

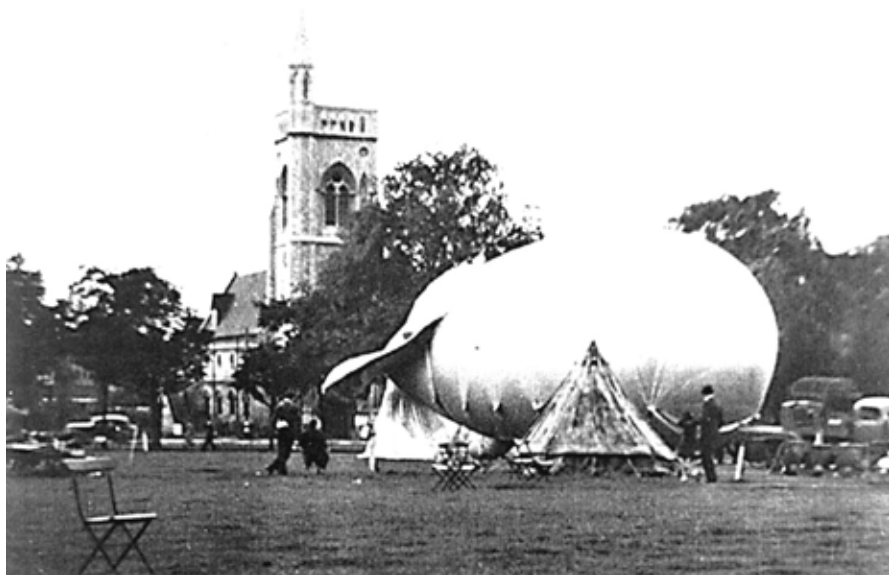


# STREATHAM SOCIETY NEWS

Published quarterly

No. 242 Autumn 2020

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**Barrage Balloon on Streatham Common**

*(See p.24)*

**\*\*YOUR 2020 MEMBERSHIP IS VALID FOR 2021\*\***

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**This issue is dedicated to our older (age 70+) readers**

**KEEP CALM AND CARRY ON!**

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## STREATHAM SOCIETY MEETINGS & EVENTS

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**ALL ‘LIVE’ SOCIETY MEETINGS AND EVENTS ARE CANCELLED  
UNTIL FURTHER NOTICE**

**Please check with our website, public Facebook page or social media for  
further news if government restrictions are lifted.**

**Don’t forget to supply Mark Bery with your email address to add to our  
contacts list.**

### **Monday Zoom talks:**

Nov 16 **History of the Matchgirls’ Strike and my Grandfather’s role in it**  
7.30pm Sam Johnson

Dec 14 **Captain Douglas Page RAMC in North Russia: Further tales of a**  
7.30pm **First World War Medical Officer**  
Ray Coggin

Jan 18th **Great Exhibition and Great Expectations: the everyday and the**  
7.30pm **unexpected at the Crystal Place from 1851 to the present day**  
Philip Emery

These talks will be advertised by email, our website and social media. See p.33  
for instruction to join.

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*This edition of the ‘Streatham Society News’ is dedicated to the Covid  
‘vulnerable’ age group (70+). As usual, without their articles and contributions  
there would be little content. This is particularly so with this issue. Thank you.*

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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.  
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## STREATHAM ROUND AND ABOUT

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### FROM STREATHAM VALE TO THE USA AND SCOTLAND

*I recently received the following email from **Nina Hallett**, a long-time resident of the USA, with essays remembering her time living in Streatham Vale.*



‘I was born at 103a Streatham Vale in April 1938, in the flat above Hearn’s Butchers. It is now a Polish Deli (Plus above). I left there just before my 22nd birthday, moving to Seattle, Washington, USA. My parents were Albert Victor (‘Vic’) Palmer and Dorothy Woodcock Palmer. Vic was assistant to George Watts, the Chemist at 99 Streatham Vale (now a Polish bistro). He served in the Navy and later he worked as a carpet salesman and a night-time international telephone operator. 101 was a fishmonger (now Sizzling Plaice); 105 was an Off Licence (now the Wine Leaf); 107 was the Co-op, which was where Arthur and Joy Woodcock (my mother’s brother and his wife) and my cousin Carol lived in the flat above.’

*Then followed a wealth of fascinating emails between Nina and her friend **Jean Renwick**, from Scotland. These two lively 82-yr-olds provided me with so much entertainment and inspiration that I am delighted to publish them. Fortunately, in the absence of other news to report, there is plenty of space.*

*We publish memories of Streatham, we read of the famous people who lived here but Nina tells something of what happened next to ‘ordinary’ people. In these difficult times her contributions are particularly welcome. I hope you enjoy them as much as I did.*

*Nina would love to hear from others who share similar memories.*

**JH**

## Flashbacks



*Albert Victor (Vic) Palmer  
known to his shipmates  
as 'Peddler' (Nina's father)*

I call them that because sometimes they are real memories and sometimes just a fast recognition of what happened, if that makes any sense at all. My first memory is of standing at the top of a steep and darkened stairway. Nothing else. No sounds. No lights reflecting on anything, from anywhere. When I was a teenager, I learned that I was 18 months old at that time, which goes against all modern science. Researchers would label it as fictional memory, learned from someone at a later date. Be that as it may, I related this experience to my parents who explained the memory.

My parents had friends in Germany and were actually in Germany, in August of 1939. While they were away, I was being cared for by my uncle and aunt who lived in a flat above the pharmacy that they owned and operated. My parents' friends, and the

whole village, urged my parents to go home because there was going to be a war. Indeed, Britain declared war on Germany on September 3, 1939, just two weeks after my parents' return. Since I only stayed with that uncle and aunt once, and there was no steep and dark stairway where I lived, it would seem that it was, indeed, a memory rather than a fictional memory.

I began school (*Granton Road*) in 1943, in the middle of WWII. I have a vivid memory of my mother's friend coming to the school one day to take me to her house after a bombing raid. We had to pass the alley which provided access to our flat above the butcher's shop. I must have seen the rubble and pulled away and ran to our garden gate, just in time to see my mother in our doorway. She was covered in black soot and two walls of our flat had been blown out. For some time after that, I can remember having to wear a raincoat and take an umbrella with me whenever I needed to use the bathroom (it rains a lot in London). We had a tarp hanging from the roof to replace the outside wall. I think the researchers would have to agree that that was an actual memory. I now teach a 4<sup>th</sup> grade class about Bainbridge history and sometimes tell the children bits of my own history. One young man still laughs when he sees me. Apparently, the raincoat picture really got to him.

School provided many memories. In particular I remember Friday mornings of later years in primary school. Every Friday we had to undergo a General Knowledge test. We were expected to listen to the radio, or read a newspaper



*Nina in the Rookery with her parents, Dorothy and Vic Palmer*

during the week, and were then tested on what were considered important topics of the week. We enjoyed it. I was recently thinking about that school and thought it would be good to have a photo if one existed. To my absolute amazement, Granton Primary School has a website. I was so excited I emailed the school to see if they have any of the old photos.

There were some days when we couldn't go to school because of the bombing. My mother and I and our next-door neighbor and her daughter once spent four days in a shelter. It was actually the brick storage shed for a little grocery store. We slept there for a few nights. I remember sitting in the doorway, holding out a little tin cup. My dad, when he came home on leave from the Navy, had brought some bars of ship's chocolate. It was as hard as concrete and we used a hammer to break pieces off. I then put a piece in the tin cup and held it out in the rain, hoping it would melt the chocolate into a drinkable cocoa. Needless to say, it didn't work. And did I tell you it rains a lot in London?

