



STREATHAM SOCIETY NEWS

Published quarterly

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STREATHAM COMMON SOUTH - A BEAUTIFUL OPEN GARDEN
The National Garden Scheme (London)
Gardens open for charity, 2021 *(See pages 3 & 14)*

2022 MEMBERSHIP - SUBSCRIPTIONS NOW DUE
(See p.32)

STREATHAM SOCIETY MEETINGS & EVENTS PROGRAMME 2022

IN-PERSON MEETINGS RETURN:

Tues Jan 4 **David Jacobs: the Streatham connections of a popular TV presenter** Talk by Mike Morfey at St Leonard's Church, Tooting Bec Gardens/Streatham High Road junction SW16
7.30pm

Tues Feb 1 **How First World War stretcher bearers changed medicine forever** Talk by Emily Mayhew at St Leonard's Church
7.30pm

Tues Mar 1 **Mother Magdalen Taylor: the work of the SMG Sisters in Streatham from 1888 to the present**
7.30pm Talk by Paul Shaw at St Leonard's Church

All our meetings listed here are live but may be subject to any changes in government restrictions. However St Leonard's Church is sufficiently spacious to safely accommodate our usual attendance unless restrictions are stringent.

Non-members are welcome to all our meetings but are requested to donate £1 to help cover costs.

Our final planned Zoom talk (see website):

Mon Nov 29 2021 at 7.30 **The Manor of Norbury** by Michael Gilbert

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

STREATHAM ROUND AND ABOUT

STREATHAM LIVE! - A CELEBRATION

This section is devoted to reports of some of the live events held following restrictions easing in September. Thanks to those who quickly organised these. I took great pleasure in observing the happiness shown by visitors emerging from periods of isolation - especially those who, like me, are of the older generation.

RIPLEY HOUSE, STREATHAM COMMON SOUTH - OPEN GARDEN

On Sunday 29th August Lindy and Mark Cunliffe opened their garden as part of the National Open Gardens Scheme for charity. Following 2020 Covid restrictions, fewer gardens opened this year but I was fortunate to be able to visit two beautiful gardens: one in Norwood Park Road, West Norwood, and Ripley House, Streatham Common South (*below*), advertised in 'The Yellow Book'.

The Cunliffes' garden was described thus: "This large south facing garden is divided into naturally separated spaces with many seated areas. There are many paths, a green house, woodland area, traditional lawn, small wildlife area and





From the luxuriant front garden, through the tiled passage, to paradise!



many mature trees such as ash willow and mulberry. The Chinese inspired garden gives a modern twist. There is a small tranquil garden with koi pond and seating as well as an award winning front garden."

From this description, I was hoping for something special but it far exceeded expectations. It was surprisingly extensive, absolutely beautiful and the seated areas were large enough to each support a convivial gathering.

Delicious cakes and bubbly enjoyed on a raised viewing patio as part of a well-designed outside extension completed my visit. Many thanks to Lindy and Mark Cunliffe for opening their amazing garden and giving me permission for this article. (See Ripley House p.14)



Judy Harris

LAMBETH HERITAGE FESTIVAL AND THE STREATHAM SOCIETY

The Heritage Festival, organised by Lambeth Archives and the Lambeth Local History Forum, returned in September 2021 with 50 events catering for a whole spread of interests and heritages. After last year's online-only offering, the festival this year offered a mix of in-person events alongside plenty of on-line ones.

Most events were free, including talks, films, author events, theatre, exhibitions, readings, walks and workshops. All online and many in-person events required booking but for others you could simply turn up. Congratulations to the teams of people who made these events possible and most enjoyable.

The Lambeth Local History Fair - the opening in-person event

Held on Saturday 4th September in the vast, well-ventilated nave of St Mark's Church, Kennington, local society stands, local history experts and bookstalls were on hand. Refreshments were on sale at the Oval Farmers' Market outside the church. A programme of talks and local walks ran throughout the day.

I took a selection of Streatham Society publications for our bookstall which was organised by Janis Benson, helped by Marion and Graham Gower with Shea Richardson. So many friends we hadn't met for some time arrived and the buzz of conversation was exhilarating. Despite having a much reduced number of publications on sale, we sold far better than at the last Fair. Perhaps after some 18 months' isolation everyone wanted to spend!



Graham, Shea and Janis on our bookstall (Marion was at a talk)

Open Day at Conyers Road Pumping Station, SW16

Also on Saturday 4th September, was this event hosted by Thames Water and the Streatham Society. With considerable prior input from the Society's Mark Bery and John Brown, they were joined on the day by Liz Burton and Robert Doyle (who afterwards rushed to St Mark's Church and helped dismantle stalls).

The Southwark & Vauxhall Water Company erected the first pumping station in Conyers Road here in 1881 and this was in a corrugated iron shed. The tall pumping station we see today was built in 1894 and it was a condition of the freeholder, Mr Thompson, that the buildings should be of an ornamental character. In 1980 it was selected to be adapted as one of 11 pumping stations serving the Thames Water ring main supplying half the capital's water.

This booked event, as expected, proved very popular. Four tours quickly filled up but over 300 applicants were disappointed. Hopefully it will be repeated.



*Ceiling detail (above) by Daniel Fieller
Other photos by Mark Bery*



*Queueing at the entrance (above) and (below)
Liz Burton and John Brown publicising the Streatham Society and selling John's
book 'Fascinating Streatham' which features the pumping station
(See our website publications to order)*

Brookwood Necropolis Railway



Above: View during the refreshment break when most people were queueing for tea or at the bookstall.

Below: John Clarke giving his talk.



Tuesday 7th September was a very special meeting. It was the Streatham Society's first 'live' meeting for 18 months, with unlimited access in St Leonard's Church, our new venue, and held on our new day and time, the first Tuesday of the month at 7.30 - 9.30pm.

It was also part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival. Mark Bery and John Brown had spent many hours arranging everything, with much encouragement from the Rector, Canon Anna Norman-Walker.

