STREATHAM SOCIETY NEWS

Published quarterly

No. 255 Winter 2023-24

STREATHAM by Streatham Vale Residents *(See p.10)*

THE STREATHAM SOCIETY IS 50!
1974 - 2024 *(See p.29)*

STREATHAM SOCIETY MEETINGS & EVENTS

MEETINGS in 2024

Meetings are held on the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30pm in St Leonard's Church, Streatham High Rd/Tooting Bec Gardens. Booking not required.

Non-members are welcome but are requested to donate £1 towards expenses.

All talks are illustrated. Refreshments are available.

Please check our website for any changes and additions.

2 Apr **The Life of Johnny Douglas - Composer of film scores including The Railway Children and 41 other films** Talk by Louise Camby

7 May 6.30pm **Annual General Meeting** followed by
7.30pm **Streatham's Past** - a new talk by John W Brown

EVENTS

Mon 20 May **St Leonard's Church Tour** John W Brown
1.30pm Booking details later. *Wandsworth Heritage Festival*

Sun 26 May **Tours of Sir Henry Tate's Grounds at Park Hill**
2pm & 3pm Booking details later. *Wandsworth Heritage Festival*

Sat 1 June **Woodfield Heritage Day** *Wandsworth Heritage Festival*

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The Streatham Society welcomes articles of interest to our members, but the editor reserves the right to edit these. Opinions expressed may not be those of the Society. Articles and photographs may be reproduced only with the editor's permission.

STREATHAM ROUND AND ABOUT

PLANNING MATTERS

WHITHER PLANNING IN STREATHAM

Last year the Streatham Society decided to renew its efforts on planning and heritage so what has been the progress over the past year? It's a bit of a mixed report card.

The positive thing was that the Society now gets consulted on key planning applications – sounds extremely simple, but Lambeth Council's systems took ages to be able to do something as simple this. We've concentrated our attention on key applications in conservation areas together with bigger applications where there is public concern.

One successful objection was on Bedford Hill regarding an incongruous side extension to a house in the conservation area. This illustrates how there is lack of understanding about conservation areas both by householders and more worryingly by their architects. Surprisingly Lambeth planning officers had suggested the extension could be disguised as a garage. The council rightly turned down an application for residential housing in Gleneldon Mews to help develop this as a centre for creative and business centre in keeping with its historical past.

Another illuminated BT street hub along Streatham High Road was refused. And an unsightly bungalow squeezed into the garden of Bray Court was refused by the council and an appeal was dismissed. And the likely re-opening of the Horse and Groom pub (though unfortunately called Stanley's bar after the owner's son) is a welcome return, rather than another block of flats.

However, on the negative side, the list of failures is a bit daunting. Lambeth approved the demolition of a large iconic 1950's house on Abbotswood Road in favour of fourteen units squeezed in. This is likely to open the flood gates for corner plots or large houses being knocked down in favour of flats. 24 Sunnyhill Road a lovely Victorian cottage which had been left to decay was approved to be demolished again in favour of two houses and unlucky to be just a few yards from the conservation area so not judged to have heritage value. And we saw the closure of Pratts and Payne pub on Streatham High Road and the betting is on this being converted into flats. Its near neighbour, the old Police station now vacant and empty for a long time with rumours what might happen.

But we're waiting for the big planning decision affecting Streatham for decades - the high-rise development at Woodgate Drive on the site of the Homebase store which could change the landscape of Streatham Vale completely.

So, what are the big themes we've witnessed. The first and most dominant is housing. Lambeth must meet demanding targets and the assumption is that any-

The new fourteen units to be built on Abbotswood Road

thing contributing to more housing will get the approval nod. Suburban intensification is going to increase rapidly year by year.

In turn "Nimbyism" is becoming frowned upon as frustrating planning decisions, so defending lower density housing that might be more appropriate will become more difficult. The problem is the lack of transparency about how much housing is required and where it should go. A worry is that new developments don't provide the affordable housing we are told is so vital to Lambeth's future.

Second, many developments are of a low-quality design. Some are just plain ugly, but more common we are seeing more identikit designs leading to a trend of "anywhere architecture" slotted into Streatham.

Third, Conservation Areas may become like tender orchids with a continuing risk of not getting the right protection. Over time they have suffered from attrition affected by incremental planning decisions or homeowners' actions which lead to an overall decline.

The best example is on Ambleside Avenue where the council have decided that Number 20 a two-storey terracotta coloured brick house with contemporary detailing is classified as only making a "neutral contribution" to the conservation area and notes it was entered for the architectural Carbuncle Cup in 2018 due to its appearance and orange detailing. But hang on, that application was approved by the council!

Elsewhere it's apparent that heritage isn't always valued. There's a proposal to remove from Streatham High Road conservation area Century House the 1930s building and previous headquarters of James Walker the jewellery manufacturers opposite Streatham station which will leave it isolated. Though bigger planning applications include lengthy heritage statements these merely are designed to show how the development fits in and augment the appearance of an area. That's

why the Streatham Society needs to be so vigilant in challenging heritage threats.

The major problem is that public involvement in planning is an uphill struggle. The Government urges local people to play a part on shaping their local spaces portraying it as a partnership, yet genuine involvement is so tricky.

Just ask anyone embroiled in a planning issue and they'll often say they feel a sense of powerlessness. Not just the complexity of the whole unhelpful bureaucratic process but also competing against developers and sadly, there are few David and Goliath moments.

Century House on Streatham High Road - now outside the conservation area but will it appear in Lambeth's heritage list?

This imbalance is compounded by developers paying Lambeth Council for Pre-Planning Applications advice (to speed up the planning process) which then gives a lofty officer view of whether the application will be successful, and no surprise this tends to be the outcome. Yet this means of local people's views are excluded.

One would hope that the Lambeth Plan which sets the ground rules for planning in the Borough and various planning policies would help, but they are liable to multiple interpretations. For example, the need for "local distinctiveness" in planning carries with it numerous views and planners' assessments hold sway.

The Lambeth Local Plan is meant to set out the priorities for planning, but as we've seen with Woodgate Towers plans for high rise buildings can mysteriously appear and be supported by planning officers. The bigger decisions are made by the Planning Applications Committee an august group of councillors with our future in their hands. You would hope this is an expert group with high scrutiny skills and an empathetic awareness of local wishes but in many decisions made these seem to be palpably lacking.

An objector gets three minutes to present their arguments to the committee against an application and only three can speak. There are some independent sources of help for local people, but Lambeth doesn't go out its way to help citizens navigate their way through the planning mine field. Contrast that with what Wandsworth Council have done with its helpful guide on planning -

Woodgate Towers - how the high rise block will destroy views from Streatham Common

what_is_planning_booklet.pdf (wandsworth.gov.uk). Perhaps in 2024 Lambeth can develop a Charter for Public Involvement in Planning

The difficulty with planning is that we don't assess what's happened over the years and nobody reviews whether developments across Streatham have worked. There's an oft quoted planning sentiment that places "evolve and develop". It's a grim dictum that bridge builders learn from their mistakes, but learning seems lacking for planners. Most don't live in the area, so they don't have the local knowledge nor indeed pride locally.