On thinking back over the years, it's strange the things you remember and those that you don't.

**Nina Hallett (née Palmer, then Westrum)**

*Nina adds:* 'After my father was called up in 1943, my mother took over his job so that he'd have a job to come home to. An old man 'Uncle Len' farmed our allotment with his and provided us with the fruits of his labors.'

## A Tree

Living in the Pacific Northwest is like a dream. We are surrounded by the incredible beauty of towering evergreens, multi-colored deciduous trees, flower and berry producing undergrowth, ocean and rivers, and an abundance of wild-life and birds. Paradise, indeed.

Living in the suburbs of London in the 1940s and 50s, was not so much! My parents and I lived in a small, second story flat of a small shopping strip in South London. Below us was the local butcher shop. We were actually considered to be lucky because we had a tiny yard. In order to reach our flat, you entered a gate from an alley. This opened to a narrow concrete path to a wooden staircase, which led up to what we euphemistically referred to as our 'front door', but was actually the entrance to our kitchen. On the way to the staircase, you passed what we always called our 'garden'. This term does not refer to a vegetable area, but rather to a place of green grass and flowers. My mother nurtured roses and Montbretia (aka Crocosmia), amongst others. And in the heat of the summer, we could even sit there to enjoy the sun, the flowers and the bees.

One day, I know not why, she planted something smack in the middle of the grass. So we, including the cat, had to be careful not to harm this intruder and invoke my mother's wrath. What was it? We couldn't believe it, but it was supposed to be an apple tree. It did grow, but super slowly and we continued to be careful around it; a skinny little thing that eventually sprouted a few branches and leaves. After a couple of years, it even boasted a few flowers, that came and went.

My uncle (my mother's brother), his wife and daughter also lived in a flat above a grocery store in the same shopping strip. They, however, did not have the luxury of a garden. In summer, they could sit out on a concrete patio (the roof of the store below) to enjoy the weather, but they did not have the grass and flowers. My cousin and I would often spend time together in our garden, and running back and forth between our flats. I was six years older than Carol, but we were always good friends.

Amazingly, one year the apple blossoms actually morphed into fledgling apples. Most of them didn't have the stamina to maintain their hold on life, and finally littered the grass, when they were chewed up by the hand-pushed lawn mower. One, however, hung on and actually started to grow and we watched the progress with bated breath. One day Carol came over to play and we spent our time in the garden. Before we knew, or recognized, what was happening, a hand went up and plucked the apple off the tree. Carol was very pleased with herself while I, and the world, froze in horror. She had picked my mother's first apple from her tiny tree, her carefully watched apple. My mother was horrified but was extremely calm and did not attempt to kill either one of us girls. But it was something she never forgot, and neither did we.

There are no apple trees in my yard, but I do have a non-fruiting crabapple tree that is glorious when in bloom. It is still hard for me to eat and enjoy apples.

[I'm wondering if the tree is still in existence?! I have photos taken in the garden at various time. Also my mom with me and the cat, who lived to be 17 after disappearing when a bomb fell in the allotments behind us. He came home about 3 days later – with all his fur blown off.] **NH**



**Photos:**

1. Hearn's back door and Nina in the Palmers' garden
2. Nina and her mother with Tiddles the cat in the alley next to the allotment fence
3. The well-kept alley today with 103a on the left. The shops have extended at the back into the yards and added high security fences upon which several residents have attached floral displays and share a secure open space on the right. Much of the lower allotment area, with several mature fruit trees, seems overgrown.



## Schooldays - Two Little Girls

**1947 VE Day Celebration**  
 Woodmansterne Road School  
 Grounds - Fancy Dress  
**Nina (7) & Jean,**  
 front row 2nd + 3rd from rt  
 Probably organised by the SVPOA



2nd row (from left):  
**Jean Leonard, Nina Palmer,**  
 Patricia Doughty, Pauline Carter (rt)  
 Top: Twin sisters, born in India  
 Also: Anne Palister (Seymour),  
 Ruby Thompson, June Press,  
 Bruna Vennazza, Peter Green

**Granton Road School**  
 11-yr-old leavers  
 June/July 1949

Top row: Brian Gomm (rt)  
 2nd: Busby Blows (lt), Beryl Harris



2nd row: Doreen (lt)  
 3rd: Joan Ward (2nd lt),  
 Alfie Smith (2nd rt)



## GRANTON ROAD SCHOOL

**Teachers - Mrs Robertson:** Head Mistress. **Mr Milnethorpe;** **Miss Barnes:** taught the second year. She and her friend were both retired returners, I believe. Miss Barnes was tall and thin, probably in her sixties and wore brown chenille dresses with lace modesty bibs. She played the piano at assembly. Her friend took the 'littlies' class – sand, water and plasticine, but only if you could write your name and count. **Mrs Cant:** she was in the last classroom on the ground floor, next to the hall. **Mr Bental** and **Mr Sim:** both ex-RAF. Mr Sim (taught maths) was good at throwing chalk and the other one threw blackboard bumpers.

**Pupils in our year: Ruby Thomson:** married and went to Canada in 1957. **June Press:** her father was a Master Baker, and made the most fabulous cakes. **Bruna Venazza:** her father bought a cafe near the Tower of London, they moved just before we moved to High School. **Beryl Harris:** lived in Leonard Road, still in touch with her on Face Book. **Joan Ward:** also lived in Leonard Road, her father and two brothers all worked at Covent Garden Market. Lost touch with her round about 1970, when we moved, have tried to find her, but so far no luck. **Pauline Carter; Doreen ?; Peter Green; Alfie Smith; Brian Gomm;** no contact with any of them. There were a pair of twin girls who had been born in India, cannot remember their names. **Ann Palister:** she joined the school in 1948, her father had the paper shop on Streatham Vale (Cameron's), Ann married John Seymour who lived opposite Nina in Streatham Vale. Both John and Ann died several years ago; still in touch with one of their sons.

**Jean Renwick (née Leonard)**

## Memories

How does memory work? Why is it that two people, sharing the same experience, can remember entirely different things?

Scientists want us to believe that memories experienced before the age of three, are not true memories. They label them 'acquired memories'. In other words, those memories come from learned experiences from others, at a later date. Personally, I don't believe that is etched in stone. From my own experience, I am convinced memories can occur at an earlier date (see **Flashbacks**).

For me, the differences of shared memories are mystifying. I am still in contact with a girl (*Jean*) who was at primary school with me. We lived near each other and were friends out of the school environment. She married at age eighteen and I was her only bridesmaid. She lives in Roxburghshire, Scotland; I live in Western Washington, USA. Therefore, we tend not to see much of each other but we do keep in touch. And we recently had very differing memories related to our primary school.

I had been reminiscing about London during WWII, and being in school while the air raids were happening. I decided to see if I could find a photograph of the school on the internet. I did, but it's not the old brick school building I remem-



*Granton Primary School today*  
(Photo from their website)

ber, so I emailed my friend. She sent me several class photographs, that I didn't remember at all. I could find myself, her, and another friend, but that's all. My friend sent me the names of all the kids in those photos. That shocked me. How did she do that???? I can remember one boy, Michael, who contracted polio when he was about 13 or 14. We both remember that he was doing well, but then fell while riding his bike. He became paralyzed and died while

in an iron lung. But I couldn't identify him in any of those photos.

My parents, my friend's parents, and Michael's parents were friends for years. But during these photo connections, I learned something new. Apparently, all the parents partied together on New Year's Eve of 1937. And each woman was pregnant! Now that was obviously not a memory, nor even technically an acquired memory. But it was definitely something I had never known before. Somehow it makes parents almost human in a child's mind. But I surely would like to know how my friend still remembered all those names some seventy years later, while my memory remains a blank.

