adjacent to the Savoy Hotel. But by the 1920s, Turkish baths were becoming less popular and profitable as more homes enjoyed baths and bathrooms. Mr Cooper closed the Brixton Road baths in 1932, and the Newington Butts baths were destroyed during the London blitz, leaving open, after WW2, only the connected men's and women's baths at 92 Jermyn Street and Duke of York Street.

### **Cooper becomes Bath**

But meanwhile in the mid-1920s, Mr Cooper decided for some unknown reason to change the name of his company – by



*The Bath empire, c1930*

then operating not only Turkish baths but, as we have seen, fabricating wooden structures and indeed bicycles – from Wm Cooper Ltd to T Bath & Co.

Thereafter all his manufacturing sites displayed the name T Bath & Co Ltd. William Cooper died in 1937 and the business was run by his son Leonard and then by his grandson John Cooper. In 1946 the family sold the garden shed business but it continued running under new owners for many years as Bath's Portable

Buildings. William's grandson, John, remembers asking his father who "T Bath" was, and being told that it was not a person but stood for "Turkish bath".

Who could have imagined that the name of a workaday business site in Herne Hill could embody such a complicated story?

[Many thanks to our learned colleagues Laurence Marsh of the Herne Hill Society and Ian McInnes of the Dulwich Society for their historical delving.]

**Pat Roberts**

# DID I HAVE A FIELD DAY?

I love music festivals and I love Brockwell Park, so what was not to like about the prospect of Field Day right on my doorstep? The festival moved to South London after a decade out East. Many were unhappy with the move, its handling and impact, but others supported it, the often antagonistic exchange of views (particularly on social media) making for a thoroughly dispiriting spring.

With (pre-line up announcement) early bird tickets costing a fraction of the on-the-day entry fee, I snapped up some for the Saturday. I hoped for acts along the lines of previous Field Days — The Pixies, Aphex Twin, PJ Harvey — but when released the line-up was comparatively lightweight, and heavily dance music oriented.

Fortunately, liking dance music, I was excited on the day. It was sunny, and the park was sprinkled with attendees outside the ominous perimeter fence, downing cheap Costcutter booze before entering the £5+ pint zone. Inside, the cosy-looking festival site recreated a village-y feel with hay bales for seats and a tug-of-war contest to go with the six stages of entertainment.

My fellow festival-goers and I headed to "The Barn" to see Nils Frahm and his classical-electro magic, but it was a distinctly smaller (and quieter) Barn than the awe-inspiring dance cavern of the previous year. Afterwards we saw Charlotte Gainsbourg on a breezy main stage before a sparse crowd. Everyone was rammed into the dance tents instead. We crammed in too, to see the evening's highlight, Four Tet.

Four Tet started, then four minutes later Four Tet stopped — the plug pulled due to congestion worries, with an announcer saying that in order for the music to resume people needed to leave the severely crowded tent. I've never before paid to see a show in which the main act will only play if the audience leaves. After 30 or so minutes we cut our losses and squeezed out, getting at least some good techno from Daniel Avery before the end, during which we enjoyed watching unsuspecting revellers repeatedly stumbling into a giant muddy puddle.

Field Day had some distinct highlights (that muddy puddle really was hilarious), but the whole event was scaled down, consequently watered down, and for me, ultimately, a disappointment. Added to which the whole sorry saga surrounding the relocating of the event means that, in the humble opinion of this local doorstep owner, it probably wasn't such a good idea after all.

**Tom Harper**



# ST PAUL'S PARISH MAGAZINE

## 1914-18

The principal role of the monthly parish magazine was, of course, to support the church's religious mission, but the First World War brought inconveniences and calamities that the magazine could not ignore. As part of the Heritage Lottery-funded "Remembering Herne Hill 1914-18" project we have looked at the effects of the conflict on parishioners from its outbreak to the Armistice (with help from churchwarden Leigh Whittingham and administrator Derek Gibson).

The war seemed to come as little surprise, but it is impressive how quickly the church responded. By order of the War Office, the Church Lads' Brigade sprang immediately into action: guarding the railway between Herne Hill and Penge, including the tunnel. It may seem ironic that, at a time of ill feeling against anyone with a German-sounding name, Captain Harry Alex Schmidt, of 113 Herne Hill, was in charge of the Brigade. In his parish letter of October 1914, the Vicar (Revd H.P. Lindsay) eagerly reported:

"We are proud of Herne Hill and of the magnificent response of the men in our parish to the call of arms by our King and Country in this hour of great national peril.

Captain Schmidt, to whose ability and unfailing devotion we owe so much for maintaining the high military efficiency of our CLB, has been gazetted to a commission in HM Army Service Corps.

The War Office pays a fine tribute to his special fitness by placing him at once above subaltern rank."