One recognises that the number of planners has fallen by twenty percent nationally in fifteen years and turnover is high leading to over work and pressures particularly affecting the important function of planning enforcement. Arguably our councillors should step up and play a more prominent role in helping local people, but their contribution varies widely. Accordingly local people can get a raw deal.

So, the feedback we frequently hear is a lack of trust and engagement. But can planning be rewired to include local people more? Arguably there are benefits in getting improved public engagement to help with better decisions as well as defusing potential conflicts. A big conversation is required though this may be a tall order given the remaining local divisions and wounds over Streatham's Low Traffic Neighbourhoods.

Yet clearly the community have the right to have the discussion, debate, and a genuine contribution about future needs of Streatham and what needs to be preserved. We watch this space!

Tim Whitaker, Trustee Streatham Society

ANOTHER LONG-ESTABLISHED BUSINESS CLOSED IN 2023

ADS-ONE Ltd, general hardware, plumbing, electrical store, closed on 26th February 2023. Situated on the corner of Cricklade Avenue and Streatham Hill, the shop has been there for over 100 years.

Above, Interior with Roy the owner
(Photo © Steve Reeves, photographer)
Below, December 2023, still empty (Photo JH)

Roy, the owner for 23 years, reluctantly decided to close as competition from larger stores and rising prices proved too daunting.

Steve Reeves, photographer, published his photograph of the interior. He described how difficult it was to stop Roy laughing and joking in order to take his photograph of this unique shop which was crammed with a vast variety of goods. Many clients had benefitted from the advice, help and jokes shared for several years

What didn't it sell? Everything for the home, garden, DIY, professional and casual shoppers was there. Single items and packs were available - even a wide variety of small items such as nails and screws, sold in the required amount. Exploring the stock was fascinating.

The business survived Covid restrictions and loyal clients returned; but increasing costs proved too much. At the time of writing it was still to let.

A sad end - again, use it or lose it.

JH

THE ODEON - OBSCURED

In November Michael Zihni posted on our Facebook site his excellent photographs of 'Lovely Streatham'. These showed several of our beautiful buildings with their original façades mainly intact. The most notable omission was the Odeon, still a cinema but now almost impossible to photograph.

Later that month the photo above of the Odeon in 1969 was posted. Formerly the Astoria it opened in 1930, then under new owners renamed about 10 years later. To provide the present multi-screens much of the original interior has been lost.

When was the large tree on the corner planted? Today it part-obscures the rather unattractive side aspect but, although a magnificent tree, it towers above the cinema and needs regular attention before its branches damage the building.

The façade is now almost completely hidden by five recently planted trees when they are in leaf. With the trees also planted on the central reservation the cinema is further obscured. Why were these five planted there? Were they left over after the central planting - despite there being plenty of available space to the north and elsewhere on the High Road? The outside space, previously used for displays and stalls now feels enclosed and dark; any stalls are only visible to those passing in front of them.

My photographs, although taken after most of the leaves had fallen, show the trees obscuring all but the top floor. The outside space has been improved recently by attractive new seating and planters but remains quite dismal.

In previous issues of the *News*, I have commented on this and the indiscriminate planting of the wrong species of tree in the wrong place. How many homes have large trees (such as Christmas trees) and shrubs now inappropriate for their small outside spaces and gardens?

Elsewhere in Streatham, a combination of hills, London clay, subsidence, large trees, and small light replacement paving slabs on side roads endanger wheel-chair users, and people with limited mobility or vision who can suffer bad falls as paving stones soon lift.

The extensive informed tree-planting undertaken on Streatham Common, in the Rookery and Community Garden show there is expert advice available - if consulted.

JH

SOME AUTUMN EVENTS

Streatham Festival's artists

The October Streatham Festival's StreatArt Trail artists also showcased as the Streatham Group Show in Streatham's Tate Library. This brilliant multi-media display showed the talent and strength of our local artists.

Photographs below show part of a Streatham display board, including the Streatham Vale Resident's composition *(front cover)* and a digital print by Hazel East based on our Low Traffic Neighbourhood map *(right)*. Table displays included Martin Grover, Ronnie Hackston (Society member) and Steven Gappy. Steven's display *(below)* included his new shades of green Streatham tea towel *(left)*. Check their websites for more information.

These and several other local artists also displayed at the Woodfield Pavilion.

November's Veteran Car route back along Streatham *(Photos MB)*

Brixton Tatterjacks celebrate the New Year

New Year photographs in the Brixton Buzz celebrate the Brixton Tatterjacks
Mike Urban's photo (right) shows one of the Brixton events

Talented Brixton Tatterjacks Morris Dancers started their new year wassailing in Brixton. On Sunday January 7th we were delighted to watch their annual song and dance performance for the Streatham Community Garden Group in the Rookery - and it wasn't raining!

LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

THEY CAME AND PAINTED STREATHAM

Watercolour of Mount Ephraim Lane by David Cox junior. c1870s. Looking towards Tooting Common.

It was a typical April day in 1875. The trees were dripping with overnight rain and the ground wet and soggy. Green shoots of spring grass could be seen breaking the soil and highlighting the wide-open space. Oak trees and broom gave added appeal to the vista. From his vantage point at the top of Streatham Common the artist Vincent Van Gogh surveyed the scene and sketched what he saw. But as fortune deemed his sketch has long since disappeared, a loss not only to Streatham but to the art world as a whole.

Why Van Gogh was at Streatham Common is anyone's guess, but he was one of many 19th century artists who found artistic inspiration in the Streatham countryside before the grip of suburbia took place. For these creative individuals, fluent in the skills of painting and drawing, it was the scenic potential of places such as Streatham Common and Tooting Common, lasting remnants of the old Surrey countryside, which caught and held their attention. Many artists favoured Streatham Common, notable for the panoramic views seen from the summit,

where the misty hills of the North Downs, the distance roofs of Croydon and the greenery of the Wandle valley lay before them and set under an ever-changing sky. It was the majesty of this panorama that challenged them.

Streatham's sister common Tooting Common offered them a different landscape, one of open grassland interrupted here and there with shrub and bush, gnarled old trees and patches of still reflective water, vistas that caught the eye of many an artist. They came to capture in their paintings the interplay between landscape and sky, woodland and grass in its most dramatic forms.

Setting up his paint box and easel to capture the local scene was Birmingham born David Cox (1783-1859), a local resident living with his wife Hannah at Laurel Cottage, Streatham Place. Living at a time when the local countryside was still to be seen and enjoyed, Cox and his son, Dulwich born David Cox junior (1809-1885) recorded in watercolour many aspects of Streatham's landscape in their own particular styles. One work by David Cox senior of a field near Streatham Common was acclaimed at the time as "a most successful representation of quiet English scenery". This was a good assessment of his skills, and has placed him among the finest of English landscape painters. "Cox, the sweetest singer of all pastoral landscape painters." He was eminent in his profession.

The younger Cox, whose style of painting was very similar to his father, resided just around the corner from Streatham Place in New Park Road. Next door but one at "Milford Lodge", lived a fellow artist the highly acclaimed Victorian landscape painter William Bennett (1811-1871). Bennett, whose work was often on exhibition at the Royal Academy, was also a prolific producer of drawings and sketches. Like the many artists who were inspired by the local countryside he found a liking for the many views presented by Tooting Common. Following his death, a catalogue of his remaining works was made and listed at least twelve sketches he titled 'Tooting Common'. Like his painting companion and neighbour David Cox, Bennett was buried at West Norwood Cemetery and rests among other luminaries from the creative world. Bennett's works are well sought after and are seen by many as desirable additions to any collection of English 19th Century landscape paintings.

