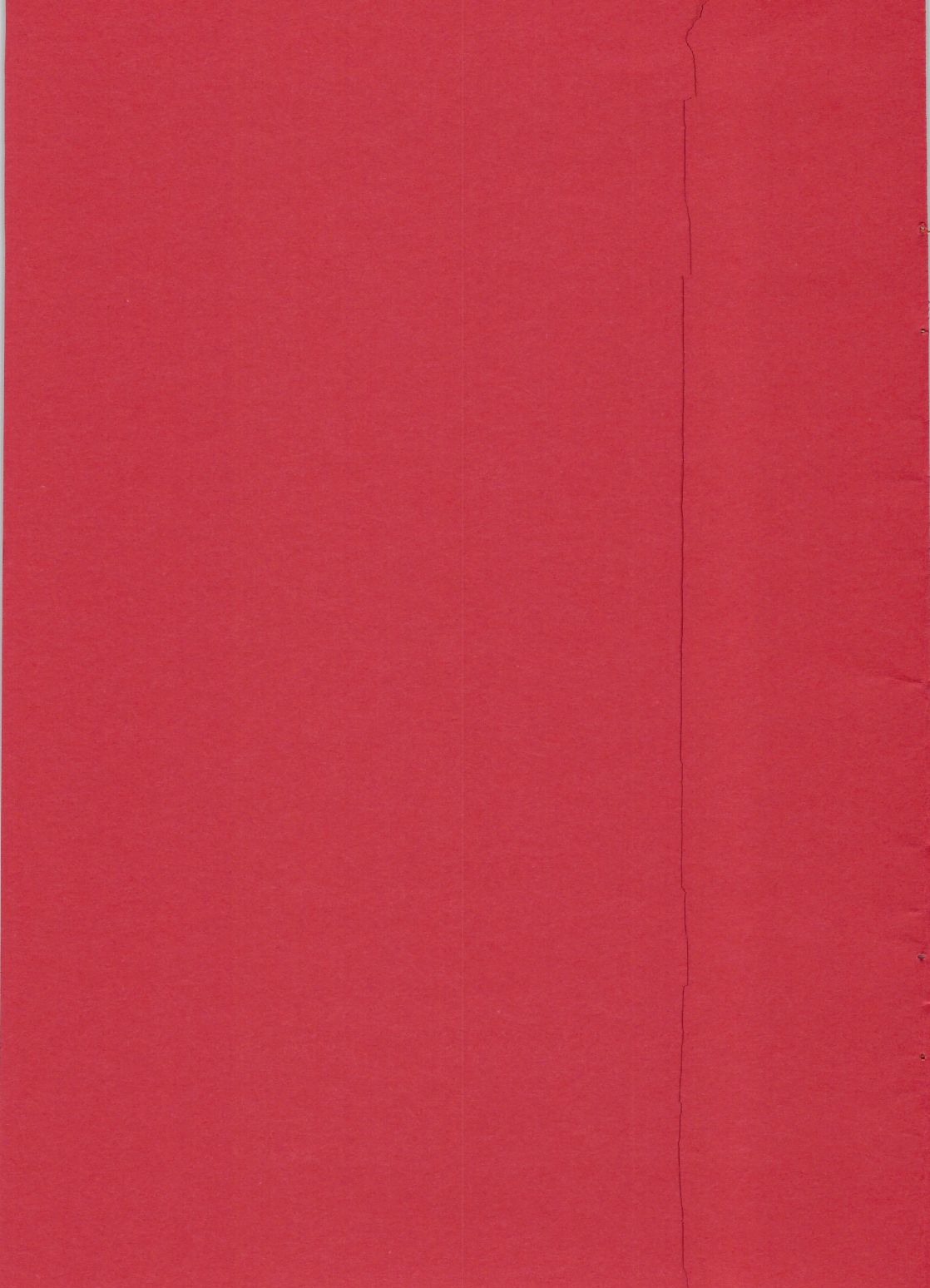


*Streatham  
Heritage Trail*



*Streatham  
Park*



# **STREATHAM HERITAGE TRAIL**

## **STREATHAM PARK**

by

Brian Bloice



The Streatham Society

First published in 2000 as Streatham Millennium Trail No. 8

This revised edition published in 2005 for

The Streatham Society  
219 Sternhold Avenue  
Streatham  
London SW2 4PG

by

Local History Publications  
316 Green Lane  
Streatham  
London SW16 3AS

Copyright © Text : Brian Bloice 2005

Copyright © Map & Layout : Local History Publications 2005

Copyright © Illustrations: The Streatham Society  
& Local History Publications 2005

All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced, stored in a retrieval system, or transmitted, in any form, or by any means, electronic, mechanical, photocopying, recording or otherwise, without the prior permission of the publisher and the copyright holders.