**NH**

### **More Memories - An Online Conversation**

I lived in Streatham Vale from 1941 until I was married in 1957. I attended Granton Road Primary School and then St Martin's in the Fields High School for Girls at Tulse Hill. I lived in Northumberland from 1973 until 1987. I was Jean Leonard until July 1957. I was born in Wandsworth and lived most of my life in and around Streatham. I have some pictures of my sister who attended Ensham Central School in the late 1930's. The photos are of the school pupils and some of my sister doing athletics. Ensham Central School was situated in Franciscan Road. My parents were living in Natal Road, in a house called Kingsmead when I was born.

I worked at the building of Torness Nuclear Power Station for the company which built the reactors. And cannot use a smart phone! We now live in the Scottish Borders.

The VE Day event was held at Woodmansterne Road School. The photo showed the children who took part in the fancy dress competition. The date on the photograph is the date written on by my mother, it was probably not held in 1945, as it was organised by the Streatham Vale Property Owners Association, as far as I am aware.

Nina and I were in the same class at Granton Road Primary School, there was only one class per year. I started in September 1942 and left in July 1949 after taking the 11+ in January 1949 and winning a scholarship to St Martin's in the Fields High School for Girls.

During the war two of the ground floor classrooms were lined with a brick skin, when the sirens went off, we were all taken to these rooms and sat cross-legged on the floor. The walls were covered in times tables. Most of our lessons during an air-raid were mental arithmetic, tables, and spelling. The playground was on the Granton Road side of the building as the playing fields had been turned into allotments.

**Jean**

My parents belonged to the Streatham Vale Sports and Social Club, and I'm sure Jean's parents did also. They both played darts and my mother was an avid tennis player. My dad often played bartender there.

The times at Granton Rd are the same for me, but Jean has a far better memory! I can remember one teacher, but right now I can't remember his name, who would turn from the blackboard to throw his chalk at whoever wasn't paying attention. FYI (*For Your Information*) chalk stings! And on Friday mornings, we always had a general knowledge quiz and were expected to have read newspapers or listened to the radio about current events. U.S. schools should discover this! I, too, won a scholarship and went to Streatham Hill and Clapham High School. For a small school, I believe Granton Rd did an excellent job on educating us, and am grateful.

**Nina**

Do you remember, Mr Milnethorpe? He died, falling in front of a train at Streatham Common Station. Miss Barnes and her friend always wore long frocks which were made of crepe with lace; they taught the 'littlies', and Miss Barnes played the piano for assembly. Mrs Robertson was head mistress. There were two men teachers, they had been aircrew and came to the school after the war. One of them was called Mr Bentall, one threw chalk, the other one threw blackboard bumpers. I think the teacher in the end classroom next to the hall was Miss Cant.

I remember the hall was used in the afternoons and evenings by local organisations, I used to go with Mother to 'Make do and Mend' classes, she used to take clothes apart and make them into something else. The social club was in Canmore Gardens and my sister played tennis with Nina's mum. On a Saturday evening there would be a raffle, and someone would play the piano. There were also whist drives and other exciting events, I cannot remember

We lived in Abercairn Road, and a doodle bug fell just beyond the end of our back garden. The salvage people came to the road and took all the tiles off our roof to patch our neighbours' and put a tarpaulin over our roof until a supply of tiles arrived. I have looked at the house recently on Google maps, and the house looks the same except one side of the front wall has been taken down to allow a car to be driven in.



*Bridesmaid Nina age 13*

My mother had to sell the house under a compulsory purchase order because the council were going to build a ring road behind the row of houses. Still waiting!!

Sorry if this is garble, but fingers cannot keep up with brain.  
**Jean**

I don't remember any of this about the school!!! I don't know how she does it, but Jean surely remembers everything that ever happened! One thing I do remember is being in London when the lights were turned back on. We weren't with our parents, and I'm sure we weren't allowed to be there on our own so I can only imagine Jean's sister was with us.

**Nina**

## Differences

The British and Americans technically speak the same language, but there are awkward differences. We both have exceptional education systems, but there are awkward differences. We freely use the same words, which can have awkward differences. You wonder where this is leading? Today is Veteran's Day and a lot is coming back to me, as it does every year.



*Nina age 21*

I consider myself a veteran. An aging female, I have never served in the British Armed Forces or those of the United States. But I still consider myself a veteran of WWII. I was born prior to September 3, 1939, the day Britain declared war on Germany, and therefore had to live my early life running (or being carried) to and from the bomb shelter. My first school years were spent constantly hiding under my desk. This is entirely incomprehensible to my American

family members and friends. And there is no way for me to accurately depict what I felt. And in all truth, I have never really tried just because it is so entirely foreign to anyone who has not experienced it. And some would question my use of the word 'veteran', which is Latin for 'old', or 'having long experience.' I consider survival from 1939 to 1945 as having long experience of WWII survival, and intend no disrespect to military veterans. My own father was a military veteran, having served in His Majesty's Submarine Service in the Pacific.

Education is another source of difference for me. I was in high school in Britain until age 18, which was nothing particularly unusual. At the end of grade school,

I took the exam known as the 11+ (so called because participants were 11 and a few months old when taking it), and passed with flying colors. This earned me a scholarship to a 'public' school. These schools were actually private schools and required money to attend. I was a 'scholarship' girl by virtue of my grade in taking the 11+ exam.

My father left school when he was 14 and ran away to sea as a cabin boy on a Cunard liner. My mother was a gifted pianist who was accepted into the Royal Academy of Music on a scholarship, but her father didn't tell her about the acceptance letter until years later. He felt that a woman's place was in the home. . . So, I felt I was doing well in the education scheme. Back in those days, going to University was not an automatic thing. Nowadays there are also colleges in Britain, making it easier to get degrees, but at that time you had to have either wealth or a brilliant mind to enter University.

Early on in life in the U.S., my first husband, a medical student, and I were invited to a Medical School reception. That, in and of itself, was awkward for me because I wasn't at all sure what to expect. I was introduced to the wife of the Dean who pleasantly asked me where I had attended school. "Streatham Hill and Clapham High School" I gaily replied. Our conversation didn't last long and it was only much later that I learned the meaning of that question. Americans don't mean 'school', they mean 'college' or 'University'. An awkward difference.

I felt somewhat vindicated years later when I was taking some classes at Georgetown University. When signing up, they told me that my years at British high school were the equivalent of the first two years of college in the U.S., but, of course, they couldn't give me credit for that. My father had a difficult time with a question when he was visiting us years ago. We were at a party given by my second husband's law firm. The mother of his partner asked my dad if he had gone to Oxford. By that time, I knew she meant the University but my dad didn't. His reply was "Yes, I once took the train to Oxford". That was another of those very short conversations!

"What is your background?" is another awkward moment for me. For 25 years I was a medical research technologist working on both animal and human tissues. I have also worked for 10 years as an investigative legal assistant. Later, I returned to a love of history and have been a museum docent and curator of exhibits. And now I assist in teaching 4<sup>th</sup> graders about Bainbridge Island history. But I do not have a degree, and I sense that is what is at the root of the question. It is incredibly difficult to explain a lack of any kind of degree to Americans, to whom going on to college or University is generally automatic. It's almost as if a person is not expected to have a successful life or career without a piece of paper to validate it. A very good friend of mine once told me that I was the first intelligent person she had ever met who did not have a degree. I forgave her but wonder now, should I have laughed or cried?

Viva la difference!