This desirability can also be said of another highly regarded artists who came to London in 1807 to establish himself as a painter in oils. This was Patrick Nasmyth (1787-1831) a Scotsman from Edinburgh, who at an early age acquired a reputation as the "Scottish Hobbema" after the 17th century Dutch master painter Meindert Hobbema. His passion was to capture in his paintings the changing moods of the countryside and sky, and this liking for open landscapes and skies no doubt attracted him to Streatham, when in 1827 he put paint to canvas and painted a moody picture of a view from the top of Streatham Common below a backdrop of open sky and distance hills, a painting that now hangs in Sudeley Castle, Gloucester. Why this most gifted painter in oils came to Streatham is unknown. Perhaps an answer may lay in the many gatherings of artists, which he

may have been aware of, that occurred in a small cottage in Streatham owned by Norman Wilkinson, a north London art lover and colleague of David Cox and family.

The scenic location of Streatham Common definitely attracted Peter de Wint (1784-1849), a painter of Dutch ancestry who soon took to his brushes and painted a dramatic view seen from the top of the common in 1849, which is said to be one of the works that show him at his best. Born at Hanley, Stoke-on-Trent de Wint was considered to be the "broadest and grandest of landscape colourist", with his work hanging among the pictures in the National Gallery. His watercolours presented a somewhat idealistic view of English landscape, eliciting the comment by the critic John Ruskin "De Wint makes me feel as if I were walking in the fields".

This attraction to Streatham Common did not escape the talents of a marine and landscape artist of note, William Collingwood-Smith. Born at Greenwich in 1815 and the son of an artist and musician he became a regular exhibitor at the Royal Academy from an early age, and soon established a reputation as a competent watercolour artist. His impressionistic rendering of a stormy scene on Streatham Common, painted in watercolour in 1871, finds a worthy place in the Victoria and Albert Museum art collection and illustrates his predilection for sweeping and atmospheric landscapes. A resident of Brixton Hill, where he lived for some years with his family, Collingwood-Smith died in 1887 and like fellow artists William Bennett and David Cox junior was buried in West Norwood Cemetery.

Not too far from where Collingwood-Smith lived at Brixton Hill was a fellow artist whose life was unfortunately plagued by debt and ill health. Using his natural talent as a watercolourist and painter in oils Edmund John Niemann (1813-1876) succeeded to become a highly regarded artist. Although born in Islington he settled down in Brixton living at Brunswick Terrace, Brixton Hill. Beginning his working life in banking he soon capitalised on his artistic skills, making his name by exhibiting his work in prestigious galleries up and down the country. His style was in the mode of the Victorian landscape artist and is exemplified in his picture of the view seen from the top of Streatham Common and which looks down towards the High Road and the landscape beyond.

The attraction of Streatham Common did not deter artists to exploit the landscape of nearby Tooting Common. With its shady glades, streams and ponds there was plenty of scope for an appealing picture in watercolour or oil, as one artist appreciated. Born in Chester into a family with artistic inclinations Edmund Morison Wimperis (1835-1900) began his career as an illustrator with The London Illustrated News before illustrating novels of Charlotte Brontë. Later in life he became a professional watercolourist specialising in country scenes and settled down with his family in Brixton, and establishing his studio at 38 Streatham High Road. As a successful Victorian artist his work can be seen in

numerous public collections and is another one of those Victorian artists whose pictures find much favour among discriminating art collectors.

This may also be said of another watercolourist William J Ferguson, a London based Scottish artist active from 1849 to 1886. Known for his liking for woodland views and rivers landscapes, and popular enough for his work to be exhibited in major galleries, he found a view looking down towards the Silk Mill from the high ground of Streatham Common, engaging enough to produce one of his attractive watercolours.

Not earning a living from her artistic skills was Francis Catherine Garforth, better known by her married name as Francis Tottie. Born into a wealthy Yorkshire family in 1824, her creative ability was nurtured by George Walker (1781-1856) a noted and acknowledged Yorkshire artist. For reasons unknown Francis came down to Streatham during the late 1850s to live at 5 Manor Park Terrace, Mitcham Lane. Not forsaking her paints and easel Francis continued to produce her watercolours and pencil drawings. Working locally, she captured the rural nature of Streatham during the 1860s, when the aspect of greenery was still prominent and buildings of suburbia yet to appear.

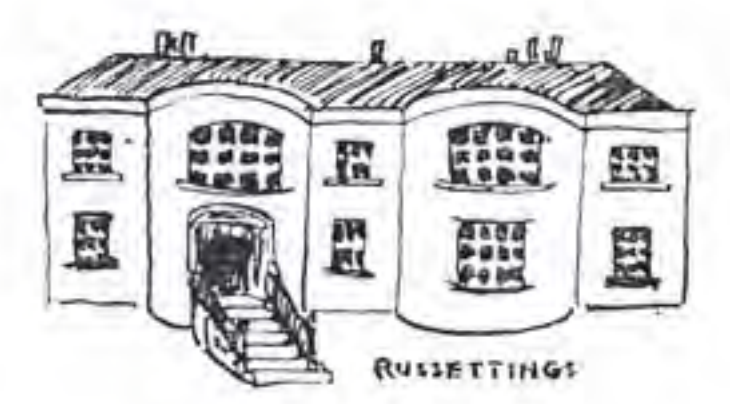
An artist of a different kind who captured the look of an earlier period was Joseph Powell of Marylebone (c1776-1834). Well known as an accomplished watercolourist, engraver and printmaker, Powell learnt his skills as a pupil of Benjamin Thomas Pouncey, a well known and respected engraver living at Lambeth by the Thames. By honing his skills in pencil drawing, he extended his artistic reputation and produced many fine topographical drawings, particularly of Clapham Town and Common, where his forte for drawing trees is well illustrated. His liking for the local area took him to sketch the scenery of Tooting Common, and with its trees bursting with character gave him plenty of scope. No better accolade can be given to Powell's work than to have examples placed in the collections at the Tate Gallery, Victoria & Albert Museum and the Royal Academy.

There were many other artists who were drawn to Streatham to pursue their creative talents and to paint a local view. Through their palette and brushes they recorded a countryside and landscape that was changing, giving us a taste of the Victorian countryside once familiar to the people of Streatham. Perhaps David Cox junior's watercolour of a rustic cottage shaded by arching trees and standing by a well-trodden lane snaking towards Tooting Common brings us a little closer to those times. This way to the common is now Mount Ephraim Lane.

Graham Gower

Read more about Graham's 45 years of multi-talented contributions to the Streatham Society on p30.

THE HISTORY OF RUSSETTINGS HOUSE



"Russettings" was the original name of the house on the site of the Belmont Bowling Club in Broadlands Avenue, Streatham Hill. Built around 1829, it was a large grey bricked house, reached by a narrow country lane situated north of the Horse and Groom public house, roughly on the present day site of Broadlands Avenue and Streatham High Road.