ISBN 1 873520 36 0

# **STREATHAM HERITAGE TRAIL**

## **STREATHAM PARK**

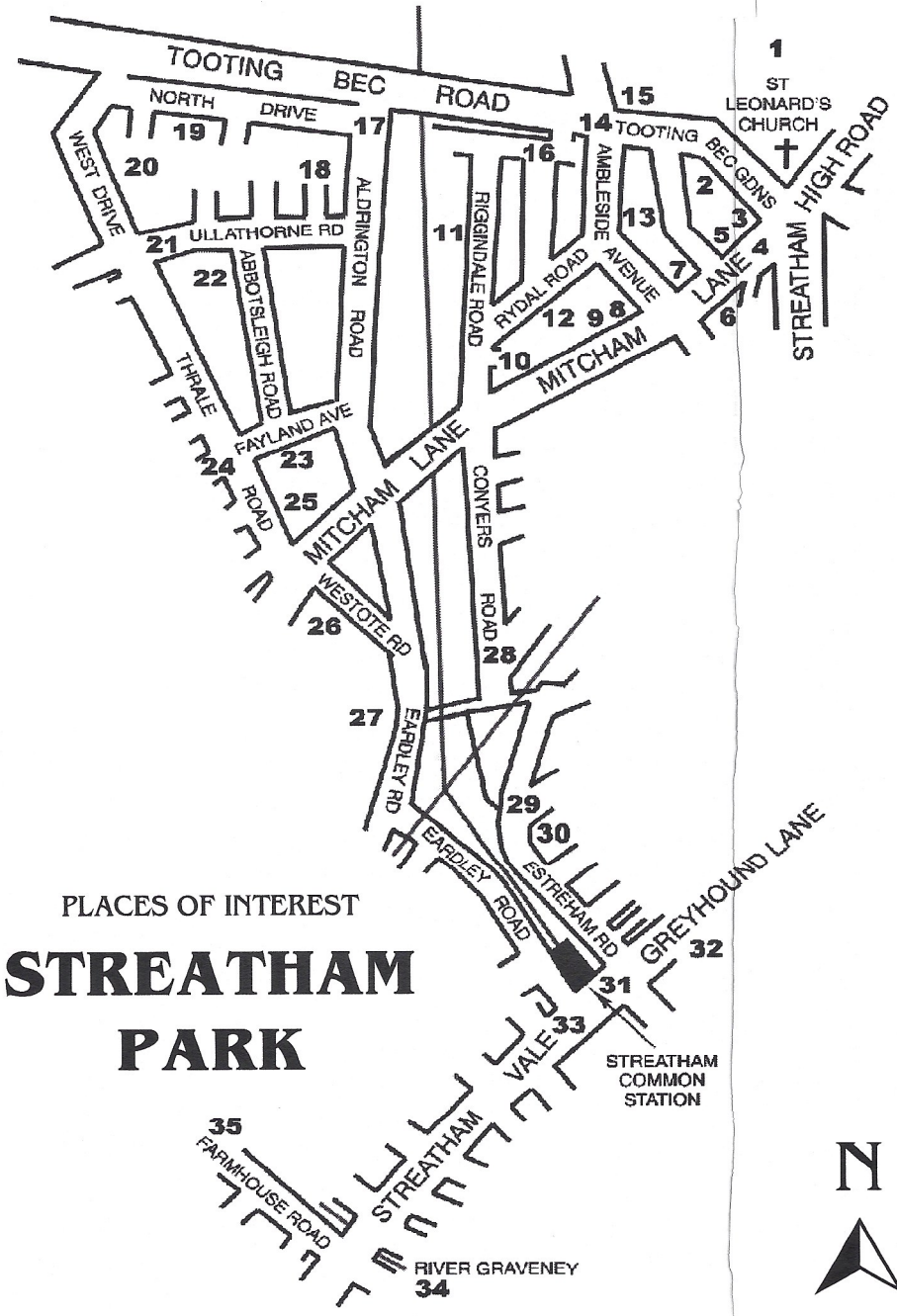
This walk is intended to illustrate the history and break-up of a large early 18th century parkland estate and the gradual emergence of the new late Victorian residential estate of detached, semi - detached and terraced houses. The walk is mainly within the boundary of the Streatham Park Estate.

Streatham Park was probably the most famous of Streatham's estates, situated between Mitcham Lane and Tooting Bec Common. This was the 18th century home of the Thrales, a family of wealthy Southwark brewers. The house was built and the estate laid out in 1739 by Ralph Thrale on the site of a medieval house called Moorfields. Part of the nearby common land was enclosed to lay out the estate. Ralph and his son Henry, who succeeded to the estate on Ralph's death in 1758, were both members of parliament for Southwark.

It was at Streatham Park that Henry Thrale, Ralph's son, and Henry's wife Hester, entertained Dr. Samuel Johnson, who, between 1766-1782, often spent the middle part of the week living at Streatham Park. It was also here that Henry and Hester raised 12 children although only four daughters survived into adulthood. Henry died in 1781 and in 1784 Hester married Gabriel Piozzi, an Italian Roman Catholic singing teacher, an event not received well by her family and London Society. They had a house in London and Hester wished to keep up the family estate in Wales. Streatham Park was now proving expensive to run and maintain and from 1782 a series of tenants leased the



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**



PLACES OF INTEREST

# STREATHAM PARK

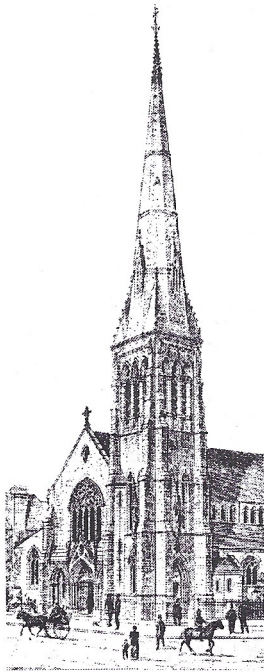
STREATHAM  
COMMON  
STATION



property; the first being Earl Shelburne, the Whig prime minister. The Piozzis had a new house built in Wales in 1795. In 1809 Gabriel Piozzi died and the burden of keeping up the several houses was now even greater. In 1816 the contents of Streatham Park were auctioned and Hester gave up her life interest in the house and leased it to a Mr Elliot, a ropemaker. Hester died in 1821 and the house and estate passed to her four daughters. It was then sold in 1825 by the three surviving daughters.