We didn't know how many visitors to expect, but attendance was beyond all expectations. Over 70 people came - of all ages but also many of our older members whom we thought may be unhappy about travelling after dark and meeting post-lockdowns. At first, several seemed wary but there was plenty of space and by the refreshment break the atmosphere was joyful.

The screen was easily visible from the back of the church, the sound system was good and our bookstall was busy. Allen Brown and his team served refreshments through the hatch from the recently upgraded kitchen facilities. Disabled access and toilets have also been much improved.

John Clarke presented a brilliant talk on how railway funerals were conducted and how the London Necropolis Company, based at 121 Westminster Bridge Road, sold one-way tickets for the deceased on their way to Brookwood Cemetery, the vast new cemetery established to serve once London's burial space was severely limited.



The former Brookwood Necropolis Railway entrance, 121 Westminster Bridge Rd

I later photographed the entrance today as the building is under threat of development. Not having visited the area for some months, I walked down Lower Marsh to the former bookshop, once owned by friends who sold my book *The Roupells of Lambeth* (see our website publications).

The shop is now a trendy coffee shop (surprise!). I bought a coffee and chatted to the manager who has lived in the area for several years. The shop's ground floor and roof gardens, which I enjoyed visiting years ago, are still there. The manager told me he rented a textile studio on an upper floor of the Necropolis building, overlooking the last remaining but derelict platform - and he knew his local history!



Finishing my day with a nostalgic walk around the Roupell Street SE1 area, I took a bus ride home. I still love walking, travelling on the top deck of a bus, and exploring London's vast variety - all free with a Freedom Pass!

(Photos MB, left, & JH right)

JH

Tour of West Norwood Cemetery



At the end of a busy week, on Saturday 11th September, the Streatham Society hosted a tour of West Norwood Cemetery. As I don't like booking and tying myself to one event, I had intended only to photograph the start of the tour. 18 attended with 2 'no-shows' so I joined it - and was very glad I did.



Our very grateful thanks to Bob Flanagan, Chair of the Friends of West Norwood Cemetery for leading our Lambeth Heritage event looking at the graves and monuments of former Streatham residents.

West Norwood was one of the first private landscaped cemeteries, one of the "Magnificent Seven" cemeteries of London, and is a site of major historical, architectural and ecological interest.

The tour included Sir Henry Tate, Sir Henry Doulton, John Tredwell and Sir Hiram Maxim, plus many more well-known individuals. In addition, we were shown the final resting place of a selection of several other famous people.



I was particularly pleased when we stopped at the Tate Mausoleum where Sir Henry Tate was buried. When my late partner, Streatham Society chairman, Brian Bloice, was cremated six years ago, I had his ashes scattered in the memorial garden the other side of the wall behind the mausoleum.

Brian's passion for archaeology, and the early industries of the South Bank of the Thames expanded to his research into the Doulton pottery and later to Sir Henry Tate, Lambeth benefactor and resident of Park Hill, Streatham, and Streatham architect, Sir Ernest George.

- Photos: - James Henry Greathead,
railway and tunnelling engineer
- Sir Hiram Maxim, weapons inventor
of the machine gun
- The Greek Orthodox Cemetery
- The Tate Mausoleum
(Photos MB)*

The Tate is the first of three terracotta mausolea designed by the firm of George & Peto using the craftsmen of the Doulton pottery works in north Lambeth. The interior ceiling design of a marble and glass mosaic angel surrounded by 149 stars was requested by Henry Tate. It is Grade II* listed.



This beautiful burial ground, landscaped by William Tite, was completed in 1836. It is well worth a visit. Monthly tours, organised by The Friends, are advertised on their website.

Crypt and churchyard tour

On Monday 13th September John W Brown, our resident local historian, Streatham Society archivist and publisher, led a comprehensive tour of St Leonard's Church, Streatham's oldest building. Exploring the well-preserved medieval crypt (*below*), the church and churchyard, 14 visitors were most appreciative.



John's history *St Leonard's Church* is on sale from John or the Streatham Society's website. (Photos MB)



The Grounds of Park Hill, a guided tour



*Robert Doyle leading his tour (above)
and the distant view of Park Hill mansion
from the lake*



The Streatham Society's final event for the Lambeth Heritage Festival was on Sunday 26 which repeated the event on May 30. Henry Tate Gardens tours were led by Robert Doyle and John Brown. Liz Burton booked everyone in and sold many of the books I supplied.

We were prepared for the limited parking because of the Kisstory event on the common but we did not anticipate the long queues of vehicles waiting for petrol at all the surrounding suppliers. Several members who had travelled by bus were badly delayed. I hope they still enjoyed the tour.

But at least the sun shone and the Kisstory music was not too loud. We received many compliments.

It is several years since the Streatham Society hosted so many Festival events. This has taken an incredible amount of organisation, especially as, despite restrictions, for 18 months, we also continued

to provide an online programme and newsletter. This achievement owes a great deal to Mark Bery, our secretary, webmaster and social media officer. Grateful thanks and admiration from all of us.

THE SEPTEMBER GATHERING IN THE ROOKERY

A Sign of the Time? - 1



This was what faced the volunteers in the Rookery when they opened up on September 16th, just two days before the Rookery Fair. Vandalism had broken in and thrown then kicked several of the benches from the terrace down the slope.

These benches display plaques donated in memory of those departed who loved the Rookery. Only recently had they been repaired and painted.

The Fair opened on Saturday 18th. A display of the benches with explanation and notices informing visitors of the vandalism, made a shocking contrast to the stalls and happiness which rewarded the hard work of the volunteer organisers. Hopefully the donations on the day and publicity on social media will pay for the repairs.



Fortunately lovely weather, the Farmers' Market, gift and craft stalls, good food, drink and entertainment made the Fair a most enjoyable occasion for everyone.

OTHER SEPTEMBER EVENTS

Dog Show on Streatham Common (Sunday Sept 5)

I went to the Show but because of the crowd, I couldn't get near the arena to photograph the star dogs.

Wellfield Road Railside Garden (Sunday Sept 5)

Those who volunteer to make this rather difficult site so beautiful are to be congratulated. I met friends I had not seen for two years and sampled delicious cake.