**NH**

## What Happened Next? - Photos of Nina in her 70s

*When I first saw these photos of Nina and friends, it looked like our group on a Streatham Society coach trip. But no, we only went for day trips within easy reach of London. Nina's group were much more adventurous!*



*2008: Egypt; inside the tomb of Ay,  
Nefertiti's 2nd husband*



*2010: Nina on a camel  
in Morocco*



*2015 - Nina hiking in  
mountains in Tunisia*

## Life's Disasters

I've seen my share during my lifetime and I consider Covid-19 to be one of them. My husband and I are staying at home, with occasional forays to the store and pharmacy. I also take walks throughout our small neighborhood and my husband hides in the woods with our two aging dogs. But no socializing, no hugs, no closeness in the store.

Going into Winslow is now a very creepy experience for me. When we do go, we tend to do it early in the morning, or late afternoon, when there is actually less traffic. Even so, it shocks me to see the roads devoid of traffic and the ferry parking lots entirely empty. It creates in me a sense of fear and dread. Something that I experienced long ago, as a small child, and thought I had forgotten. As memories come flooding back, it proves to me, yet once again, that you never really forget some things.

I was born in London and lived with my parents in a flat above a small butcher's shop. Our neighbors were also occupants of flats above small shops, making up a whole street. WWII began in September, 1939, and our lives changed forever. I had my own bedroom in this tiny two-bedroom flat. It faced the street and I could look out of the window and watch the people passing by doing their daily shopping. I don't remember the air-raids and bombings disrupting our lives in the early stage of the war. We didn't have a very substantial bomb shelter in our yard, but we did have one. It was made of corrugated iron with a wooden door at the front and was built backed up to the wall of the next shop's brick storage shed. They were neither pretty nor comfortable but, at least for the first few years of the war, helped protect us. As the war intensified, we had to run up the street to the local grocery store which had a big brick storage shed. We shared this with our neighbor and her daughter, Joan, who was my friend and six years older. We once had to spend four days and nights together there.

One early wartime event that I do remember is that of being abruptly woken up one night. Apparently, I had been put to bed and drifted off into a very deep sleep. Suddenly, I was aware of a loud crunching noise that kept on and on. I woke up crying. The details are sketchy. I don't know if my mother hadn't wanted to wake me up to get to the shelter, or if we just didn't hear the siren go off (which did happen a few times). But there had been an air-raid and bombs had fallen. The noise that awoke me was that of people outside on the street, walking on the broken glass of the windows blown out by the bombing. Not only was I upset, but apparently, I was mad as heck!

The empty roads, streets, parking lots and stores of the current Covid-19 pandemic remind me a lot of the desolation and eerie stillness of wartime after bombing raids. I hope, for sanity's sake, that it doesn't last for too long. The condition of my nerves, and agitation in general, are deteriorating fast and, of course, being over 80 and having had cancer, radiation and chemotherapy, I'm feeling like my chances are diminishing rapidly. Sixteen years ago, I told my oncologist that I wasn't afraid to die. That still holds true, but . . .

I just don't want to. . .

I'm not ready to accept the possibility. . .

and I don't want to go this way!

In the meantime, the birds still sing, the flowers bloom, and the trees blossom and send pollen floating through the air. Achoo . . . Oh dear, Covid, or damned allergies again?

**NH**

*Nina adds:* 'With the coronavirus, Darrell and I are having altogether too much togetherness after 50 years of marriage!!! I have ended up teaching local history to 10-11 year olds here on Bainbridge Island (*Western Washington State*). I am not a teacher, and have no degree, but I've been on the Board of the county Historical Society for 25 years and have volunteered as curator for the museum when we couldn't afford to hire one. I am a volunteer with the school district and love the classes with these extremely bright, and friendly, kids. The virus, again, will be making a big difference for this next school year and I may be helping via Zoom!! Take care of yourself and enjoy happy memories.'

## **COVID-19 - WE'RE ALL IN IT TOGETHER!**

### **Keep Fit - Keep Active - Live for Today - Don't Think Too Much**

Following the conversation with Nina and Jean, I checked with my friends who are of a similar age (70s-80s). Those who are most cheerful advised the above, in addition to Hands-Face-Space.

As younger people's activities increase, there is a decrease in contacts and emails and it is easy for our age group to feel isolated. If carless and as local bus travel becomes increasingly difficult, we must walk or travel by train. Our social and interest groups are unlikely to return for some time. Advice suggests we use Facebook, Twitter, Zoom, and other social media but I cannot contemplate spending more time staring at a screen for longer than I do already. Other non-tech friends either cannot or also choose not to.

We are told to copy the World War II spirit. But in many ways, there is no comparison. I am reminded of my mother. In the 1970s, after she retired, I bought her a television. She had never wanted one and seldom listened to the radio. For news, she read a daily newspaper. After the TV was installed, I found her in great distress, watching graphic news footage of the Vietnamese war. Switching it off, I remarked that during WWII she had lived in London, with a baby (me, born in 1944), and that surely this must have been more upsetting.

She told me her wartime spent in London was exciting. She and my father married in 1938 and moved from the Teesside area to London where he was a representative for an engineering firm. The job involved travelling between Glasgow, Teesside and London, for which he received travel and rent allowances. When war broke out in 1939, his job was restricted as being essential. He rented, very cheaply, a smart flat in Earls Court belonging to a wealthy American who had returned to the USA for the duration of the war. They were young, had an income, a flat, friends, and there was little bombing in the area.

My mother said that once the many cinemas, theatres and dance halls reopened, the social life was wonderful, particularly after the American GIs came to town! Pubs and cafés had little food but were centres to socialise. Newspapers and cinema newsreels were carefully edited to report little of the horrors of



war, either at home or abroad. People supported the War Effort and took courage from the British spirit and achievements. Many areas were bombed heavily, particularly in the East End, but the comradeship and community spirit were reported and praised. The depravation, misery and crime usually were not.

For my mother and many others, post-war hardship escalated; frequently lasting longer than the five war years. Those of us now in our 70s and 80s were post-war babies or were only children at the end of the war in 1945, so could be shielded from much. (For a decade, boys' comics and popular fiction continued to glorify the war.) Times were hard, rationing continued and accounts of horror and suffering - the human cost of war - were brought back by the armed forces who survived. Brave, but often traumatised and damaged men returned home, no longer the earlier optimistic comrades-in-arms, to families they hardly knew, to unfamiliar situations. Most could never speak of their experiences; it was considered a weakness to do so. Marriages collapsed; divorce (if you could afford it) or separation followed, but many unhappy unions stumbled on.

General disillusionment and political unrest grew until the establishment of the Welfare State, including the NHS, brought better times in the 1950s. Like others, with improved education and opportunities, I was encouraged to work hard at school, go into further education or training, and get a good job. Thus, many of us have the benefits of financial security which the younger generation will not.

Communities may have faltered then but friendships and entertainment survived; so unlike today's Covid 'war' which is very divisive and seems unending. News reports are depressing and confusing, littered with groundless opinion, perhaps fake. Good news is submerged. News and 'misinformation' via the internet pings round the world in minutes. We can see instantly what is happening everywhere and envy or despair. But we older people also benefit from a lifetime's experience. We have all suffered past loneliness, isolation, fear and loss.

We owe it to ourselves to call on our reserves, remain positive, protect ourselves and be active in mind and body. 'Use It or Lose It!' Local train travel is easy. In central London, buses, tourist sites and shops are almost empty; awful for the economy, but great for retired people. The trendy coffee shops I visit for breakfast may be amazed that I haven't a smart phone to register contact - but they don't throw me out! We're too old to change much, so make the most of today.