According to an advertisement for its sale by Geo. Gouldson and Sons & Co. in October 1892, it was described as "Detached, standing well back from the road, nine bedrooms and dressing rooms. Dining room, library, morning room, kitchen, scullery, larders, wine cellars and store rooms. It had stabling for three horses, and a coach house for 3 carriages and a harness room. The gardens consisted of tennis lawn, flower and kitchen garden, a large and smaller greenhouse and tool house. In one and three quarter acres."

It later became known as "Belmont House" and in 1891 was renumbered as 10 Streatham High Road, and in 1906 subsequently renumbered to 42 Streatham High Road.

From the Streatham Directories, Rate Book entries and Census' we can discover the families that lived there:

- Its first occupant was Charles Ring who lived there from 1829 to 1836

- From 1837 to 1844 Edward Foss, wife and four servants were in residence. He was a legal writer and biographer. In 1822 he became a member of the Inner Temple, but was never called to the bar, instead maintaining a successful solicitors practice. He was Under Sheriff of London in 1827/8, and also Director of the Law Life Assurance Society from its foundation in 1823. He was active in founding the Incorporated Law Society, and was its President in 1842/3. He moved from Streatham to Canterbury in 1844

- From 1846 to 1852 William Stericher a Tea Dealer lived there with his wife, two nephews also in the tea trade and 3 servants. "A most eminent wholesale tea dealer whom the government inspector of teas used to consult on the questions of doubt for the purpose of fixing duty."

- From 1853 to 1863 Gustavas Dressler a General merchant, who was born in Germany, his wife, Suzanne born in France, plus four children and 5 servants, called it home. He died 19 December 1863. One of his sons, Conrad Dressler (22 May 1856 – 3 August 1940) was an English sculptor. He studied sculpture at the Royal College of Art and was later influenced by the Arts & Crafts Movement. He worked in partnership with Harold Rathbone between 1894 and 1897 at the Della Robbia Pottery, and then moved to Marlow Common in Buckinghamshire, where he established the Medmenham Pottery, specialising in architectural tiles and large wall panels, created from small sections. Dressler was the inventor of a tunnel kiln known as the 'Dressler oven'.

- From 1865 to 1884 it was purchased by George Gouldsmith**,** an Auctioneer, Surveyor and Estate Agent, who lived there with his family. He died in June 1882 and left the house to his wife.

1839 Estate Plan west of Streatham High Road
which is shown south - north from St Leonard's Church (left)

- From 1887 to 1892 James Anderson was in residence, then from 1896 to 1898 Alexander Cochrane. Both of whom little is known.

- By 1898 it was the home of Elizabeth H F Butterworth, who died on 23rd December 1902, leaving an estate valued at £20,428 6s 8d.

On 26th January 1905, an advertisement appeared in the Streatham News to auction the contents of the house. Then little is known about the house until 1909 when it was owned by Sidney Newton and Company, Motor Engineers.

But London and Streatham was beginning to grow, and large country houses on Streatham High Road were being demolished to make way for road widening, houses and shops.

Streatham Amusements Ltd acquired the leasehold of the house and sought planning permission to demolish the house and rebuild a cinema, theatre, Gaiety skating rink and shops. In 1909 they made an application for a music and dancing license. But Streatham Chamber of Commerce and local residents opposed the plan and it did not go ahead.

One of the last references for the use of the house, was as a committee rooms for Alderman Hunt and Lorden, the Municipal Reform candidates for the 1910 London County Council elections. It is believed the house then stood empty. But in 1911 the Belmont Bowling and Tennis Club leased the site and the club opened.

The old house was finally demolished, and the building materials from the demolished house were auctioned by Veryard and Yates on 1st September 1914.

In the 1920's Broadland House (north of Belmont Bowling Club and later renumbered to 40 Streatham High Road), was demolished and due to further development in Streatham High Road, the land was sold for housing and the now familiar Broadlands Avenue was laid in 1928, the address of the present club. The houses were developed by Messrs Albert Soden of 325 Streatham High Road and advertised for sale in January 1930.

The Tennis Club moved to new premises in 1928, although I have not been able to trace where locally they moved to. The Belmont Bowling Club has remained on the site since 1911.

The club is always ready to welcome new (and experienced) members, who want to try out or continue to play this great sport. The Bowling season is from April to September and members can access the club and green at any time during these months. New members can learn from the more experienced players and continue to practice and improve at their own pace, while playing in club matches and with other local clubs. For more information contact Belmonthonsec@outlook.com

Freda Graham

THE BATTLE OF TRAFALGAR - THE STREATHAM CONNECTION

At the turn of the 19th century, Streatham was a small Surrey village. The main industry of the area was agriculture and its beautiful rural setting made it a popular location for the homes of wealthy merchants and businessmen who worked in London.

Central London's Trafalgar Square and Nelson's Column

At first glance, such a small town, situated over 50 miles from the sea, would seem an unlikely place to have particular cause to celebrate the Battle of Trafalgar, other than the national pride experienced by thousands of similar places throughout the British Isles.

Lord Horatio Nelson and Nelson's Monument/Column

However, there are a number of fascinating connections between Streatham and the Battle of Trafalgar, which took place almost two hundred and twenty years ago on the 21st October 1805 when the British fleet defeated the combined French and Spanish navvies.

This was the most decisive naval battle in the Napoleonic wars and the victory confirmed Britain as master of the seas; a position it was to hold for more than a century.

Our quest for local links with the battle begins opposite Streatham Common, where a row of small cottages once stood on part of the site now occupied by a Sainsbury supermarket. Situated to the south of the present-day Immanuel Church, these buildings formed part of the cluster of dwellings that were grouped around Greyhound Lane and formed the hamlet of South Streatham.

Some of these old houses had been erected in the late 18th or early 19th centuries and their ceilings and walls were constructed from mud and animal hair. Their main structural beams were carved from old ships' timbers suggesting that these originated

Streatham High Road and (below) Mr Clowser's House, 92 Lewin Road

from the numerous ship breakers yards that were kept busy during and after the Napoleonic Wars.

This row of houses used to be known as Western Terrace, signifying its location at the western end of Streatham Common. After 1854, when Immanuel Church was built on land adjacent to them, a small passage by the side of the terrace became known as Church Place.

It was around 1850 that George Clowser moved here and took up residence in the house next to Immanuel Church, from where he ran his building business. On moving in he discovered an elderly gentleman lodging in the attic of the building. Locals knew little about the man except that he was a "stranger" and kept himself very much to himself. He rarely left the house and spent most of his time in his room.

When Mr Clowser met his lodger, he found the hermit quite agitated and fearful of being evicted from his attic home. Being the kindly soul he was, George assured the elderly man that he would not disturb him and he could continue to live there for as long as he wished.

Some months later when speaking with the old man, Mr Clowser, who was born in Merton in 1812, mentioned how his father was one of the few people who saw Lord Nelson leave his villa in Merton to join the Victory at Portsmouth for his final mission.

Much to George's astonishment the old man told him that he had served with Nelson on the Victory and was in fact the seaman who had steered the ship during the Battle of Trafalgar. To prove his point, he produced papers in his possession to affirm this which he showed Mr Clowser.