Wind Day on Streatham Common (Sunday Sept 12)

Because there was no time to arrange the annual Kite Day, this small event replaced it. But I saw only two small kites aloft as there was only a gentle breeze.

... and others too numerous to report, including ...

Streatham Free Film Festival - Screenings all over Streatham.

Little Big Peace Event - at St Margaret the Queen Hub new community venue.

AND IN OCTOBER ... after this issue had gone to press ...

The Streatham Festival - including ... **Streatham Strut; Streatham Literary Festival; Streatham Arts Festival; Art in the Pavilion; Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre's Imaginarium** and a wealth of talks, workshops and displays.

I hope there will be a few photos of these to brighten up our Winter issue.

JH

LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

RIPLEY HOUSE, STREATHAM COMMON SOUTH *(See p.3)*



1. (Right) No. 9 Streatham Common South with no. 10 (left) behind the trees
2. No 10 - Ripley House, before the front garden was re-landscaped

RIPLEY HOUSE, 10 STREATHAM COMMON SOUTH

The Open Garden event at Ripley House encouraged me to search the internet and our records to discover more of the history of this beautiful house. I found the often quoted connection to Thomas Ripley, the famous architect who is reputed to have designed and lived in the house, is allegedly unsubstantiated.

In 2012 **John W Brown**, our archivist and local historian, wrote the following article in *Streatham Society News* no.211:

“THE BICENTENARY OF RIPLEY HOUSE

There are few surviving buildings in Streatham that have celebrated their bicentenary and the newest to add to this list is Ripley House, 10 Streatham Common South, which was erected in 1812.

This fine Regency building was widely reputed to date to the late 18th century but is first listed in the parish rate books in 1812.

It appears to have been built for, or acquired by, William Parkinson. It was not until 1830 that Mrs Sarah Ripley occupied the property. She was the young widow of Richard Ripley and it is likely she extended the house which originally had its entrance at the west side of the building. It was from this period that the property became known as Ripley House.

The Ripleys had formerly lived on the west side of Balham Hill. Richard was the son of John Ripley who was Churchwarden of St. Leonard's parish church in 1805. In 1819 John left £240 in his will for the relief of six poor men and women of Streatham. This is one of the ancient charities of the parish and is still administered today.

Despite its grand age, Ripley House is not as old as its near neighbour, No. 9 Streatham Common South, formerly known as Southcote and now South House.

Again, this house was said to have been built in 1789 but is shown as "a new house" in the 1810 parish rate book. Nevertheless, it is believed to be the oldest surviving house in Streatham. Although much altered over the years it remains a fine Georgian house with hipped roof, dormer windows and a fine radial fanlight over the door.

Two small statues of seated lions look out over the common from the two corners of the roof ledge, both recent additions dating from sometime after 1972.

This property is a Grade II listed building of architectural and historic significance, and like its neighbour, Ripley House, forms an important part of the Streatham Common Conservation area."

John has recently had the opportunity to re-investigate the main internet posts concerning Ripley House.

He writes: "As I previously suspected, it contains numerous factual errors. The claims concerning the antiquity and design of the house which have been published in various sources, as well as repeatedly quoted by estate agents when selling the property, may not be strictly accurate. I admit I have been guilty of repeating such claims in good faith only to subsequently discover through detailed research that this may not be the case.

'In 1996, when the house was owned by Bernard Jupp; he very kindly allowed me to inspect the property at which time he did some preliminary research into its history. Unfortunately, he did not have access to the deeds at the time so I was unable to examine these.

'My preliminary researches suggested that the house dates from 1812 when it first appeared in the parish rate books of the period. It appeared to have been built for, or acquired by, William Parkinson. The property seems to have been empty in 1815 and a notation in the rate books suggests that it was then connected with a Mrs Ray, whose husband was a well-known builder and prominent resident of Streatham at that time. By 1817 it was occupied by John Higgins who lived there until 1821 when James Campbell resided there for a year. Between 1823 and 1825 William Morris was in residence.

'It was not until 1827 that Mrs Sarah Ripley occupied the property. She was the young widow of John Richard Ripley and it is likely that she probably extended the house to accommodate her growing family and it likely that it was from this period that the property became known as Ripley House.

‘The link between the Ripley family of Streatham and Thomas Ripley still has to be investigated. However, it is unlikely that the house was built by the Ripleys as there were previous occupants before they took up residence.

‘It is possible an earlier building occupied the site prior to 1812 and perhaps the deeds may include a reference to this. Rocques map of 1746 suggests buildings in the area of the property, as does a late 18th century (c.1780) map of the Crooke Ellison and Bates estate, who were large landowners in south Streatham at the time.

‘A Mr Ripley first appears in the rate books in 1792 at which time he was living on the west side of Balham Hill. John Richard Ripley was Churchwarden of St Leonard’s parish church in 1805 and in 1819 left in his will £240 to the Rector and Churchwardens of Streatham, to be invested in Navy 5% annuities, the interest of which was to aid the relief of six poor men and women belonging to Streatham, who were not in receipt of parochial relief. This is one of the ancient parish charities which I believe to still be in existence and administered by the Rector of Streatham, although the sums involved today have been badly eroded by inflation.

‘The present frontage of the house dates from c.1928 when it was refronted by Masons the builders who since the 19th century occupied the builders’ yard now run by Lewis.”

“Subsequent research leads me to make the following comments:

‘Although the house was built in 1812 it was not occupied by a member of the Ripley family until 1827. It is therefore impossible to have been built or designed by Thomas Ripley who died in 1758 or remodelled in 1764 as claimed.

‘A close examination of the Rate Books leads me to believe that the site on which Ripley House was built was previously a field as no building is recorded on the site in previous rate entries. The buildings featured on Rocques Map of 1746, are therefore likely to relate to other properties on Streatham Common South.

‘I have not been able to connect the Streatham Ripley family with Thomas Ripley, and a connection still has to be established.