When I emailed congratulations to Nina and Jean, Nina replied: "Stick with us Judy - we're guaranteed to keep you from boredom. We're still in super lockdown on the West Coast (*also because of the dense smoke from wild-fires*) and I suspect there will be numerous cases of domestic non-bliss on the horizon if it goes on much longer. We slink out to the store for coffee and newspapers, and some groceries, but then we avoid the whole world. Our grocery store has the sign 'Keep Calm and Carry On' as we buy our lattes!"

We know where that sign originated!

**JH**

## CONGRATULATIONS, EILEEN WALKIN!

**Alan Piper** reports in *The Brixton Society Newsletter*:

Lockdown has made it difficult to keep in touch with all our members, so we have only recently touched base with Eileen Walkin, who is one of the Brixton Society's long-serving members but doesn't do Zoom. Back in February, Eileen was presented with the Lancelot Andrewes Medal, for godly zeal and service to the Gospel, by the Bishop of Southwark, Christopher Chessun. In making the award, the bishop described Eileen as a pillar of the Church since her arrival in Britain from Barbados in 1965, worshipping first at St. Leonard's, Streatham, and then at St. Mary's, Addiscombe.

After studying law, Eileen had a long and successful career in the Civil Service. However, it was her voluntary work, as a school governor, and with refugees and the homeless, that the bishop particularly referenced. "She has also been someone who is faithful in the little things that are of infinite value," said the bishop, "always there to welcome, noticing when someone is new, making sure they know how to join in, and above all, faithful and persistent in prayer."

*Eileen has long been a valued member of the Streatham Society. We have previously reported on some of her Lambeth achievements. She is featured in the book 'Black British - A Celebration' published by The Brixton Society in 2007.*

## WELCOME BACK HEART STREATHAM!



The October printed edition was the first since March. Over the past months a digital magazine and blog have been published, giving away over 100 digital advertisements to local businesses. But it is wonderful to read this excellent publication at leisure again.

This edition includes the exciting and ambitious programme for the Streatham Festival 2020 9-18 October. This includes the Eye on Streatham photography festival with workshops which has been running since early summer. It also presents the inaugural Streatham Literature Festival, a special day at Streatham Space Project, a Literary Walk, and a Children's Short Story competition.

Most events are digital or require pre-booking on-line. A great deal of effort has gone into the preparation and all concerned are to be congratulated. Next year I hope we are back to normal so I can support as many as possible.

## LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

### EVACUSTES A PHIPSON - A TALENTED, ITINERANT, WATERCOLOUR ARTIST AND SEEKER AFTER A SOCIALIST UTOPIA

It must be around 40 or so years ago that Keith Holdaway first drew my attention to E A Phipson's paintings of Streatham.

Four decades later I still have framed copies of his watercolours of Coulthurst Cottages and Waterloo House by Hermitage Bridge hanging on my wall which Keith gave me all those years ago.

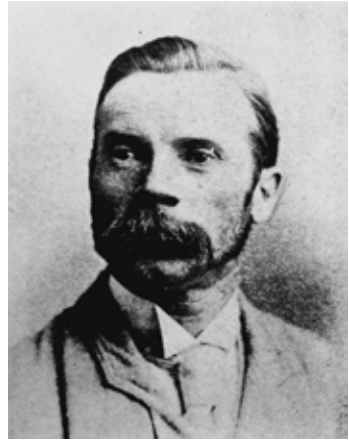
Evacustes A Phipson was one of the most prolific British topographical watercolourists in the 1890s and throughout the opening decades of the twentieth century.

During this period, he produced over 1,650 paintings the vast majority of which feature views of various places in England. However, he was also active on the continent with pictures set in France, Germany, Italy, Belgium, Netherlands, Switzerland, Spain and Cyprus.

In addition, I am aware of at least 257 unidentified paintings by him in the USA, the subject matter of which is unknown.

Although many of his paintings were sold at modest prices to local authorities for inclusion in their municipal art collections and, in the early 1900s, he produced a number of pictures which were reproduced as postcards, he is widely regarded today as a talented and gifted amateur watercolour artist.

Phipson's paintings rarely come onto the market, and I have only been able to identify six pictures in private hands in the United Kingdom, including one in a pub in Rye and one in Icklesham Church.



*E A Phipson, above from  
A Labour Annual 1896*





*Ancient House, Ipswich - A R Quinton*



*Ancient House, Ipswich - E A Phipson*

I have been advised that since 2012 at least 6 paintings by Phipson have been offered for sale on eBay although not all have found a successful bidder or were subsequently withdrawn from sale.

At his very best Phipson's work would match the high standards of many of the professional watercolourists of his day such as the famous topographical artist A R Quinton whose paintings of British landscape scenes were reproduced on over 2,000 postcards between 1904 and 1934, a similar period to that in which Phipson was active.

Although Quinton mainly painted landscapes, and most of Phipson's work features buildings and street scenes, it is possible to compare their skill with paint and brush as they both painted the same view of the 'Ancient House'

in Ipswich. Both images were coincidentally reproduced as postcards published by the same publisher, J Salmon of Sevenoaks in Kent.

To the casual observer, there is little to distinguish the two paintings concerning colour, composition and competence. Yet Quinton achieved fame, recognition and a comfortable living from his painting while Phipson struggled to make ends meet and his work is not widely known today.

Phipson's brief career as a postcard artist showed much promise and although a highly competitive market his cards appear to have been reprinted indicating their appeal to the general public.

However, whereas Quinton's paintings are featured on a couple of thousand postcards, I have only been able to discover around 50 contemporary postcard images featuring Phipson's work.

These comprise various views of Bridgenorth, Bristol, Gloucester and Shrewsbury which were published by L Wilding of the Salop Art Press; Joseph Little-

bury issued cards featuring scenes in Worcester; there are six views of Bristol published by 'JB & SC' in the Avonvale series and Raphael Tuck & Sons Ltd. produced a series of six cards in their Oilette series under the title of Quaint Corners showing views of Kingston on Thames and Bramley in Surrey, Waltham Abbey, Bocking in Essex and two views of Bishops Stortford.

Charles Flowers, another prolific topographical watercolourist of the day, seems to have also had little competition from Phipson. Flowers was particularly active in producing paintings of London which were reproduced as postcards by Raphael Tuck.

However, as Evacustes appears to have shunned the tourist hot spots of the capital, views of Tower Bridge, Trafalgar Square and the Houses of Parliament appear never to have graced his easel. In my opinion, he was equally as talented as Flowers, but this relatively remunerative area of work seems not to have appealed to him.

I believe the reason for this is that Phipson was, at heart, an itinerant artist and probably lacked the drive, discipline, ambition and business skills necessary to turn his artistic talent into a successful commercial career.

He preferred to paint humble cottages and quiet back streets and perhaps the hassle of painting touristy-type views to order did not attract him. The pressure of having to deliver a quantity of work to a uniform standard and by a given date possibly rubbed against his apparently easy-going manner and free spirit.



*Hermitage Cottage, Streatham*



*Greyhound Lane*

Having dabbled in painting postcard views, he may have simply decided it was not for him, and the problems and constraints involved were not worth the bother. At his best, his work is outstanding, and many of his pictures exhibit the exceptional skill of the truly talented amateur. They have a romantic charm and warmth I find very appealing.

However, there are also a number which fall well short of the standards set by his finest work and were probably painted in haste, or under other influences, which may have also prevented him from becoming a financially successful professional artist. These assumptions are supported by comments concerning him I discovered in papers lodged in Croydon archives in which he is described as a “wandering man whose weaknesses were reputed to be gin and young women and who supported himself by the assiduous application of a modest but real talent for water-colour painting”.

The varying quality of his work is evident in the handful of paintings Phipson completed of buildings in Streatham and the surrounding area which first prompted my interest in him.