These documents were likely to be the Prize Money certificates which all sailors on the vessel received after the battle, detailing their share of the value of the captured French and Spanish ships.

Using the Muster Rolls of the Victory and various parish records I have tried to identify this seaman, alas without success. The 1851 census shows George and his family in residence at the property, but no one else is detailed in the house. I can therefore only presume the old helmsman had either died or by the time of the census had moved to other lodgings outside the parish.

However, one Trafalgar veteran we can identify is John Lane who was a young 15-year-old midshipman on HMS Thunderer, a vessel of 74 guns, during the Battle.

He was born in 1791 in Halifax, Nova Scotia and spent most of his working life at sea. Following his service at Trafalgar he continued in the Navy and was promoted to Lieutenant in 1815 and finished his career as a Commander.

He spent part of his retirement in Streatham where he lived at 3 Bellevue Terrace, now known as 66 Streatham High Road, which once housed Streatham's well-known La Pergola Restaurant.

John is detailed as lodging here in the 1871 census together with his 68-year-old wife, Martha. Captain Lane lived in Streatham to a "very advanced age" although he is not listed in the 1881 census so presumable died sometime in the preceding decade.

He was famous locally for his anecdotes about his adventures at sea and his memories of the Battle of Trafalgar. He was a good friend of Doctor Richard Hake Bush, who lodged in a large house in the High Road called Leigham Villa which used to stand where North Parade is today.

Among Dr Bush's other acquaintances was a young man called Herbert Baldwin who lived in Streatham for over 70 years from 1859 until his death in 1930. Baldwin wrote several accounts of Streatham in the days of his youth and tells how he used to meet the old sea-captain at Dr Bush's house and was enthralled with the many tales he told of his maritime adventures and the hardships he endured during his time at sea.

When news of Nelson's victory at Trafalgar reached England, it was the cause of considerable rejoicing, tempered only by the grief caused by the tragic loss of the gallant Admiral whose planning had ensured success in the battle. To celebrate the occasion the Streatham bell ringers took to the tower of the ancient parish church of St Leonard on November 6th, 1805, and a victory peel rang out across the village.

The old parish accounts show that they were paid the princely sum of 6s (30p) for their endeavours and when Thomas Watts, the Captain of the bell tower, submitted his account for payment he listed the event as "Rejoicing at Nelson's Victory". Thomas gathered his fellow bell ringers together again a fortnight later on November 20th when they rung a further peel in honour of the victory. Again, the church accounts show they were paid 6s for what Watts termed simply as "Rejoicing at Streatham".

The Churchwarden's accounts also reveal that James Wheadon was paid 5s (25p) for preparing a proclamation and prayers for "Lord Nelson's victory", no doubt used at St Leonard's church services to celebrate the occasion.

An indication as to the importance of the battle to Britain's security is borne out by the national monument to the victory - Trafalgar Square at the end of Whitehall, which is dominated by Nelson's Column. Standing 145ft high the Devonshire granite monument was designed by William Railton and erected here between 1839 and 1842. Standing atop the column is the 17ft tall Craigleith stone statue of Nelson by E H Bailey. On the plinth at the base of the column are four bronze bas-reliefs cast from cannons captured in Nelson's battles depicting his various naval victories.

These were commissioned at a cost of £1,000 each and were completed in 1849 and show the Battle of Cape St Vincent on the west side of the column, by M L Watson; the bombardment of Copenhagen by John Ternouth on the east side; the death of Nelson at Trafalgar by J E Carew on the south side and last, but not least, the Battle of the Nile by William Frederick Woodington. It is in this sculptor that we have our final connection between Streatham and the Battle of Trafalgar.

Pictured: Battle painting; Battle of Trafalgar - Times Poster; Lord Horatio Nelson; Nelson's Monument/Column; Nelson's Column Nile detail

Assisting Woodington in the making of this relief for the north side of the pedestal of Nelson's Column was his son, also called William, who went on to become a famous sculptor in his own right. William Junior moved to Streatham in the early 1900s and spent the last 20 years of his life living at 78 Pretoria Road, prior to moving to 92 Lewin Road shortly before his death in October 1922.

William Frederick Woodington senior (left) and junior

William was born in St Pancras on 14th October 1830 and spent several years working with his father before branching off by himself. Perhaps his most notable work is the four statues at the dome of St Paul's Cathedral depicting St Basil, St Gregory, St Chrysostom and St Athanasias.

He was also responsible for two mural memorials in the crypt of St Paul's, commemorating the life of Canon Webber and Lord Napier of Magdala, whose statue stands in Trafalgar Square and after whom the pub at 111 Beulah Road in Thornton Heath is named.

Woodington junior also made 25 6ft high statues and four large groups of three statues in each depicting Agriculture, Science, Justice and Commerce for various municipal buildings in Calcutta in India. Other examples of his work were to be found at Crystal Palace. Following his death at 92 Lewin Road, William Woodington was interred in his family grave at West Norwood Cemetery. Sadly, his monument has not survived and is one of the those which were destroyed by Lambeth Council.

William's father, William Woodington Snr, was born on 10th February 1806 at Sutton Coldfield near Birmingham. At the age of 12 he was articled to the engraver Robert W Sievier. It was when Sievier took up sculpture in 1822 that his young apprentice's interest in this art form also developed. For almost 60 years between 1825 and 1882 he exhibited at the Royal Academy and in 1851 was appointed curator of the Royal Academy School of Sculpture.

Today, one of Woodington Senior's most famous sculptures stands guard over Westminster Bridge in the form of the Southbank Lion. Cast in Coade stone from Woodington's original, this Lion firstly stood atop of the Lion Brewery on the South Bank. Its larger twin, known as the British Lion, is on permanent display at the All-England Rugby Football Club in Twickenham.

Locally we have a fine example of Woodington Senior's work in the Paxton Bust at Crystal Palace. Erected on 10th June 1873 it originally stood on top of a large brick plinth on the Italian Terrace between the main steps but was relocated to its present position in the early 1970s. If you visit Crystal Palace, you will be able to see Woodington's name carved into the back of the bust. Woodington Senior lived at 51 Hayter Road and died on Christmas Eve 1893 at his Brixton home.