‘J R Ripley could not have occupied the house in 1764 as it was not built until 1812. I examined the cellar when the Jupps were living in the property and saw nothing that would lead me to believe the building was once an ale house and there are no post 1812 references that I discovered which would support this claim. Almost certainly wine could have probably been stored in one of the alcoves in the cellar, but this would have been for the consumption of those living there. I examined all the pub licensing records for Streatham at the London Metropolitan Archives and they all refer to established pubs in the area and there were none that could have related to Ripley House.

‘Reference to the stables at the back of the house which were demolished in 1918 probably relate to the horses used by the household and I have found no contemporary reference to the property being associated with the coaching trade. Be that as it may, horses may have been put to pasture in the fields at the rear of the house, but again I have found no specific references concerning this.

‘As to the ‘folklore’ reference to Dick Turpin having hidden there after stealing the ‘Manor House Silver’ in 1738, I have discovered no such references in contemporary records. I would refer you to the article in the last *Streatham Society News* in which I wrote about Turpin’s connections with Streatham and the surrounding area, and the claim he hid in a cottage in Streatham, but this was said to be in Hermitage Lane not Streatham Common South. Had he stolen the ‘Manor House Silver’ it is highly likely this would have been recorded, but again I have found no such reference in contemporary writings.

‘I could go on. Many of the aforementioned claims probably first appeared in Estate Agents particulars many years ago concerning the house and their frequent repetition has turned fiction into fact.”

John W Brown /edited JH

THE EARL OF STREATHAM - WILLIAM MILDIN KING OF THE JUNGLE

Are you sitting comfortably? Thomas Llewellyn Jones wants to tell you a story: “The incredible, but true saga of William Charles Mildin, the 14th Earl of Streatham, who lived for 15 years as ape-man and jungle king!” His tale is entitled THE MAN WHO REALLY WAS ... TARZAN and was first published in March 1959 in the American Magazine, *Man’s Adventure*.

Thomas begins his tale with his boyhood memories of pretending to be Tarzan when playing with his sister and of his admiration of ‘Edgar Rice Burroughs’ fabulous hero, Tarzan of the Apes”.

“We followed him through innumerable adventures with his horde of friendly anthropoid apes, his indomitable side-kick, the elephant, and the other assorted denizens of the jungle; he wreaked his fury on the endless chain of villains who were attempting to interfere with normal Jungle fun and games”, he writes and then goes on to reveal a truly fascinating story of the man who inspired Burroughs to write his Tarzan novels. The feature reads as follows:

Tarzan, as Mr. Burroughs portrayed him, was a young English nobleman: a certain Lord Greystoke. who was lost in the jungle as an infant and grew up among the apes. As he appeared in print, there was no doubt in anyone’s mind that he was a fictional character - a literary invention - pure and simple. There never was a “Lord Greystoke”. That particular name was made up, pulled right out of the air.



*Early cover of the book
'Tarzan of the Apes'*



*Tarzan, as depicted in
'Man's Adventure'*

But the actual character, the person on whom the entire series was based, did live. There really was a man - an English nobleman who, shipwrecked on the jungle coast of Africa, was cared for by the apes, grew up with them and eventually survived a thousand adventures before returning to London to assume his rightful title and position. The man was William Charles Mildin, 14th Earl of Streatham. For 15 years, between 1868 and 1883, his life was the prototype of Tarzan.

Although many of the details were unknown at the time, the broad outlines of his story were fully known to the public.

The *London Times* published several articles on the noble Earl, and more romanticized versions of his adventures appeared in several of the English illustrated papers and magazines of the late 19th century.

Edgar Rice Burroughs had ample opportunity to study these stories before creating his own character. And the similarities between Lord Streatham's sojourn in Africa, and Tarzan's, are too many to be merely coincidental. All this came to light rather recently. For the existence of a 50-year-old story in the files of old newspapers was not even noticed when the first Tarzan novels appeared.

It wasn't until late 1957, some 74 years after the event, that the spotlight was first thrown on the entire affair. It came about almost accidentally, and since that time the family solicitors of the Mildins have made every effort to hush the story up.

There was no hint of the unusual when Lord Edwin George Mildin, the 15th Earl, died in September 1937. His Lord-

ship had no heirs and so it was not considered surprising when the huge family estate was bequeathed largely to charity.

There was a proviso in the testament requiring that all family papers be kept secret, under lock and key, 20 years following the Earl's death. But that was normal too. Many people prefer to keep the details of family history quiet until all living participants have passed away. It avoids a lot of unpleasantness.

To a solicitor, the commands of a client are ironclad. And so, right after the Earl of Streatham had died, a formal notice appeared among the day's legal advertisements, advising all interested parties that the papers of the Mildin family would be unsealed.

The story that then unfolded was odder than odd - stranger than strange - and proved once again that truth can often put fiction to shame.

"I was only eleven," wrote Lord Mildin, the father of the Earl of Streatham who died in 1937, "when, in a boyish fit of anger and pique, I ran away from home and obtained a berth as cabin boy aboard the four-masted sailing vessel, Antilla, bound for African ports-of-call and the Cape of Good Hope."

Lord William described the voyage from England and down the African Coast in great and meticulous detail. Then he told of a violent storm which caught the Antilla in the Gulf of Guinea - a storm which raging for over 72 hours, wrecked the vessel.

"When the wind subsided. I discovered I was the only survivor. I was alone in the gulf waters clinging to a piece of wreckage. Fortunately, I was being borne toward shore."

At this point, Bennet sent for old shipping records. Yes, the account checked through - at least that far. The four-masted sailing vessel Antilla had indeed sailed from Bristol, England in 1868 - and, according to Lloyd's Register was lost "with all hands" off the African coast in October 1868!

The document the solicitors held in their hands then told of how young William Mildin was washed ashore at a point probably about midway between what is now Pointe-Noire and Libreville in French Equatorial Africa.

The area was largely uninhabited when the child castaway dragged himself upon the beach. The thick, interlaced jungle came down to within 30 yards of the water's edge - and the boy lay there on the sand, exhausted and terrified.

"I dared not search for natives for I had always heard that they were savages - head-hunters and cannibals," he wrote. "Instead, I waited until I had regained some strength and went directly into the jungle in the hopes of there finding food and water."