The main owner after this was George Phillips who either lived in or let the house between 1840 and 1863, when the house was demolished. The house and grounds were sold for development and a number of residential roads were laid out through the estate. The London, Brighton and South Coast Railway had split the estate into two in 1862, and by 1868 a small number of buildings had appeared on the land. Thrale House was built to the east of the railway and Streatham Park Villas to the West, all fronting onto Mitcham Lane. The subsequent development differs on either side of the railway. Today, Thrale Road and the Thrale Almshouses in Polworth Road, Streatham, perpetuate the memory of the family whose hospitality brought many of the most talented people of late 18th century England to Streatham Park.

**1. ST LEONARD'S CHURCH** The trail starts at the ancient parish church of St Leonard, the only extant church in Streatham when the Thrales came to the parish in 1739. The Thrales attended the church and members of the family were buried within the church. They were reburied in the crypt when it was constructed in 1831. Monuments to the Thrale family can be found inside the church, and in the crypt are the reburied coffins of Hester Maria Salusbury, died 1771, (Hester's mother), Henry Thrale, died 1781, Cecilia Margareta Mostyn, died 1857 (married daughter), Sophia Merrick Hoare, died 1824, (married daughter), and master Henry Salusbury Thrale, died 1776, (young son). Other members of the family may also have been buried here.



*Church  
of the  
English  
Martyrs  
1893*

**2. ST MARY'S CONVENT** The convent marks the site of Russell House a large mid-Seventeenth century house owned by Lord William Russell (a member of the Bedford family). The grounds of the house extended as far as Mitcham Lane. The house was later owned by the Kymer family on the break-up of the ancient Manor of Streatham and Tooting Bec. In 1872 the house became a home for "discharged female prisoners" who were employed in a laundry attached to the house. In 1886 the house was purchased by Robert Measures who presented it to the Catholic Church. Robert H Measures was a wealthy ironmaster who had, since 1881, lived nearby in a large house called Woodlands in Tooting Bec Gardens. Russell House became St Mary's Convent and a home for distressed females run by the Poor

Servants of the Mother of God. A room was converted into a chapel and thus the Roman Catholic Church was re-established in Streatham after a break of 336 years. Russell House was replaced with the present building in 1932 which now serves as a retirement home for the elderly of both sexes.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

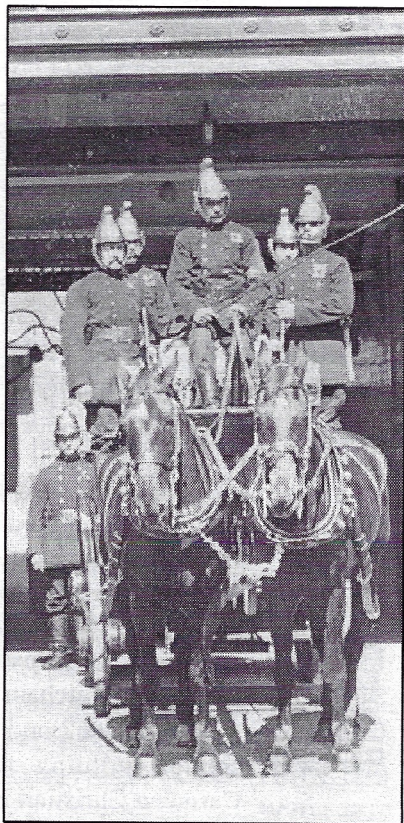
**3. CHURCH OF THE ENGLISH MARTYRS** This Roman Catholic Church was built on the land donated by Robert Measures. The church was designed by A E Purdie and built both by Hills Brothers of Streatham and Lorden and Sons of Tooting Bec. The foundation stone was laid by the Bishop of Southwark on 4th May 1892. The spire towers 136ft 9ins above the street, making it 9ft taller than that of the neighbouring parish church of St. Leonard's. Busts of the Measures family can be found carved in stone alongside the altar.



The building to the right of the church tower, in Tooting Bec Gardens, does not form part of the church but is a cleverly disguised electricity sub-station.

**4. MITCHAM LANE** is one of the ancient trackways of the parish that linked Streatham with Mitcham. In the 16th century James Wilford, a Master of the Merchant Taylors' Company, paid for the road to be improved and his son, John, also a Master of the Company, left a legacy in his will, dated 4th February 1550, to maintain the highway in memory of his father.