There were many people of German origin living in the Herne Hill area before the First World War – some well to do, some less so. We told the story of Henry William Hahn, a German baker in Hinton Road, and his family in Issue 140 of the Magazine. And other shopkeepers of German origin in Milkwood Road also saw their shops attacked in the rioting that followed the sinking of the RMS Lusitania in May 1915.

Already in December 1914 the parish magazine had contained, perhaps, an indirect reference to such xenophobia: "Mrs Schultze feels, I regret to say, that she must resign the charge of the Mothers' Meeting at the end of the year. She and her daughter have devoted themselves to the members with loving care and the parting will be keenly felt by all as a personal loss." Mrs Caroline Schultze was a Englishwoman married to William Schultze, a German-born merchant. Their son Theo (Wilhelm Ernst Theodor) attempted to enlist as soon as war was declared, but was exempted because of his role working in exports. He finally enlisted in the Queen's Westminster Rifles in January 1916. That July he went to France and spent the next two months serving on the Somme. On 7 September he was killed by shrapnel from a shell blast.

As for Harry Schmidt, in October 1915 he was promoted to Major on active service in France. He survived the war. But the family changed their name to Smythe ...

David Young

## Murder in Soho: *Who Killed Freddie Mills?*

Such was the title of a documentary recently shown on BBC Four. Well, wouldn't we like to know? On 25 July 1965 Freddie Mills, ex-world champion light heavyweight boxer and the David Beckham of his day, was found in the back of his silver Citroën DS19 parked behind his Nite Spot club in Charing Cross Road, shot through the eye with a rifle borrowed from a Battersea shooting gallery. Mills, who lived with his young family at 186 Denmark Hill, had retired from the ring some 15 years earlier, but was still a handsome, gregarious and popular showman who appeared on TV and in films.



*Freddie Mills in his club, late 1964, with Annie Gelly*

The coroner's verdict was suicide, but there have always been doubts. For a start, Mills's body was taken directly to hospital by ambulance, rather than being examined in situ by the Met. Why?

Mills suffered from chronic headaches (possibly as a result of brain damage from many a brutal fight). The programme suggested that he was naive, vulnerable and severely depressed – but enough to want to kill himself? He left no suicide note. Certainly his TV career was in decline and he was in financial difficulties. As his Six-Five Special co-presenter Pete Murray put it, "suddenly you have to buy your own lunch".

Boxers, night clubs and organised crime are the stuff of cliché-ridden B-movies; however it is true that Mills mixed with shady characters (how could it have been otherwise?) and may have been paying protection money. Or not paying it.

Roger Huntman claimed that Mills was blackmailing his father because he was desperate for cash, and was then killed on the orders of New York mobster Meyer Lansky.

There was fascinating footage from Mills's home movies, as well as interviews with friends and close family, doctor David Wingate, boxing legend John Conteh and Eddie Richardson, brother of the very scary Charlie Richardson (coincidentally, a Denmark Hill resident – in Acland Crescent – until his arrest and lengthy incarceration in 1966). As Mills's stepson Don said, "I'm keeping an open mind on it."

Colin Wight

*Society member Annie Gelly adds: While singing regularly at Freddie's club I met Michael Holliday, singer with the band at the Astoria Ballroom next door, who used to come in quite often. Late one night, when I was at the club, he came in after work, and he appeared to be in a very depressed state. Freddie immediately recognised that something was wrong, so he closed the club early and sent everyone home, while he sat with Michael until the early hours, in an attempt to talk him out of ending it all. Alas, his efforts were all in vain, because a few days later Michael was found dead. To this day I do not believe that Freddie committed suicide, knowing how he tried to help Michael Holliday.*

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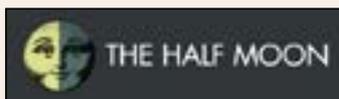
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We are grateful to our corporate members **Rondanini, WBC** for their continuing support and are pleased to welcome two new members **The Half Moon** and **The Dulwich Estate**.



Do you represent a local business that might be interested in corporate membership of the Herne Hill Society? Corporate Members are highly valued for the additional support they offer to our work for the local community. They receive acknowledgement on our website and in this magazine, as well as three copies of each issue, for just £25 a year.

Find out more at  
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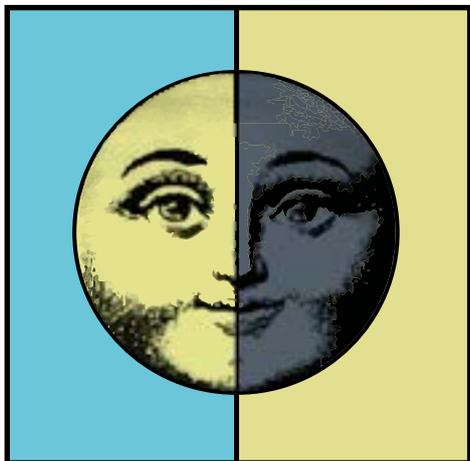


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