It was on his very first foray into the jungle that William stumbled upon a colony of apes. Evidently the primates had never seen a white human before. Instead of running from him, they drew closer, chattering excitedly and with great interest.

“For some strange reason I was not afraid of these strange creatures,” he goes on. “They were hideous to look upon but nonetheless seemed gentle and harmless.”

Their initial surprise subsiding, the apes offered the castaway nuts, grubs and roots to eat, thrusting the food at him with their long grotesque arms and hands. Starved, the youngster smiled gratefully, took the food and ate it.

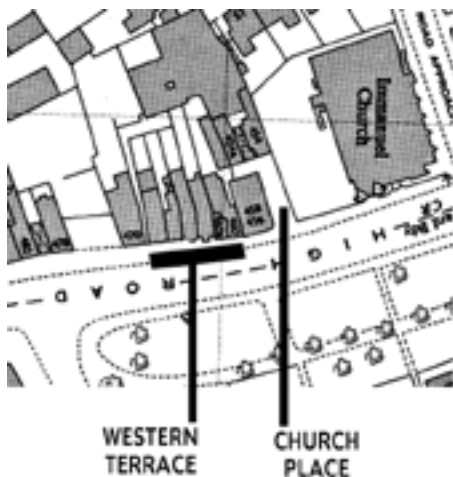
“I was terribly ill afterwards and the apes appeared to understand this. One ancient female hunched her way over to me and cradled me in her arms.”

Lord William was, in fact, ‘adopted’ by the apes. After he had recovered from his immersion, they led him to a clearing where they lived.

To be continued...

JWB

VILLAGE STREATHAM - CHURCH PLACE & WESTERN TERRACE



Church Place and Western Terrace

Many fond and happy memories of “Old Streatham” were brought to mind by Yvonne Watkins’ fascinating article in a recent edition of *Streatham Society News* about the ancient parade of shops that used to stand opposite Streatham Common, on the site now occupied by Sainsbury’s supermarket.

This picturesque terrace of five small cottages was originally known as Western Terrace, as they stood at the western end of Streatham Common. They were subsequently converted into small shops and became Nos. 460-468 Streatham High Road.

At the southern end of the terrace a path led to a rear yard where four little cottages had been erected facing the tiny back gardens of the shops.

At the northern end of Western Terrace was a small archway leading to a yard and stabling at the rear of No. 460, next to which was a dwelling comprising of Nos. 1 and 2 Church Place, as it stood immediately to the south of Immanuel Church. This building later became Nos 456 and 458 Streatham high Road.

Further north, between these dwellings and the grounds of the church, was a narrow passageway leading to a house at the rear of No. 456 and a small detached double fronted house which was No. 454 Streatham High Road. This had been erected on the site where three small cottages had once stood.

Western Terrace and Church Place formed part of the cluster of dwellings that were developed around Greyhound Lane and formed the ancient hamlet of South Streatham. These quaint little cottages were built using old ships' timbers and the ceilings and walls were constructed from mud and animal hair. The large wooden beams



Church Place, next to Immanuel Church

which formed the frame of the cottages probably came from the numerous ship breakers' yards that were kept busy during and after the Napoleonic Wars. The terrace was cheaply constructed, and the rooms of these humble dwellings were extremely small, indicating their origins as labourers' cottages which were originally occupied by poor working-class families employed on local farms.

By the mid-1800s, the ground floor of the house at the northern end of the terrace had been converted into a beer shop known as the Coach and Horses. Despite its tiny size, the building attracted a thirsty clientele who could enjoy a cheap beer without the comforts normally associated with larger pubs and it became a popular meeting place for those who were not welcome at the nearby Pied Bull or the Greyhound public houses.

For some years the establishment was run by one of Streatham's most talented cricketers called Daniel Day (1807-1887). He was born in Streatham on the 14th of June 1807, the son of the village carpenter, Thomas, and his wife Sarah, and was baptised at the ancient parish church of St. Leonard on 19th July 1807.

In his prime, Daniel stood 5 feet 9 inches tall and weighed 14 and a half stone and was a gifted right-hand batsman and right-arm fast medium (roundarm) bowler. He played regularly for the Dulwich and Streatham Cricket Clubs, but such was his enthusiasm for the game he also found time to play for Camberwell, Carshalton and Croydon Cricket Clubs. Such was his skill with ball and bat he later played for the Surrey County team and in several England sides.



Daniel Day

Day also invented, and became the patentee, for ‘tubular guard gloves’ and arranged for the India-rubber factory, later taken over by P.B. Cow, to manufacture them. The old rubber factory building survives today and now forms part of Sainsbury’s supermarket at Streatham Common.

Daniel continued to live in Streatham until around 1842 when he was invited by the President of the Marylebone Cricket Club to take over the running of the South Hants Club and Ground at Southampton.

Day died in Southampton in 1887 and left instructions in his will that he should be buried with his cricket bat, worm-eaten with age, together with his pads and walking stick.



*Revd Stenton Eardley,
first Vicar of Immanuel
Church*

By the time the Rev. Stenton Eardley arrived in Streatham to begin his ministry at the newly built Immanuel Church in 1854, the old beer shop was known by the rather quaint name of the Dewdrop. However, despite the change of name there appears to have been little change in the quality of the clientele and its band of boisterous boozers had earned the establishment a rowdy reputation.

Being a staunch supporter of the temperance movement, Eardley felt the shop was a bad influence on the poor in his parish, particularly as it stood close by his church, and he successfully campaigned for its closure.

To be continued...

JWB



*The first Immanuel Church at
Streatham Common*



*Western Terrace and Immanuel
Church*

SOME EARLY STREATHAM ANTIQUARIANS

As Graham Gower detailed in a recent edition of the *Streatham Society News*, the Society can trace its origins to the former Streatham Antiquarian and Natural History Society which was founded in 1933 and of which Graham is probably the sole living member, having been associated with the group as a young boy in the 1950s. Commonly known as the Streatham Antiquarian Society, the group changed its name to the Streatham Local History Society at its annual meeting in 1951.