Between 1904 and 1929 Evacustes painted 16 views of places in Streatham, Tooting, Norbury and Thornton Heath which are held in the collections of Lambeth Archives, Wandsworth Council and the Croydon Museum and Heritage Service. There is also a view of Clapham Common Northside in the London Metropolitan Archives. Some of these views are important in as much as they are the only surviving images we have of the scenes featured.

Phipson may have been aware at the time that he was creating a unique image for posterity to cherish. We do know he was keen that his work should be held in local authority collections so that a wider public could see them. He probably, therefore, selected his views either in consultation with his municipal purchasers or with an eye to producing a painting that would appeal to them.

This may account for the reason that few of his paintings of Streatham and the surrounding area feature well-known buildings and beauty spots. Evacustes may have thought such scenes were likely to already be well represented locally and preferred to provide an image that would fill a gap in a collection and therefore have greater appeal to the curator. His limited number of Streatham views do not, therefore, include scenes of Streatham Common or of the Rookery Gardens, two well-known local beauty spots much favoured by amateur artists.

None of the local pubs are painted by him and some of the towns prominent buildings, such as Streatham Hall, the Empire and Golden Domes Cinemas or the Triangle building at the junction of Streatham High Road and Gleneagle Road, escape his brushes notwithstanding they would have all made excellent subjects for his easel.

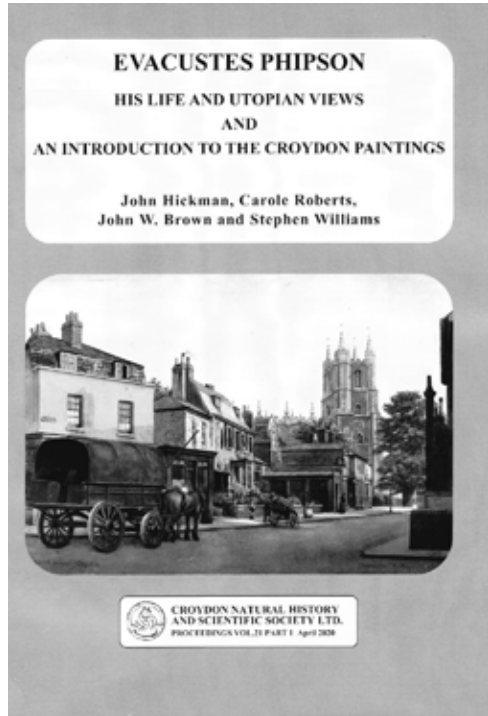
Buildings which today we now think of as being old, but at the time Phipson was roaming the area were comparatively new, appear not to have appealed to him.

Bank Parade, opposite Streatham Common, built in 1890 would have made an impressive painting, but he bypassed it preferring instead to capture a view of some ancient cottages nearby, at the top of Greyhound Lane.

In fact, cottages seem to be his preferred subject matter when in Streatham. Of his seven known paintings of the town, five feature this humble type of dwelling the other two being of Streatham's ancient parish church of St. Leonard and Christ Church at Streatham Hill.

Perhaps Evacustes anticipated that many of the town's oldest properties may soon be demolished and replaced with modern buildings and the view would therefore no longer exist and were worthy of being immortalised by his canvas.

But there was so much more to Evacustes than just his charming paintings as has been revealed in the recently published 2020 Proceedings of the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society.



This 106-page volume is exclusively devoted to Phipson's life, utopian views and his paintings, 340 copies of which are held in the collection of the Museum of Croydon. Profusely illustrated in colour, the book features a large selection of his Croydon paintings, in addition to a dozen of his watercolours featuring places in Streatham, Tooting, Norbury and Thornton Heath, many of which have never been published before.

The book has been compiled by **John Hickman, Carole Roberts** and **Stephen Williams**, with my contribution being an appreciation of Phipson's local Streatham paintings and assistance in helping to compile the detailed appendix which lists all his known paintings.

The Proceedings cost £12, plus £1.50 postage and packing, and are available from the Croydon Natural History and Scientific Society, 96a Brighton Road, South Croydon, CR2 6AD.

**John W Brown**

## THE WRITING IS ON THE WALL



*Broadlands Close Garden Wall  
WWII markings*



The 75th anniversary of VJ day, marking the end of the Second World War, coincided with a fascination letter I received from Doreen Mackie of Broadlands Close.

Doreen sent me photographs of her garden wall which backs onto Mount Ephraim Road. Over the years I have received many unusual items through the post but Doreen's photographs, arriving so unexpectedly in the post, obviously attracted my attention.

On close inspection of Doreen's snaps faint numbers could be seen which had been painted onto the wall. It would appear these numbers dated from the time of the Second World War and Doreen asked what the numbers related to, suspecting they may have marked the locations of "parking bays" for barrage balloons which she had been told were located at the Belmont Bowling Club during the war.

Doreen was indeed correct in believing the land on which Broadlands Close was laid out formerly was part of the Belmont Club and an aerial photograph taken in 1940 clearly shows the two open spaces that then formed the Belmont Club.

There were two components of the club. One, which survives today, was the Belmont Bowling Club and the other was the Belmont Tennis Club.

The use of property during the Second World War can be hard to ascertain as this was often secret and not widely known for obvious reasons. However, thanks to detailed research undertaken by Streatham Society member Bob Jenner into Streatham in the Second World War, I am aware that Barrage Balloon site 3/5 was based at the Belmont Tennis Club in Broadlands Avenue.

I would suspect a single barrage balloon was based there during the war, partly I would assume, to provide some protection for nearby Streatham Hill Station. However, from the aerial photograph taken in 1940 it would appear no barrage balloon was based at the site at that time.





*Broadlands Avenue and detail (below)*



In the summer of 1944, the Germans launched their V1 flying bomb campaign against London and as a counter measure against this onslaught there was a three-fold increase in the location of barrage balloons.

It is therefore possible that the barrage balloon site on the Belmont Tennis Club ground subsequently accommodated more than one balloon at this time. However, barrage balloons were very large and difficult to handle and I would suspect the site at the Belmont ground would have been too small to accommodate more than one balloon.

A photograph of the barrage balloon sited at the bottom of Streatham Common shows the huge size of the balloon and the difficulties involved in controlling it during the period of inflation and its rising into the sky. Because barrage balloons are so large it is difficult to see how any number of balloons could have been “parked” on the tennis club ground due to its limited space.



*P B Cow's factory WWII -  
Making Barrage Balloons*

Another picture I have of the balloon based at nearby Holmewood Gardens again shows its huge size which appears to almost fill the park there.

I would suspect the numbers painted on Doreen's garden wall would indicate parking spaces for lorries, auxiliary vehicles, winding gear or other civil defence motorised transport used by the barrage balloon squad based there.

After the war the Government offered to either reinstall the tennis courts or pay compensation to the Belmont Club who decided to take the compensation payment which was used to help meet the cost of building a new club house. The tennis club site was then used as allotments and subsequently sold for development when Broadlands Close was laid out on the site in the early 1960s.

It is fascinating to learn that even after three quarters of a century after the end of the Second World War remnants of the conflict are still to be found in hidden corners of Streatham.

**JWB**



*World War II Barrage Balloons*



## **STREATHAM POST CARDS**

Here is another of Streatham Society member Frances Partridge's collection of old postcard views of Streatham which she has donated to John W Brown's Streatham archive. John has captioned the cards for us.



### **The Lower Pond on Streatham Common c.1913**

A simple post and rail fence surrounded the pond at the western end of Streatham Common in the early 1900s.