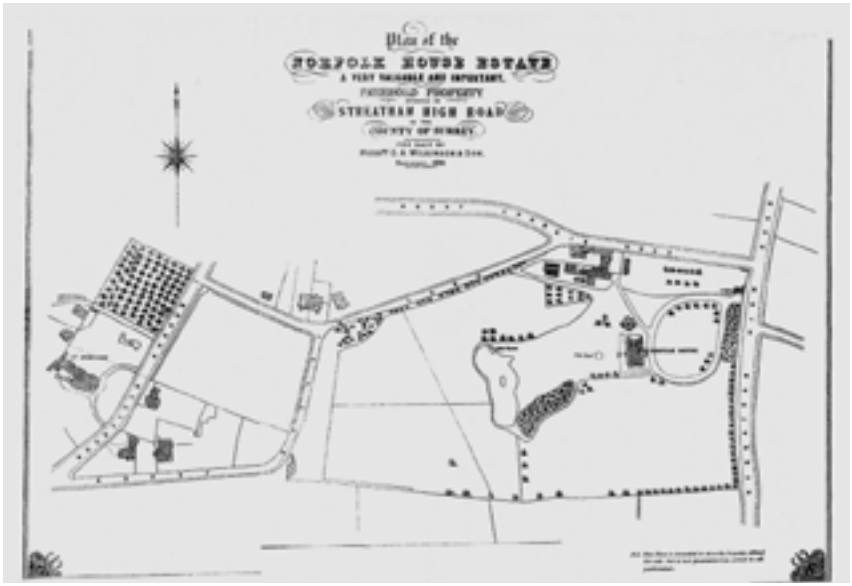
John W Brown

NORFOLK HOUSE ROAD STREET SIGN

We are grateful for the recent donation to our archive of an old street sign for Norfolk House Road. It was possibly one of the longest street signs in Streatham, and measures five feet long by eleven inches high. The sign is thought to be at least 65 years old as at the top of the sign are the words Borough of Wandsworth, indicating that it predates the mid-1960s when Streatham formed part of Wandsworth before the transfer of about two thirds of the area into the Borough of Lambeth. Norfolk House Road was laid out on the grounds of Norfolk House in 1903.

Norfolk House was one of the grand mansions of Streatham and was erected by Francis Yates around 1843. The house had 13 bedrooms and stood in over 15 acres of landscaped grounds comprising extensive gardens and parkland laid out between the High Road and Mount Ephraim Lane.

A small lodge on the High Road guarded the entrance to the grounds and a long sweeping carriage drive led to the front door of the property. In the grounds were numerous greenhouses, 3 coach houses, and a stable. At the rear of the property was a large lake with a boat house. In the centre of the lake was a small island which was a popular place for family picnics in the summer months.



In 1851 Christopher Gabriel, a wealthy timber merchant, moved into the property. In 1833 he had married Ruth Thurston, the only daughter of John Thurston a noted billiard table maker. John had established his business in 1799 and is considered to be the father of snooker. His firm continues to make billiard and snooker tables today and are responsible for many improvements to the designs of the table, including the introduction of the slate bed and placing rubber within the cushions which allowed billiards and snooker to develop into the major sport it is today.

STREATHAM.

PARTICULARS AND CONDITIONS OF SALE

FREEHOLD PROPERTY

"The Norfolk House Estate,"

STREATHAM HIGH ROAD

AN EXCELLENT MANSION

EXTENSIVE PLEASURE GROUNDS,

PARK-LIKE LAND,

15 Acres and 20 Perches,

A BUILDING ESTATE,

Frontages to Made Roads of about 2,000 feet;

MESSRS. C. A. WILKINSON & SON

ON FRIDAY, the 25th day of APRIL, 1873.

The Gabriel family were wealthy and influential timber merchants. Christopher's grandfather, also called Christopher, had laid the foundations of his family's fortunes in 1770 when he set up in business as a plane maker for carpenters. Following his death in 1809 two of his sons, Thomas and Christopher, continued to run the family business and subsequently concentrated their activities on the timber importing and wholesale side of the business based at Gabriel's Wharf on the Thames. Thomas Gabriel became Lord Mayor of London in 1866 and was knighted by Queen Victoria. The third generation of the family continued to run the firm, building on the success of their forefathers. In 1866 Christopher's brother, Thomas Gabriel, became Lord Mayor of London.

The family business continued under various names for the next hundred years until 1968, when as Gabriel Wade and English Ltd it was acquired by Montague L Meyer Ltd. After Christopher Gabriel died on 2 March 1873 his widow, Ruth, continued to live on at Norfolk House until her death in 1898 after which the estate was sold for development. The house was subsequently demolished and in 1903 Norfolk House Road was laid out through the grounds between Kingscourt and Mount Ephraim Roads.

Pictured: Sale Particulars; Norfolk House and Garden; Thomas Gabriel, Lord Mayor of London

JWB

STREATHAM SOCIETY REPORTS

RECENT MEETINGS

Crime and Craft, Masonic Movement - good or bad

WBro Mike Neville (retired) of The Yard gave an entertaining talk at our meeting on November 7th. He revealed the Freemasons who have been involved in murder, treason, skulduggery and scandal from the time of the English Civil War to the 1980s. Nearly every infamous case investigated by Scotland Yard, including Jack the Ripper, Oscar Wilde, Dr Crippen, the Great Train Robbery and the Kray Twins, is shown to have Masonic involvement for good or bad. Also included were some Streatham connections.

Mike has written several books *(above)* on the subject. His professional presentation was much appreciated by an audience of over 80 members and visitors.

Members' Christmas Celebration

Despite the awful weather some 60 members came to our meeting. They were rewarded by a variety of refreshments, a large raffle, time to socialise and another excellent speaker.

Andy Thomas's talk 'Christmas - a festive history' uncovered the long and intriguing background to the festive season. From the ancient celebration of light in the winter darkness to the marking of the birth of a messiah, mid-December has long been a time of rituals and rejoicing. Yet the history of Christmas has not been straightforward; its celebration was banned in Puritan times and its traditions splintered into many guises before the Victorians rehabilitated the festival into what it has become.

Andy, a keen celebrator of the festive season, is a prolific author of several books, guides and articles on history and folklore, lectures throughout the south-east and has made numerous radio and TV appearances. *(See his website.)*

London's South Bank - The History

We thought even worse weather on January 2nd would result in a low turn-out but again 60 people braved the storms. We welcomed author Mireille Galinou, who has spoken to us previously, to introduce her latest book which was publicised in our Summer 2023 *News* issue 253. Mireille is the author of several suburban local histories including *The Dulwich Notebook* and *The Streatham Sketchbook*. We were delighted when several copies of her South Bank History sold at the meeting.

EVENTS

Dr Johnson House, Gough Square, Tour November 11th 2023

Director & Curator Celine Luppo McDaid gave a fascinating tour of the house (off Fleet Street) for Society members. Johnson also had an apartment at the Thrales' house in Streatham and worshipped in St Leonard's Church.

Remembrance Sunday - Memorial Gardens, Streatham Common

On Sunday 12th November the Streatham Society was represented by Shea Richardson *(Chair, pictured)* and Robert Doyle.

They laid the Society wreath at the front of the War Memorial and flowers at the Civilian Memorial.

A large crowd attended, including many Society members.

MB/JH

MEMBERSHIP 2024

Membership 2023: Our total paid membership was 351. We welcomed 63 new members, plus some renewals. Thank you for your support.

New members: We have welcomed: Rebecca Endean & Malcolm Nicholls, William & Moira Harman, Nicky Smith, Kathleen Fowler, Mary & Crispin Green, Jane Inglesfield, Richard & Julie Mycroft, Gillian Robinson, Thomas Stanbury, Stephanie Thompson, Jenni Rodgers, James Buchanan.

Subscription renewals for 2024: These should be paid before March 31st 2024 to ensure the continued delivery of our newsletter and emails.

Subscriptions: Individual £10; Household £15 (two named adults); Life membership (single or named couple) £180. These can be paid by bank transfer (BACS), standing order before March 31st, cheque or cash at meetings. See our website or contact me for further details.

To confirm payment and activate registration, please include your name, method of payment, the amount and destination (subscription, donation or publication) and email confirmation to me. All payments are acknowledged by email.