A prominent founder-member of the group was Harold Bromhead (1869-1943), who was its first secretary. He lived at Mirfield, 28 Conyers Road, and was by profession an art valuer who advised the famous writer, Rudyard Kipling, on the worth of his paintings.

As well as his voluntary work for the Antiquarians, Harold was also chairman of the Streatham Ratepayers' Association and an active member of Streatham's ancient parish church of St. Leonard.

He wrote a number of books on the history of Streatham including *The Heritage of St. Leonard's Church* (1932) and *Streatham's Beginnings* (1936), as well as numerous articles for the St. Leonard's parish magazine and the *Streatham News*. It is from his research that much of our knowledge of certain aspects of Streatham's history stems.

Harold died in 1943 and his widow, Ethel Bromhead, continued to support the work of the Antiquarian Society as a member of its council, and later as a Vice-President of the Society. She spent many years after her husband's death putting his Streatham papers in order, maintaining his Streatham newsclip files, and contributing items of historical interest to the St. Leonard's parish magazine.

In April 1949, the effigy of Sir John Ward, which had previously rested under the staircase in the south porch, was removed to a more prominent position under the Howland monument in the tower. This is the last remaining part of the old 14th century church which Sir John Ward built. The expense of the removal was met by Ethel Bromhead, who also paid for the plinth on which the effigy now rests, in memory of her husband. The plinth bears the coat of arms of Sir John Ward and has the following inscription:

"In the 14th century this church was rebuilt by Sir John Ward and this damaged effigy, being a part of the memorial erected to his memory, is placed here in the



Harold Bromhead with the old parish weights and measures in the 1930s

only remaining portion of the building by Ethel M Bromhead in memory of her husband Harold M Bromhead who passed to his rest 14th April, 1943, in his seventy-fourth year. A devoted servant of this parish.”

Following Ethel's death, her home at 28 Conyers Road, was acquired by the Abbeyfield Society in 1967. They purchased the property for £5,700 and spent an additional £5,893 converting it into flatlets for retired people. A branch of the Society was launched in Streatham in 1964 by the Rotary Club as a means of providing sheltered independent accommodation for retired people. The former Bromhead family home in Conyers Road was the first of several such properties established by the Society in Streatham.



*Sir Gordon Hearn (left)
collecting war savings from Alderman
and Mrs Mills during WW2*

Following Harold Bromhead's death in 1943, the position of Secretary and Treasurer of the Streatham Antiquarian Society remained vacant, the duties being absorbed by the then President, Col. Sir Gordon Risley Hearn CIE DSO (1872-1953).

Sir Gordon lived at 52 Woodbourne Avenue. He trained at the Royal Military Academy, Woolwich, and served in India and southeast Asia from 1894 to 1926, during which period he was chief engineer of the

Indian State Railways and worked on the construction of the railway through the Khyber Pass. As well as being the founder-president of the Streatham Antiquarian and Natural History Society he was also chairman of the Streatham Ratepayers' Association.

During the war he wrote and produced a series of Streatham local history notes and in 1953, assisted by Ethel Bromhead, he compiled *An Itinerary of Streatham* which took the form of a journey along Streatham's streets highlighting the places of interest encountered along the way and giving brief details concerning their history. It was this publication which chiefly sparked my own interest in the local history of the town and was the inspiration for my *Streatham Now & Then* series of books (*available from the Streatham Society's website*).

It was not until 1947 that the joint positions of Secretary and Treasurer of the Antiquarian Society were filled again, when Mr W.G.S. Ward of 106 Heybridge Avenue, took up the posts. William Ward, commonly known as Bill, was a founder member of the Society and had served for many years on its Council.

Bill started his career as a reporter on the *Brixton Free Press* in 1926, joining the *Streatham News* in 1929, eventually becoming assistant editor of the paper. He was a keen sportsman and wrote for the paper under the pen name of "All

Rounder". He later became the Sports Editor for the South London News Group. Bill was a keen sportsman and played for the Streatham Cricket Club and the Streatham Old Grammarians' Cricket Team. He was president of the Gonville Bowling Club and secretary of the Croydon Bowling Association.

He wrote articles on the history of Streatham for the *Streatham News* and acted as Question Master at the Streatham Local History Society's Brain Trust evenings which were held in the early 1950s. He later became a Vice-President and President of the Society. He died, aged 78, in 1986.

Bill Ward's papers and books are held in Lambeth Archives as the Ward Collection under the reference IV/148. This holding includes a number of photograph albums containing old pictures of Streatham, and newspaper clippings etc, dating from 1920-1957. Many of the photographs in the collection were taken for use by the *Streatham News* although they were not all published in the newspaper.

Much of the other material donated by Bill has been absorbed into the collection of the Streatham Antiquarian Society at the archives, filed under reference IV/66, which also includes Harold and Ethel Bromhead's papers.

JWB



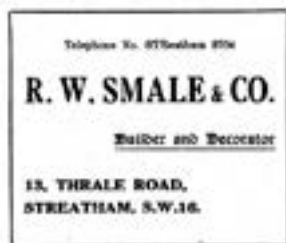
Presentation of a photograph of the last tram to run in Streatham by E Pearson, Chairman Streatham Ratepayers Association, to Mr WGS Ward at The White Lion

THE STREATHAM AND MITCHAM DISTRICTS PURCHASING GUIDE

Over the years I have been able to periodically add to my collection of old copies of the *Streatham News* when past editions have been given to me by friends who have been re-laying carpet and discovered them used as underlay when disposing of their old floor covering.

Recently, I received a bumper bundle of old documents discovered in a similar way by Moyra Heggie when workmen were lifting floorboards at her house in Gleneldon Road. Why this fascinating collection of ancient papers was secreted away beneath the floor over 70 years ago remains a mystery as they have no commercial value, now or then, although they are fascinating to the local historian and make a valuable addition to my Streatham archive.

Most of the documents relate to the Co-operative Insurance Society whose local agent resided in Gleneldon Road in the late 1940s, from which period the material dates. I can only assume that he may have used this safe hiding hole as a temporary depository for premiums he collected and sundry business papers and when



he vacated the premises items of no value or interest to him were left there to rot away.