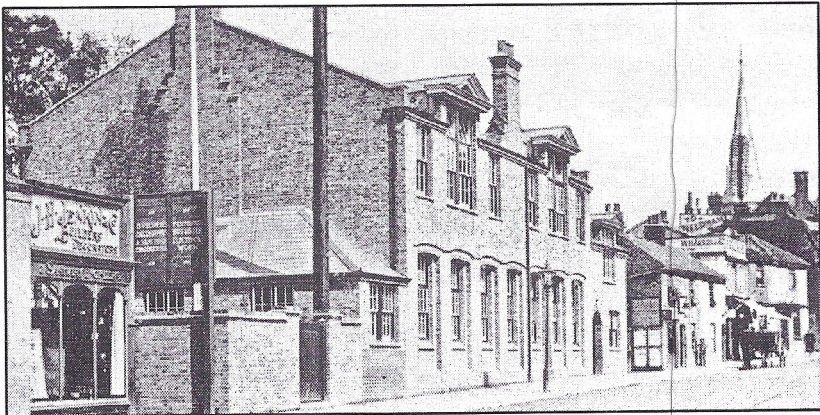
**5. SOUTH LONDON ISLAMIC CENTRE** occupies the old Streatham Fire Station, which was opened in December 1903. Prior to this the fire engine was housed at No. 45 Mitcham Lane, part of which building still survives today. The opening ceremony for the new station was interrupted by the Streatham Brigade's first emergency call from their new premises which was to a fire at 149 New Park Road, leaving the Chairman of the London County Council Fire Brigade Committee to declare an empty station open! The station closed in May 1971 and the building is now the South London Islamic Centre. Granville House originally stood on this site which was occupied by Streatham Grammar School until 1898 when it moved to 40 Mitcham Lane (see No. 9).



*Streatham Fire Brigade c1904*

**6. THE BETHEL TEMPLE** was originally used as a chapel by the Plymouth Brethren, whose Sunday services here at the turn of the 20th century attracted around 80 worshippers. Before the Second World War

*St Leonard's School, Mitcham Lane, c 1910* the Streatham National Spiritualist church was based here. The building was later rechristened the Kingdom Hall when used by the Jehovah's Witnesses and, since May 1995, has been used by the All Nations Christian Fellowship Apostolic Faith, who rechristened the building the Bethel Temple.



**7. TENDERLINKS CHILDCARE** occupies the former St Leonard's Infant School. From 1813 the children of the poor of the parish originally attended a school that was held in a hayloft over the stables at the back of the White Lion public house in Streatham High Road. In 1837 parishioners raised £1,000 to build a school in Mitcham Lane and this was subsequently rebuilt in 1868 and 1909. See the stone plaque on the school building for further details. In 1987 the Carmena Christian Nursery and Preparatory school was established in the Junior School which it now shares with the Elim Pentecostal Church.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

**8. CAMPBELL CLOSE** is laid out on the site of the Thrale Hall Hotel, which was built in the 1860s and stood on the western junction of Mitcham Lane and Ambleside Avenue. Originally called Thrale House, it was used as girls' school in the 1860s and then in the 1870s as a "hydropathic" centre before being converted into a hotel. It was named after the Thrales who lived at Streatham Park in the 18th century, although contrary to popular belief it had no connection with the family other than being built on part of their estate.

The Thrale Hall Hotel was one of the largest hotels in Streatham with ultimately over 60 bedrooms. In its heyday, in the opening decades of the 20th century, it provided a fashionable and popular venue for social events in Streatham. The hotel had a chequered career, and a number of its residents attempted or were successful in committing suicide, although this was not considered a comment on the level of service provided by the establishment. In 1980 the building was acquired by the Chinese Embassy who used it to accommodate their commercial and technical staff. The hotel was subsequently demolished and the site developed with housing.



*Thrale Hall Hotel c1910*

**9. ST LEONARD'S SCHOOL** In 1968 St Leonard's junior school moved to this site on which formerly stood Streatham Grammar School from 1902. The infant school transferred here in 1985.



**Methodist Church, Riggindale Road, c1910** **10. METHODIST CHURCH** was built in 1900 to the design of Frederick Wheeler and Speed. The church is in an Art Nouveau style and is said to have the widest barrel vaulted ceiling for its date. A stained glass window in the church was the gift of R. W. Essex of Dixcot, 8 North Drive (see No 19) and is in memory of members of his family. The church originally met in the adjoining hall which dates from 1887.