Although relatively small in size, the pond was very deep and old records reveal that a number of people drowned here over the years. In days past livestock grazing on the common would quench their thirst at the pond and young children would paddle and swim here in the summer months. In the winter when the pond froze over, it was a popular site for skating.

As can be seen in this view a number of large trees shaded the pond from the heat of the noon-day sun and it provided a picturesque attraction much enjoyed by local residents.

In 1939 the pond was filled in by the London County Council and a concrete paddling pond was constructed on the site. In October 2016 the paddling pond was removed and the site was landscaped to form part of a large children's playground.

**JWB**

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# STREATHAM SOCIETY REPORTS

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## ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING 2020

NOTICE IS HEREBY GIVEN that the 44th Annual General Meeting of the Streatham Society (Charity Number 283297) will be held by Zoom at 8.00pm on Monday 23 November 2020 to transact the following business:

- 1. Minutes of the previous meeting** - To be agreed and matters arising
  - 2. To approve Changes to the Constitution** – a) The Constitution currently states an AGM should be held by 30 June. To be amended to *“normally by 30 June and not later than 31 December”* b) allow other methods of holding an AGM. *“In cases where it is not possible to hold an AGM e.g. in a situation of National Emergency an AGM may be held using digital and other methods advised by the Charity Commissioners”*.
  - 3. Reports and Accounts** - To receive and consider the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020.
  - 4. Appointment and remuneration of independent examiner of accounts** - To appoint an independent examiner for the financial year to 31st March 2021.
  - 5. Appointment of charity trustees** - Nominations for the position of Chair, Vice-Chair, Secretary, Treasurer and other committee members must be received by **Monday 9th November 2020**.
- All committee members are Trustees of the Charity.
- 6. Members’ resolutions** - Resolutions should be sent to the Secretary by **Monday 9th November 2020**.
  - 7. Any other business** - To deal with any relevant matters raised at the meeting.

**Mark Bery, Secretary, 15<sup>th</sup> October 2020**

### Login details for the meeting

Zoom <https://us02web.zoom.us/j/83391484258>

Meeting ID: 833 9148 4258

**\* Members unable to attend the Zoom meeting should contact the Secretary with their comments no later 7 days before the AGM.**

To aid communication with members during the pandemic it would be helpful to have members’ email addresses. For those members who have not registered an email address with the Society and wish to be contacted by email, please include

details on the web site (there is a new form on the contacts section <https://www.streathamsociety.org.uk/contact.html> or email [markbery@hotmail.com](mailto:markbery@hotmail.com) with the subject "Please include me on the Streatham Society email database".

## ANNUAL REPORT 2019-20

At our last AGM the Streatham Society celebrated its 45<sup>th</sup> anniversary and I mentioned how surprised Jean Gaffin, who chaired the inaugural meeting, would be surprised at the difference a year makes! This has been a year like no other because of Covid 19.

In a world where planes have been grounded, theatres and cinemas are in darkness, supermarket shelves are laid bare and everyone wears a mask there has been a ray of hope and light to lift our spirits. It is, of course, **The Streatham Society**. This is entirely due to our hard working, dedicated and optimistic committee members who would not be defeated and have kept the flag flying .

Our secretary and webmaster Mark Bery has kept everyone up to date with events and happenings through Face book, Twitter and Instagram. I am constantly surprised at each time I look on Twitter to see he has found yet another well known person who was born in or had links with Streatham. When Vera Lynn died, almost to the day, he discovered the man who wrote "We'll meet again" lived in Streatham. He has worked hard to get our virtual talks up and running. The talk on the Vauhall Pleasure Gardens attracted an audience of a hundred people. John Brown has met regularly with other members to look at local research and discoveries. He also answers requests, information and enquiries from all over the world and locally, asking for information on people with relatives who had connections in the past with Streatham.

Our publicity and programme sub-committee, comprising of Mike Bowtle, Russell Henman and Jill Dudman, have put together a varied and exciting programme of speakers in anticipation of a time when we may once again be able to have our face to face meetings restored at Woodlawns

Judy Harris still continues to produce excellent editions of *Streatham Society News*. At the risk of repeating myself, I always see this as the Jewel in our Crown. It is hard work putting the magazine together and getting people to send in articles but Judy always makes the magazine interesting and engrossing so please keep sending her any news or articles of interest.

My thanks to all the other committee members:

Liz Burton, our dynamic new treasurer who makes sure we are not overspending.

Janis Benson, our excellent minutes secretary who with support from Marion Gower continues to run the book stall at meetings and other events. Book sales were doing well and on Kite day last year and Henry Tate Gardens we sold many publications.

Robert Doyle, who helps to look after the meeting venue and opens and locks up when we leave. He also looks after our new sound equipment that we purchased earlier in the year.

Allen Brown and his team who organized the bi-monthly tea breaks until we had to close in April.

Graham Gower, our representative on the Lambeth History Forum. He also liaises with the Tooting History group and Wandsworth Heritage Festival. I am glad to report that Graham is recovering well after his recent illness.

This year I have found this a difficult report to write and it is therefore shorter than usual. Apologies if I have failed to mention everyone or left out important information..

Up until the time we ceased to meet in April, there was an increase in average attendance of 56 at 18 meetings. They attracted 120 visitors who each donated at least a £1 entry. My thanks to Judy for this information.

Although we have had regular Zoom meetings to keep in touch I eagerly look forward in anticipation to the time ahead when Corona virus has been eradicated and we can once more meet and greet our loyal members face to face at the bi-monthly meetings. In the meantime keep well and keep safe.

**Shea Richardson, Acting Chair**



*Two of our Zoom talks  
(See p.32)*

**THE STREATHAM SOCIETY**  
**INCOME AND EXPENDITURE for YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2020**

<b>GENERAL ACCOUNT</b>	<b>2020</b>	<b>2019</b>
<b>Income</b>		
<i>Notes</i>		
Subscriptions	£ 2,870.00	£ 2,425.00
Donations	£ 476.10	£ 1,316.00
Raffles	£ 528.70	£ 426.00
1 Refreshments	£ 470.00	£ 266.00
2 Publications	£ 3,313.90	£ 1,719.00
3 Bank Interest	£ 254.43	£ 258.00
	<b><u>£ 7,913.13</u></b>	<b><u>£ 6,410.00</u></b>
<b>Expenditure</b>		
<i>Notes</i>		
4 Affiliation fees	£ 48.00	£ 48.00
5 Donations	£ 1,592.00	£ 330.00
Speakers' fees	£ 300.00	£ 350.00
6 Publications	£ 1,454.75	£ 654.00
7 Printing, postage, stationery	£ 2,440.29	£ 2,227.00
8 Insurance	£ 75.00	£ 75.00
9 Room hire	£ 1,050.00	£ 950.00
10 Miscellaneous	£ 536.64	£ 194.00
	<b><u>£ 7,496.68</u></b>	<b><u>£ 4,828.00</u></b>
Surplus/deficit on RBS account	<b>£ 416.45</b>	<b>£ 1,582.00</b>
<b>CURRENT ASSETS</b>		
<i>Notes</i>		
RBS account	£ 14,636.08	£ 14,254.00
11 Cash in hand	£	£ 8.00
Lloyds current account	£ 7,003.49	£ 6,756.00
Lloyds deposit account	£ 15,554.12	£ 15,554.00
	<b><u>£ 37,193.69</u></b>	<b><u>£ 36,572.00</u></b>

The notes are explained in the Treasurer's Report to be presented at the AGM  
Money placed in deposit account 16/4/19

**Liz Burton, Treasurer**

## EXAMINER'S STATEMENT

### Streatham Society Account for the year ending 31st March 2020

I confirm that I have examined the accounts for the year ended 31st March 2020 as presented to me by the Treasurer together with the following supporting documentation:

- Relevant bank and savings account statements
- Cheque books and relevant invoices and receipts
- Notes on our accounts provided by the treasurer and the paying officer

I confirm that the draft accounts are accurate and complete in accordance with the information provided to me.