Among the bundle of papers was an old letter from Pratts, Streatham's famous department store, advising the agent in March 1946 that the utility furniture he had ordered was now ready for delivery. The letter sent just a few months after the end of the Second World War includes an interesting printed message at the bottom of the page which reads: "If you do not require this letter for reference may we suggest that you use the back of it should you wish to reply". A reminder of paper shortages after the war and a continuation of the wartime recycling and make do and mend philosophy.

But the real gem among Moyra's discovery was a local advertising brochure issued in November 1947, and no doubt posted through the doors of local residents to encourage trade. I have never seen this particular edition before and although 10,000 copies were issued, this could now be the sole survivor. Such items were often discarded and thrown away, much as many residents do today with unwanted pizza leaflets or Estate Agent fliers.

Called the *Streatham and Mitcham Districts Purchasing Guide*, this simple 8-page brochure was delivered to local houses, each of which enjoyed a year's "Free Accident Insurance" as part of the promotion. This may have been the reason why our local Co-op Insurance Agent kept his copy safely under the floor.

Sad to report, none of the business's advertising in the booklet now exist. Gone are the jewellers Charles F Smith of 416 Streatham High Road, and Jessie, the hairdresser offering "cold permanent waving", and "Permalette dyeing and bleaching" at 145 Streatham Road is no more. Mack & Mack, Estate Agents, established 20 years in 1947, have long

vacated their premises at 1 Streatham Vale and H. Marchant, a builder offering “War damage repairs” no longer plies his trade at 63 Chilmark Road, Streatham Vale. G & R Lester’s phone will remain unanswered should you choose to dial STReatham 6579 as they have long left 5 Beechcroft Mansions and you will now have to go elsewhere for “the best cover for your insurance at the lowest premiums”. Lilian Siegel no longer offers “personal attention for all your beauty Requirements” at 183 Streatham High Road and sadly, Alfred C King, has packed away his gold medal and the diplomas he received in London and Brighton for tinting ladies hair at 4 Leigham Hall Parade. One of the firms advertising in the booklet proudly boasted of having been established 54 years (founded 1893) but alas, W Blewitt & Co, Builders and Decorators of 20 Greyhound Lane, is established no more.

Of particular interest to me was the advert for Bertram Cowen’s garage in Hermitage Lane which I knew well as it was only a short distance from my home in Lower Streatham. Sadly, this once thriving business was swept away and its showrooms and repair facilities were demolished just a few years ago to make way for a Lidl’s supermarket.

Although it is sad when once well-known and much appreciated local businesses close down, we should take heart in that in subsequent years their premises are almost invariably taken over by other traders and the commercial life of our High Road and neighbouring streets continues in another form.

The current Corona virus has caused some long established local businesses to cease operations for reasons well beyond their owners’ control, such as E & A Wates in Mitcham Lane and the Hideaway in Streatham High Road.

However, hopefully, new enterprises may take their place and so the commercial life of our town may continue as it did in the late 1940s when 10,000 copies of the *Streatham and Mitcham Districts Purchasing Guide* were thrust through local letterboxes to provide a boost to local traders then recovering from the devastation of the Second World War.



HAPPY 70th BIRTHDAY! - Streatham's Brown triplets make history



Seventy years ago on September 18th 1951, Streatham triplets Allen (eldest), John and Maurice (youngest) Brown were born. This photo shows them left-right, born 20 minutes apart in age order, with big sister Pam. Every year on their birthday until they rebelled a few years later, they were photographed by the local press, smartly washed, dressed and brushed.



John (with nappy showing) is proud that his birthday is shared with notable poet and author, Samuel Johnson (*left*), born September 18th 1709. Dr Johnson frequently stayed at Hester and Henry Thrale's home, Streatham Park (demolished). He was a regular worshipper in the Thrale's pew at St Leonard's Church.

John, noted Streatham historian and prolific local history writer and publisher, is also archivist for St Leonard's Church and the Streatham Society. See the photo of John today on p.11 leading his tour of St Leonard's Church. In different clothing and a wig, he could pass for Dr Johnson!

Happy birthday all four - Pam's birthday was the following day.

CORRECTION

In our last issue the captions Old Cottages in Hermitage Lane (p.23) and The Greyhound Pub (p.34) should be reversed. Apologies!

JH

STREATHAM SOCIETY REPORTS

STREATHAM SOCIETY ANNUAL REPORT 2020 - 21

Although the restrictions imposed by Covid 19 continued to affect our meetings it did at least allow time to reflect and reconsider our approach to coping in the short term and the longer term.

Firstly, we initiated a series of very successful Zoom meetings which were well received and secondly, we had been aware for a long time that the success of our meetings at Woodlawns had led to more demands for fewer places; as our popularity increased so did the demand on space.

It was felt that a larger venue was needed and following discussions with the committee and St Leonard's Church it was decided that, following a VERY successful meeting in September, all future meetings would be held in the church. The advantage of this is the increased visibility of the screen and more than adequate seating. We now look forward to the year ahead in a greatly enhanced venue and a number of interesting and lively speakers.

Membership

Our paid membership for 2020 was 273. This was fewer than 2019 but good considering we had no live meetings after March because of government restrictions. We welcomed 30 new members, £453 was donated with subscriptions. 141 members supplied an email contact address. As live meetings ended in March it was decided that subscriptions should be waived for 2021. Therefore income was much reduced.

Publications

We have over 50 titles in our publications which are all advertised on our website. There are 32 Streatham Society titles and 27 John Brown's Local History Publications. John publishes all our books. Lockdown restrictions have resulted in an increase in our online sales. Many of these were for our *Trails* as people took exercise walking around Streatham.

Despite this being a challenging year, we remain excited and optimistic about the future. I would like to thank **all** the committee for their ongoing enthusiasm and hard work. They are: Janis Benson for running the bookstall at the recent Lambeth Heritage Festival and all other events, Mark Berry for his work as secretary and on social media, Russell Henman for arranging speakers, Liz Burton, treasurer, who makes sure our money is spent wisely and Robert Doyle for technical assistance.