Gift Aid declaration: Tax payers: Boost your subscription and any donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1. A form can be sent to you on application or is available on our website to email or post to our secretary *(Contact back page)*.

Judy Harris, Membership Secretary

BETTY SEARLE 1921 -2023

We are sad to report the death of Betty Searle, our oldest member, at home on December 1st 2023. Born on 21st February 1921 at Upper Tulse Hill SW2, she was almost 103.

Keith and Betty Searle (Photo JWB)

To celebrate her 100th birthday Keith Searle, former Treasurer of the Streatham Society, wrote a moving tribute to his mother which was published in the *Streatham Society News* 244 Spring 2021.

At her centenary she was still active. She had a remarkable life and an excellent memory. She very much enjoyed being interviewed by the local press and media to share her memories and opinions on everything from her past to current affairs.

We send our sympathy to her family.

THE STREATHAM SOCIETY AT 50

Membership 1974 - 1997

The Society was founded early in 1974. Our 40th anniversary (2014) was celebrated a year late because we omitted it from the 2014 programme! A garden party was arranged in July 2015 with a celebration cake *(right)*. There is an account of this and Brenda Hargreaves' history of the Society in *Streatham News* 221 Summer 2015.

The Membership Register 1974 - 1997 *(above)* is an incredibly detailed handwritten record. Details of payments, resignations and deletions are carefully recorded. Difficult to read without magnification, I have studied only the first few pages. An additional file index was destroyed when membership was digitised.

It is interesting to note the joining dates of some of our prominent members who contributed much to the success of the Society; several were long-term executive committee members who continued their membership for life.

1974: Brenda Hargreaves, Dorothy Rockett, Joan Rich, Betty Parr (with others), founder and long-term committee members. **1975** Daphne Hayes-Mojon (Marchant), prominent on the committee until retirement. **1977** Keith Holdaway, took over the local history group forming the Local History Research Group. **1978** John Cresswell, a major influence in focusing the Society's wide contribution to Streatham, particularly planning, conservation, and heritage issues. **1980** Shea Richardson, now chairs the Society. **1983** Brian Bloice, local history, planning, later Chairman. **1984** Judy Harris (committee 1989 to date).

In addition prominent sub-committee members were: **1979** Graham Gower, a major contributor to our local history publications and events *(see p.30)* and **1984** John Brown, local historian, publisher, adviser, archivist and Streatham collector, now our publisher and local history expert.

Subscriptions

In 1999 following John Cresswell's move south, the executive committee was reorganised and welcomed new officers. The membership was unwieldy. Peter Main, our new treasurer, entered all onto a database then Brian Bloice analysed this and produced a report comparing statistics for 1998 and 1999.

Originally there was only a single subscription but soon this expanded. There appear to have been 13 different types of membership in 1998/99. Variations included those paying for some years in advance and the size of Corporates. Individuals paid £3, £5, £7, £15 or £35. Families paid £6, £8 or £10. Corporate businesses and schools paid £5, £6, £7 or £10.

Membership in all categories was shrinking except the age concession (pensioners) which was well over twice that of the standard subscription. About 80 unpaid members were included in the totals. Over 40 more were complimentary; receiving a free newsletter. The cost of the newsletter and postage was high, similar to the present, despite significant price increases since then.

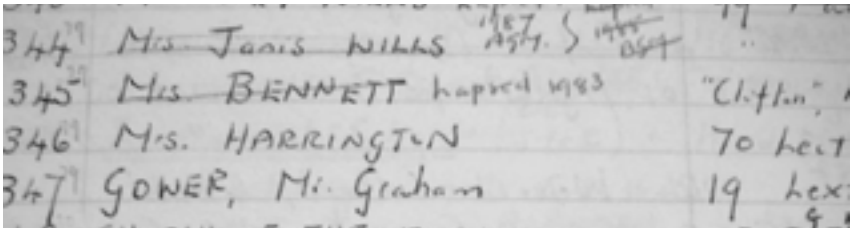
Only married couples were entitled to a joint membership, receiving a shared copy of the newsletter. This excluded two other members at the same address. On the executive committee at that time were unmarried couples, two siblings, two house-shares and a mother and son; none had the option of a joint membership. This discriminated against some of our hard working members. Apart from the son all were women, some on a low income. Three household subscriptions were for a married couple: full (£10), retired concession (£8), plus student (£6).

Now we have only three categories: Individual, Household (two named adults at the same address) and Life (single or couple, same address). Other family members occasionally attending meetings need not give the voluntary donation unless they wish to do so. It is unusual for more than two household members to attend these - and the talks seldom appeal to children.

Graham Gower

Our Membership Register records Graham Gower's subscription (member 347) was first paid on February12th 1979; 45 years ago at the production of this newsletter in 2024. This is shown *(right)* just after Janis Wills (Benson). Janis's membership lapsed in 1987 (recorded in red ink) but she later became bookstall organiser and minutes secretary.

I first met Graham at the Local History Research Group meeting in September 1983. Chaired by Keith Holdaway, also present were John Cresswell, Brian Bloice, Daphne Hayes-Mojon (Marchant) and Catherine Doggett (Mahé, Society chairwoman). They were part of a group of about 12 who were actively involved in local history research and publication. In 1984 the Local History group rapidly expanded, mainly due to John Brown's vast local knowledge, several very enthusiastic personalities and Brian's AE Local History students.



Graham's contribution to our local history research and publications is immense. Our successful early publications were Graham's *A Brief History of Streatham* (1980) and *Streatham Pictures from the Past* (1983) by John Cresswell, Graham and Keith Holdaway. The sale of these in local bookshops created a large reserve to fund future publications.

Graham's later publications include *Streatham Origins and Early History* (2008), *The High Road, Streatham* (2008, *sold out*), and *Field, Farm & Estate - Hyde Farm* (2019). He also wrote some of our Heritage Trails and, for Local History Publications, *A History of Suburban Streatham* (1996). He produced *The River Graveney*, the first of our Streatham History Notes and has regularly written articles for the newsletter - including one in this issue. All his publications are very carefully researched.

Graham has always been involved in the organisation of meetings and events. His wider versatility was shown at our 40th anniversary party. John's photo shows him cutting the celebration cake with his decorated red cupcakes in the foreground. He is watched in admiration by a group including Brian Bloice (*left)*, then chairman.