(Signed) **Allen Brown**

Examiner, June 2020

## STREATHAM SOCIETY ON ZOOM AND YOUTUBE

Although we have been unable to hold our regular talks at Woodlawns during the pandemic we have been holding a number of talks on Zoom.

This included our contribution to the virtual Lambeth Heritage Festival in September, and we are very pleased several of our members were able to attend our very well attended series:

4th September: Militant Activity: Chess in Victorian Lambeth and Beyond (attended by 29)

7th Sept & 1st October: Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens: A Place to See and Be Seen (attended by 100 and 46 respectively)

15th September: Streatham's Theatrical History (attended by 29)

28th September: South London and the 19th Century Cycling Boom (attended by 65)

My very grateful thanks to our four speakers who provided excellent and very well received presentations: Martin Smith, Julie Chandler, Liz Burton and Paul Darby.

All talks except for the Vauxhall Pleasure Gardens talk either are, or will be available to watch on our YouTube channel which also includes John Brown's Streatham's 41 and Roger Wates (E and A Wates) interview of Radio London. There are links from our website to the YouTube channel.

It is my intention to continue to provide talks on Zoom while we are unable to hold meetings at Woodlawns and these will be advertised on our website, social media, email and the quarterly *Streatham Society News* magazine.

I am aware that many may consider using Zoom too difficult, but it really isn't as long as you have access to a computer, the internet and an email address to



receive the joining instructions. This is the experience of Streatham Society member Kevin Kelly who attended a few of our talks:

*'My first experience of a Zoom lecture was very easy and simple to negotiate. I just clicked on the link that I had been sent, was presumably accepted in some way and I was in. It was interesting for me to be able to see the names of other friends who had also logged in. There was the ability to make comments during and after the talk which I did not take advantage of but I'm already looking forward to my next visit to Zoomland.'*

Liz Burton has very kindly offered to provide support to anyone who may require help in using Zoom. Liz's contact information is on the back page of the newsletter.

I should also like to record our thanks to Society member Barbara Wright and who has very kindly invited Streatham Society members to her Zoom talks on 'Marylebone' and 'Westminster in Pictures' (2 parts) with more planned for the near future. Also, our thanks to Lambeth Archives who have provided a series of Lockdown talks over the last few months.

**Mark Bery**



## **A STREATHAM CHRISTMAS -**

### **A miscellany of items relating to Christmas past in Streatham**

by John W Brown

Price £6.60 incl. p&p

This profusely illustrated book (A4 size) would make a lovely present for anyone interested in Streatham's history.

Order it from our website via BACS, or by post with a cheque payable to The Streatham Society, or directly from me (*contact back page*). Doorstep collection from my address is available by appointment; cash payment accepted.

**JH**



## MEMBERSHIP 2020 - 2021

We welcome new members Keith Lye, Paul Lister & household, Simon Dunton and Jan Chadwick. We hope they enjoy our events and publications. Thank you all or adding your details to our email contacts list for future information.

Because of the current lockdown cancellation of our 'live' meetings, your committee has extended current membership until December 31st 2021. **JH**

### Letter from Stephen Amor

Dear Judy Harris,

A heartfelt plea for the printed Streatham Society newsletter.

We are dominated by our online identities, all our interactions are digitalised. We exist as algorithms of attributes. For me, a book is a printed thing to be experienced; its shape, size, paper quality, typeface. Its personality, a thing to hold and the same is true for the *Streatham Society News*. I understand the financial attractions of 'online'. However, thoughtfully produced as a pamphlet, especially for a local newsletter, seems appropriately meaningful.

I came to London in 1953 aged 18 to start what was then called the Pre-Diploma course at Saint Martin's School of Art on Charing Cross Road, not understanding that the College was located in the heart of Soho, not really understanding what Soho was. In the years since then I have crisscrossed London living in the North, South, middle and West of the city (and working in the East).

The decade that I spent living in West Dulwich eventually led me to 'Francis of Streatham' retailer of high end stereo equipment. I parked in Gleneldon Road and was amused by the onion cupolas of some of the houses there. Eventually, my family and I lived in the road for twenty years and our two daughters spent their schooldays locally.

Streatham has always seemed on the brink of gentrification, gradually shaking off its slightly risky reputation. I have always appreciated some of the architecture, there are some lovely examples of Arts and Crafts houses. Where my family live now in Norbury, in a house on land sold by Ellen Stanford to finance her somewhat lavish lifestyle, there is an almost village feel. We sometimes think that we are edging along the A23 towards Brighton!

I enjoy reading the newsletter and look forward to its arrival. I may be in the minority in this perception, however I proudly prefer the printed version and would be sad to see it reduced to an email!

*Thank you Stephen, and thanks also to Maureen Barclay, from Norbury, and Ann Henderson, from Bury St Edmunds, for their very encouraging letters of support. Let us hope that we can resume 'normal' service soon in 2021.*

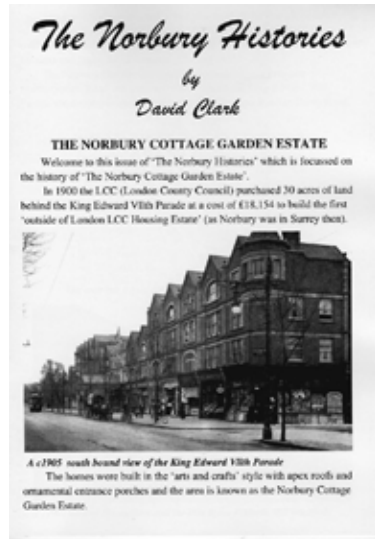
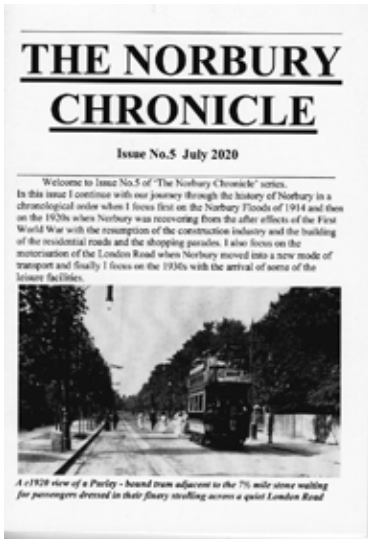
**JH**

## PUBLICATIONS

### THE NORBURY HISTORIES and THE NORBURY CHRONICLE

by David Clark

Price £1.50



David Clark's well-researched and profusely illustrated series of Norbury's history make an excellent contribution to our local history.

The quarterly *Norbury Chronicle* is a journey through the chronological history of Norbury. *The Norbury Histories* focus in more detail on specific locations. Topics covered include Norbury Hall, Norbury Manor Farm, Norbury Park and the Norbury Cottage Garden Estate. They are on sale at Showell's Newsagent 1412 London Road, Norbury.

David welcomes information and images of Norbury's history as possible contributions to future issues. He can be contacted at 18 Oakhill Road, Norbury SW16 5RG or by email: [davidandlindaclark@googlemail.com](mailto:davidandlindaclark@googlemail.com)

### THE SEASON'S GREETINGS TO ALL OUR MEMBERS

**Keep Fit - Keep Active - Don't Think Too Much - Live for Today!**

May you have a peaceful Christmas and hope for better times in 2021

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the quality of life for all who live and work in Streatham**

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