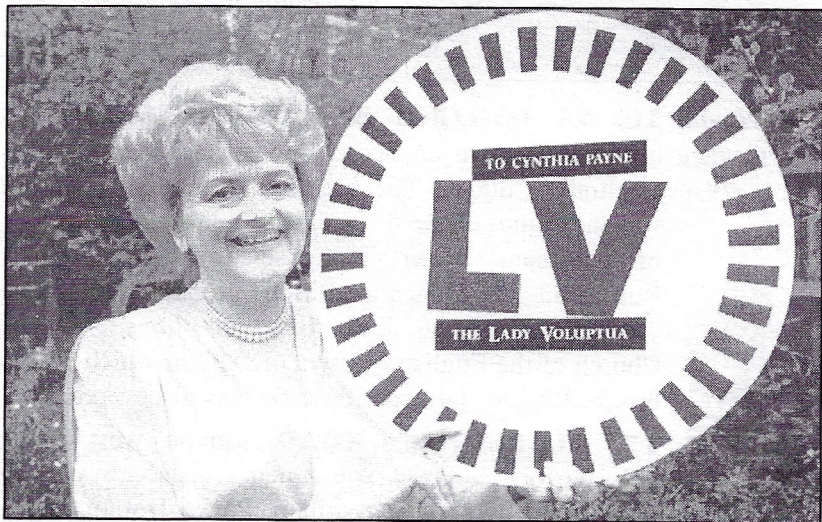
**11. RIGGINDALE ROAD** Most of the houses in this road date from the early 1880s. At No. 88 lived Sgt. Mjr Philip Kearns who fought with the 89th Regiment of Foot at Sebastopol in the Crimean War and received a special medal from the Sultan of Turkey. His son, Col. Kearns, head of the Army Service Corps, was macebearer for the City of London. Note one of the last remaining Victorian post-boxes in Streatham with VR initials outside No. 33. The roads to the east of the railway were at one time referred as being on the Woodlands Estate.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

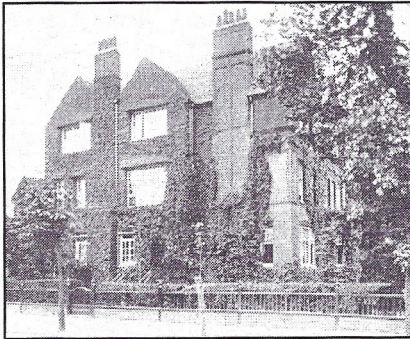
**12. RYDAL ROAD** is on the eastern boundary of the new Streatham Park estate developed in the 1880s. Much of the housing in this area and the adjacent Woodlands estate is thought to have been designed by the architect Frederick Wheeler who lived at No. 7. Frederick Wheeler designed many buildings in Streatham in the 1880s, including an addition to Thrale Hall, Sussex House School and the buildings on the High Road known as the Broadway and the Triangle. L. G. Sharp, a leading classical musicians' and singers' agent, who represented Dame Nellie Melba, lived at No. 14.

**13. AMBLESIDE AVENUE** This road was laid out in 1879. That part between Mitcham Lane and Gleneagle Road was originally known as Inverleith Avenue until 1905. The road is named after Ambleside, a small town and holiday centre in the Lake District, 4 miles north west of Windermere. This is one of a series of local roads named after locations in the Lake District and Lancashire, such as Thirlmere, Ribblesdale, Rydal and Penwortham Roads. The road marks the eastern boundary of Streatham Park. A well-known resident of this road is Streatham's 'femme celebre' Cynthia Payne.



*Cynthia Payne*

**14. TOOTING BEC GARDENS** is part of an ancient route linking Streatham with Upper Tooting (Tooting Bec). In 1440 the route is referred to as Crosweye, and, during the 19th century it was commonly known as Long Road or Streatham Lane, and later as Tooting Bec Road. The name Tooting Bec Gardens was applied in 1881 to that part of the road lying opposite the eastern end of the Common to Streatham High Road. The adjacent part of Tooting Common lay in the parish of Streatham and on some early maps is shown as a second Streatham Common



**15. BISHOP'S HOUSE, 38 TOOTING BEC GARDENS**

Originally known as Woodmuir, this house was built in 1906 on part of the garden of a large mansion called Wood Lodge. It became the home of the Bishop of Southwark when Dr Mervyn Stockwood moved here in 1960.

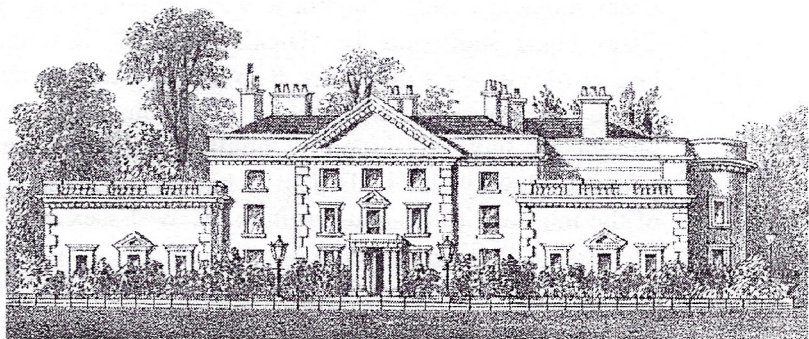
**Cheltonia College** **16. 45 TOOTING BEC GARDENS** This was originally known as Sussex House and then later as Cheltonia College. The headmaster Frederick Arnold was the author of the first published substantive history of Streatham. When the house was being built, a Roman ditch was unearthed in the grounds. This was a continuation of the ditch found on the site of the Church of the English Martyrs in 1892 in which a little bronze Roman statuette of Venus was discovered.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