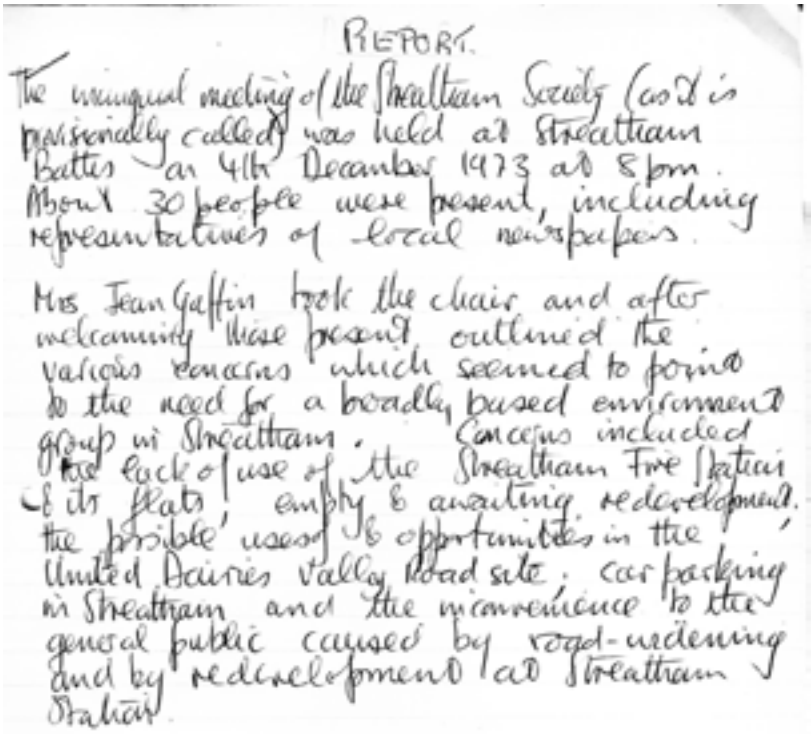
But when Graham's and John Brown's organising and socialising are over, there is nothing they like better than to find a quiet corner and chat local history, as pictured at member Barbara Richardson's 90th birthday celebration in St Leonard's Church *(Graham, left).*

JH

Four of Graham Gower's popular books

THE STREATHAM SOCIETY CELEBRATES ITS GOLDEN JUBILEE

2024 marks the 50th anniversary of the founding of The Streatham Society - or does it?



REPORT.

The inaugural meeting of the Streatham Society (as it is provisionally called) was held at Streatham Baptist on 4th December 1973 at 8 pm. About 30 people were present, including representatives of local newspapers.

Mrs Jean Gaffin took the chair and after welcoming those present outlined the various concerns which seemed to point to the need for a broadly based environment group in Streatham. Concerns included the lack of use of the Streatham Fire Station & its flats, empty & awaiting redevelopment, the possible uses & opportunities in the United Dairies Valley Road site, car parking in Streatham and the inconvenience to the general public caused by road-widening and by redevelopment at Streatham Station.

Opening report notes of the meeting held on December 4th 1973

For the past half century 1974 has been quoted as the year in which the Society was formed, at a special meting held at Streatham Library at 8pm on the evening of Tuesday 26th March 'to adopt a constitution and elect members to its executive'.

A meeting at Streatham Baths in 1952

An old poster in our archive headed The Streatham Society advertises the 'Public Meeting' at which this was to take place and clearly states the aim of the Society as being 'to maintain and improve the quality of life for everyone living or working in Streatham'.

However... there was a public meeting held earlier than this; on December 4th 1973 at Streatham Baths, at which the decision to form the Society was made which led to plans being developed which were presented to the gathering in the Library three months later.

Notes made at this earlier meeting survive and begin:

'The inaugural meeting of the Streatham Society (as it is provisionally called) was held at Streatham Baths on 4th December 1973 at 8pm. About 30 people were present including representatives of local newspapers.

'Mrs Jean Gaffin took the chair and after welcoming those present outlines the various concerns which seemed to point to the need for a broadly based environment group in Streatham. Concerns included the lack of use of the Streatham Fire Station and its flats, empty and awaiting redevelopment, the possible uses and opportunities in the United Dairies Valley Road site, car parking in Streatham and the inconvenience to the general public caused by road-widening and by redevelopment at Streatham Station.'

After various discussions and contributions from those present the meeting drew to a close and the notes tell us:

'It was agreed following discussions of the proposal formally put by A Virgo that:

The Streatham Society should be formed with the general aim of improving the quality of life in Streatham.

The acting officers of the Society should be:

Pat Daley (Chairman and Publicity); Mrs E O'Donoghue (Honorary Secretary); Mrs B Hargreaves (Honorary Treasurer)

Poster advertising the public meeting on 26th March 1974 and Streatham Pump no.1

Three action groups should initially be set up with concerns and areas of interest as follows:

Alan Virgo - Environment; Norman Howard - Facilities; W Marshall - History and Archive.

'Pat Daley then took the Chair. After discussions of the intended work of the Action Groups it was agreed that the Society would aim to publish a newsletter and to seek wider support when it had validated its existence by the achievements of the Action Groups.

'A public meeting would be held in February to publicise and launch the Society

'By collection £8.50 was raised towards hall hire and publicity expenses in the first instance, and the meeting closed.'

The 'February' meeting mentioned in the notes at which the Society was to be launched and publicised was that held at Streatham Library at 8pm on the evening of Tuesday 26th March 1974.

As to the newsletter this was published in May 1974 as Issue No 1 of the *Streatham Pump* which continues today as the *Streatham Society News* of which this article appears in issue 255 almost 50 years later.

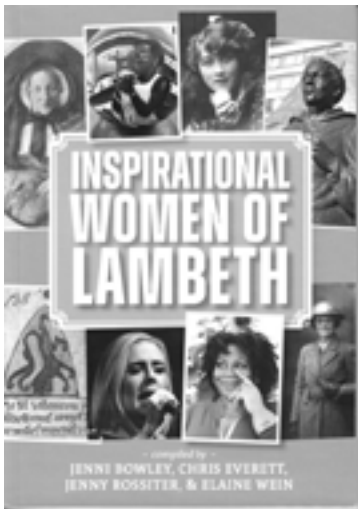
Not wishing to be pedantic I suppose you could argue that the Society was founded at that first public meeting held at Streatham Baths on December 4th 1973 and was officially launched three months later on 26th March 1974.

However, when computing my own age, I start at the date of my birth, rather than the date of my conception, and if that is good enough for most of us, then it is good enough for the Society. So Happy 50th Birthday to the Streatham Society which will be celebrating its half century on 26th March 2024!

JWB

NEW PUBLICATIONS

INSPIRATIONAL WOMEN OF LAMBETH *Compiled by Jenni Bowley, Chris Everett, Jenny Rossiter & Elaine Wein. Price £12.99*
Published by Lambeth Tour Guides Association www.lambethtourguides.org



The women of Lambeth have been trail-blazers, pioneers and occasionally notorious from the mediaeval period to the 21st century. They include writers, those in science and medicine, entertainment, community activists, social reform and politics.

There are mountaineers, artists, architects, actors, politicians, doctors, nurses, novelists, businesswomen and campaigners. All have lived, studied, worked or were buried in Lambeth.

This attractive card-backed, well-produced book has 144 pages which are packed with information and illustrations, and with a geographical index.

FURZEDOWN - A Short History *Martin Beaver Price £10*

Local history buff Martin Beaver has written a fascinating book on the history of Furzedown.

From empty fields in the 18thC to the thriving urban community it is today, the book covers historic events and local characters backed with stories and photographs.

Part 1 starts with the enormous late 19thC transformation. Part 2 looks at some changes since 1945, including Covid and Blossom the cow.

On sale at Furzedown Project (profits to this charity), Sprout Arts and Budgens, all in Moyser Road, Furzedown.

Contact: *beavermartin4949@gmail.com*

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The aim of the Streatham Society is to maintain and improve the quality of life for all who live and work in Streatham

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