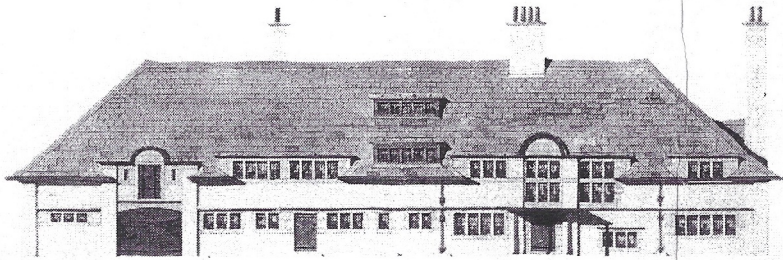
**17. ALDRINGTON ROAD** Moving west of the railway this and the subsequent roads are on the remaining part of Streatham Park. Documentary evidence shows that, apart from a few houses in

Ullathorne Road, the majority were built in the late 1880s or in the early 1890s. There is some evidence also that the builders were the George Barnes building firm. Aldrington Road was laid out in 1878 and formerly comprised a number of large detached houses in one of which Arthur Wates, the co-founder of the Norbury-based building company, lived. The area was badly bombed in the Second World War and the street is now occupied by a number of blocks of flats. Susanna Frazer celebrated her 105th birthday at the Radclyffe Old Folks Home here in 1978. Dot King is also a resident of this road; she was awarded the British Empire Medal by Margaret Thatcher in 1991 for her 15 years' service at Downing Street. The Lodge to Streatham Park stood on the east corner of Aldrington Road with Tooting Bec Road.



*Streatham Park*

**18. 19 COLSON WAY** carries a Streatham Society plaque, erected in 1986, to commemorate the site of the Thrale's home at Streatham Park. This house marks the location of the west wing of the Thrale's mansion where Dr Johnson slept and where the Library was located. In 1803 the estate was described as consisting of the house, offices, stables, coach houses, farm buildings, yards, walled gardens, pleasure grounds, temples, teahouse and park. Streatham Park was sold in 1863, the Thrale mansion was demolished, and the new Streatham Park Estate laid out in the grounds. The present council estate was built in the 1950s.



**Dixcot, No. 8 North Drive** 19. **8 NORTH DRIVE** The house was called Dixcot by the owner Richard W. Essex, who commissioned the architect Charles Voysey to design the house in 1897. It appears that, due to a disagreement, the work was executed by Walter Cave and completed in 1901. R.W. Essex moved in 1902. The house was named Dixcot by Essex being shorthand for "Dick's Cottage". It is the largest of Voysey's buildings. R. W. Essex was owner of the Essex Wallpaper Company, for whom Voysey is known to have designed a number of wallpaper patterns. Voysey also is thought to have designed many of the interior fittings and furniture. R. W. Essex was a Member of Parliament and took a keen interest in local affairs. After he was awarded a knighthood in 1913 he was known as Sir Walter Essex. He died in 1941. After the war the house became a LCC children's home but has now returned to a private residence



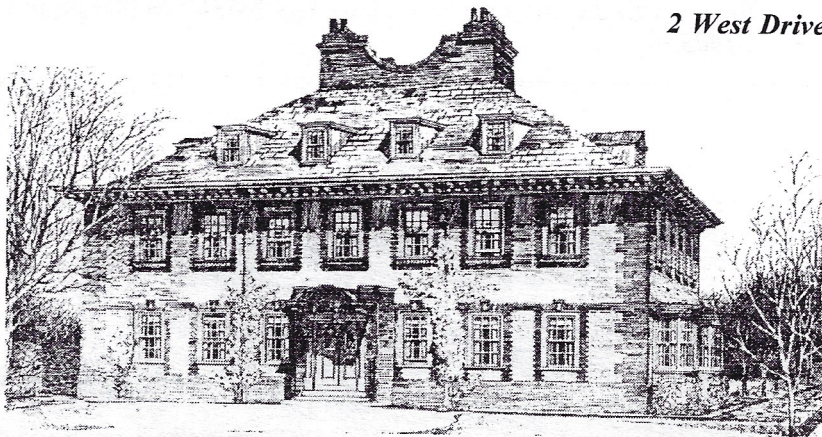
**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

**20. WEST DRIVE** This was formerly a private road which displayed a large notice stating "Private carriage drive - No through passage allowed." No. 2 is a fine mansion in a neo-Georgian style, designed by the architect Leonard Stokes in 1899 for Stokes' brother Philip Stokes, a city barrister. Maids, nannies, a governess and gardeners supported the Stokes' family of eight children. The family moved away in 1913. Leonard Stokes, as well as neo-Georgian mansions, was also responsible for designing Roman Catholic



churches, over 20 telephone exchanges and Chelsea town hall. He was president of the Royal Institute of British Architecture from 1910 to 1912. In this corner of the 18th century Streatham Park Estate was situated the lake and kitchen gardens. The adjacent common lay in the parish of Tooting and was known as Tooting Graveney Common.

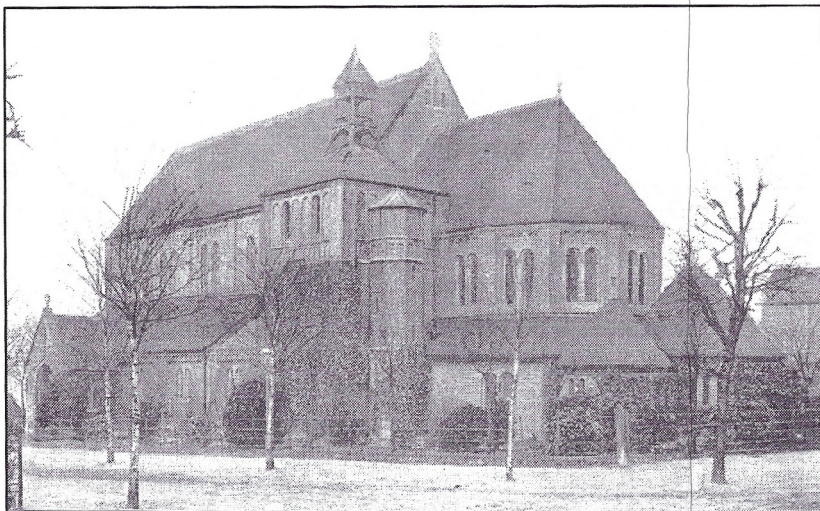
*2 West Drive*



**21. ULLATHORNE ROAD** The road was laid out on the new Streatham Park Estate in 1878. The large Victorian houses that once fronted the northern side of this road were demolished in the 1950s when Pringle Gardens and Colson Way were developed with council housing. On the site of Nos. 1-3 Pringle Gardens and Nos. 19 and 21 Ullathorne Road used to stand a large house called the Lynches. This used to be the home of Charles Derry, of Derry and Tom's department store fame, who lived here from around 1906 to c1913. Thomas Wallis, a noted industrial architect lived here briefly about 1925. Nos. 23 and 25 Ullathorne Road stand on the site of a house called Yaverland, which, from the mid 1920s to the early 1930s, was the home of Ernest and Caroline Soper and their family. One of their sons was Donald Soper, the famous Methodist preacher, who was born in Knoll Road, Wandsworth, in 1903. He was made a life peer in 1965. Lord Soper died on 22nd December 1998 aged 95.

**22. ABBOTSLEIGH ROAD** Abbotsleigh Road was laid out in 1904 and was named to commemorate the Abbot of the Abbey of Bec in Normandy, France, which owned the Manors of Tooting Bec and Streatham. Jack Dale, the British and European middleweight Wrestling champion, lived at No 15A. During the war he served with the Streatham Auxiliary Fire Service before joining the army.

*St Alban's  
Church  
c1905*



**23. FAYLAND AVENUE** Fayland Avenue dates from 1904. St. Alban's Church used to stand on the northern junction with Aldrington Road. It was designed by E H Martineau in a Byzantine style and was consecrated in 1887. The roof was badly damaged in the Second World War, and further destruction was caused by a fire in 1947. As a consequence the church was not reopened until 1949. The building was subsequently declared a dangerous structure and was demolished in 1984. A new church centre was subsequently erected on the site of the old parish hall at the southern junction of Pretoria and Thrale Roads.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

**24. THRALE ROAD** Previously called Green Lane, the road represents the western boundary of the large estate owned by the Thrale family. In its heyday in the mid 18th century many of London's high society would have been seen perambulating in the grounds of the estate. Joshua Reynolds, Oliver Goldsmith, David Garrick, Fanny Burney and James Boswell all visited Streatham Park. They were all commemorated in a series of paintings by J Reynolds commissioned by Henry Thrale and known as the Streatham Portraits. Houses appear along the road from the late 1880s.



*Streatham Park Tavern  
c1920*

also known as the Streatham Park Tavern. The property was originally run as a beer shop and did not obtain a "full" licence until 1884. The original pub was rebuilt in the 1930s in mock Tudor style, and following a major refurbishment in 1992, was renamed The Park Tavern. The pub was closed in 2001, refurbished, and reopened in the autumn of 2003 as the Samuel Johnson Public House.

**25. SAMUEL JOHNSON PUBLIC HOUSE**

This building started life as a large house on the eastern junction of Mitcham Lane and Thrale Road. It is reputed to have been built by a wealthy farmer who came to London seeking a sound investment for his savings. However, the house remained untenanted for several years until it caught the eye of William Harding, a Penge publican, who transformed it into the Streatham Park Hotel,



*Samuel Johnson*

**26. WESTCOTE ROAD** This road dates from 1868 and was formerly known as Thrale Road until July 1902, when that part of Thrale Road to the east of Mitcham Lane was renamed Westcote Road in honour of Lord Westcote, who was said to have been a frequent visitor to the home of the Thrales at Streatham Park. In 1888 the names of three small terraces of houses known as Manor Park Villas, Manor Park Cottages and Oak Villas, which stood at the eastern end of the road, were abolished and renumbered to form the odd numbered houses Nos. 1-27 in the street. A huge bonfire was built here on VE night and a street party was held attended

*Revd Stenton Eardley* by local residents dressed in red, white and blue. Note the dated buildings 1898 & 1901 at the Mitcham Lane junction of the road.



**27. EARDLEY ROAD** was originally a trackway across open farmland. It was named in honour of the Revd Stenton Eardley, the first vicar of Immanuel Church, who served the parish from 1854 until his death in 1883. The road contains typical late Victorian terraced housing.

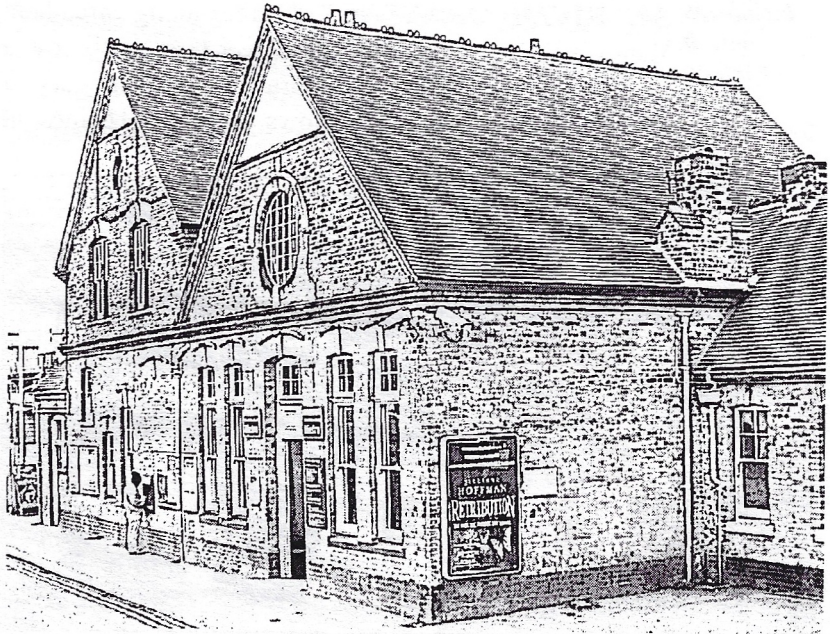
**28. CONYERS ROAD** This road dates from 1867. Alongside the railway line is the 'Moorish temple' styled Waterworks built in 1888 for the Southwark and Vauxhall Water Company. It was built over a deep artesian well to supplement the supply of water from the Thames and is now used as a control and pumping station on the Thames Water Company's ring main.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

**29. ESTREHAM ROAD** This road was originally an extension of Ellison Road and was renamed in 1911. Estreham is the name by which Streatham is recorded in the Domesday survey of 1086.

**30. HYDERI ISLAMIC CENTRE** The building was constructed as a drill hall and HQ for Streatham's Territorial Army unit, which formed 'A' Company of the 5th East Surrey Regiment. In 1958 the building became an Orthodox Jewish Synagogue. Since 1983 it has been used by local Muslims as the Hyderi Islamic Centre.



*Streatham Common Station*

**31. STREATHAM COMMON RAILWAY STATION** The railway line was laid down by the London, Brighton and South Coast Railway Company in 1862. Streatham Common Station was opened in 1868 as Greyhound Lane Station, later renamed Streatham Common. The brick buildings of the station date from 1902.

**32. GREYHOUND LANE** This ancient way previously led into farmland from Streatham High Road; its extension beyond the railway bridge was known as Lonesome, now called Streatham Vale.

*No 130  
Streatham  
Vale one  
of the  
buildings  
which  
formed  
part of  
Greyhound  
Farm*

**33. STREATHAM VALE** Beyond the railway bridge is the present day Streatham Vale Estate built on either side of the road called Streatham Vale since 1924. The builders, Wates, built the estate on open farmland between 1925 and 1930, one of their largest estates.

**34. RIVER GRAVENEY** Further along Streatham Vale Road, it is crossed by the River Graveney, now a storm relief sewer. The River Graveney is a tributary of the River Wandle, which flows into the Thames at Wandsworth Town.



**35. FARMHOUSE ROAD** Alongside the River Graveney is Farmhouse Road, which contains the remaining buildings of the later Greyhound Farm. The farm moved here about 1872 to replace earlier farm buildings situated at the Streatham High Road end of Greyhound Lane when they were sold for development. The remaining buildings of an uncertain date may be developed in the near future (2005).



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAIL**

We end the Heritage Trail with a reminder of the open farmland that the majority of Streatham was up to the beginning of the 18th century.



**STREATHAM  
HERITAGE  
TRAILS**

This is one of a series of Heritage Trails published by the Streatham Society. For details of other titles in the series, or other publications published by the Society contact:

The Streatham Society  
219 Sternhold Avenue  
Streatham  
London SW2 4PG  
Tel: 020 8674 0459

Email: [info@streathamsociety.org.uk](mailto:info@streathamsociety.org.uk)  
Web-site: <http://www.streathamsociety.org.uk>



## **THE STREATHAM SOCIETY**

The Streatham Society was founded in 1974. Its aim is to maintain and improve the quality of life for all who live and work in Streatham. It publishes a bi-monthly newsletter and holds regular meetings on the third Monday of each month at 8pm at Woodlawns, 16 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, SW16. Membership is open to all who agree with the aims of the society.

## **LOCAL HISTORY GROUP**

The Local History Group of the Streatham Society holds monthly meetings on the first Monday of the month at 8pm at Woodlawns, 16 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, SW16 and a warm welcome is extended to all who are interested in the history and heritage of Streatham.

For further details concerning membership of the Streatham Society and the activities and programme of the Local History Group contact:

Brian Bloice  
220 Woodmansterne Road  
Streatham SW16 5UA  
Tel: 020 8764 8314  
Email: [brianbloice@compuserve.com](mailto:brianbloice@compuserve.com)

ISBN 1 873520 36 0