I would like to give a special thank you to our Newsletter editor Judy Harris for all the time and effort she puts into producing the excellent quarterly *Streatham Society News* which is always packed with news, photos, information, reports

and dates for our diaries. Please keep sending her your news or memories of Streatham or other items that she can use when putting the items together.

Here's to another year of discovery, fun and wine at meetings!!

Shea Richardson, Acting Chair

THE STREATHAM SOCIETY
INCOME AND EXPENDITURE FOR YEAR ENDING 31st MARCH 2021

GENERAL ACCOUNT	2021	2020
Income		
Notes		
Subscriptions	£ 670.00	£ 2,870.00
Donations	£ 212.20	£ 476.00
1. Raffles	£ --	£ 528.00
1. Refreshments	£ --	£ 470.00
2. Publications	£ 1,695.95	£ 3,313.90
3. Bank Interest	£ 251.05	£ 254.43
5. Cash in hand	£ 51.00	
	<u>£ 2,880.20</u>	<u>£ 7,913.13</u>
Expenditure		
Notes		
5. Affiliation Fees	£ 48.00	£ 48.00
6. Donations	£ 1,670.00	£ 1,592.00
Speakers' fees	£ 180.00	£ 300.00
7. Publications,	£ 1,574.00	£ 1,454.75
8 Printing, postage,		
Stationery	£ 1,668.18	£ 2,440.29
9. Insurance	£ 75.00	£ 75.00
10. Room hire	£ 750.00	£ 1,050.00
11. Miscellaneous	£ 321.72	£ 536.64
	<u>£ 6,286.90</u>	<u>£ 7,496.68</u>
Surplus/deficit	-£ 3,406.70	£ 416.45
CURRENT ASSETS		
Notes		
RBS account	£ 44.84	£ 14,636.08
12. Float for bookstalls	£ 51.00	£ --

MEMBERSHIP - 2022 (recorded from October 2021)

New members: We welcome Sarah Skinner, John Brakband, P Moorhouse, David Richardson-Bunbury and Brian Storey. We hope they enjoy our publications and events.

2022 subscription renewals are now due. These last until December 31st 2022. Annual subscriptions remain unchanged at: Individual £10; Household £15. There is also a Life membership £180.

Payment is via BACS to The Streatham Society (business) account: Sort Code 30-84-68 a/c no 39526068. If you use BACS, please email me confirmation of your payment as I do not have immediate access to the Society's account.

Payment is also accepted by cash or cheque to The Streatham Society to me at meetings or posted to 125 Thornlaw Road, West Norwood SE27 0SQ.

If you prefer, or if your details have changed, our membership application form can be downloaded then posted or scanned to me.

Gift Aid declaration: If you have not already done so, boost your subscription and any donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1. A form can be sent to you on application or is available on our website to email or post to our secretary.

Your email address: Please supply this for our contacts list as it is now our usual method of communication, in addition to our magazine. Your details are not passed on to any other group or individual without your permission, as stated on our privacy policy (see our website - <https://www.streathamsociety.org.uk>).

Subscription acknowledgement: Membership cards will no longer be issued. On-line payments will be acknowledged by email; post payments by my compliments slip with the following *News* issue. In-person payments will have already been recorded at meetings.

Life and other pre-paid members: These are shown on the envelope near your address for this issue (November) of the *Streatham Society News* for all members who paid before October 10th (our copy date).

Streatham Society News: Our quarterly magazine is posted to your address, not emailed. Back copies are available on our website.

Life Membership

Have you considered paying £180 life membership? Life membership, especially with gift aid, would be a very welcome source of income, especially with our considerable loss of income since March 2020 because of Covid restrictions.

In recent years some of our oldest (80+) members have taken out life membership, perhaps realising the benefit of no longer having to remember to pay their subscription annually and that a good proportion of this will be a donation.

In the last 18 months I have also received life memberships (which usually co-

vers two people at the same address) from some of our younger and new members. I am delighted to report that we now have 31 Life Members! What a boost and vote of confidence for the Society - thank you.

Confused? I'm still collecting and explaining at meetings as usual!

RECENT TALKS

(See also our Lambeth Heritage Festival events pages 5 - 12)

Our first in-person meetings of 2021 at St Leonard's Church were:

Brookwood Necropolis Railway (September 7) by John Clarke; 70+ attended. (This was also part of the Heritage Festival programme and picked up and promoted by *IanVisits* on Twitter.)

Bygone Streatham (October 5, after AGM) by John W Brown; c.70 attended.

PLANNING ISSUES

On behalf of the Streatham Society, John W Brown submitted a detailed opposition to the development at 49b Leigham Court Road. This involves the demolition of 49b and development of land at the rear of 47, 49a, 49b and 49c. The demolition of 49b would be to gain access to the rear of the property for the erection of a large four storey residential building.

The Society supported local residents and other local organisations against the granting of planning permission. It would have a major detrimental impact on the Leigham Court Road Conservation area in which it is situated and would destroy one of the finest Victorian exteriors in Streatham.

FACEBOOK MEMBERS

Current membership is over 2,400. It is fascinating to read the wealth of information adding to and publicising our local history. These form the majority of the site's postings. Several posts come from our oldest contributors (80+). If you don't want to join you can read the public site. Google 'Streatham Society' or email the address on the back page of this issue.

MIKE BOWTLE - A resignation

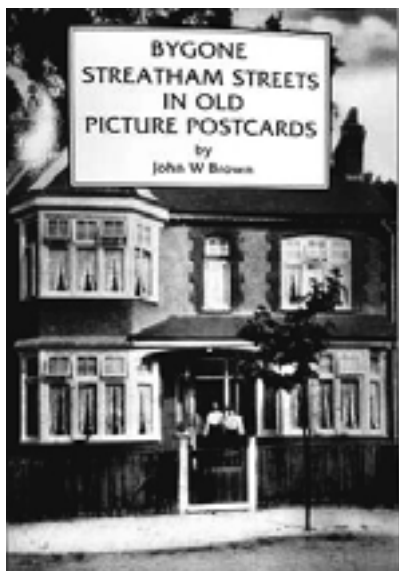
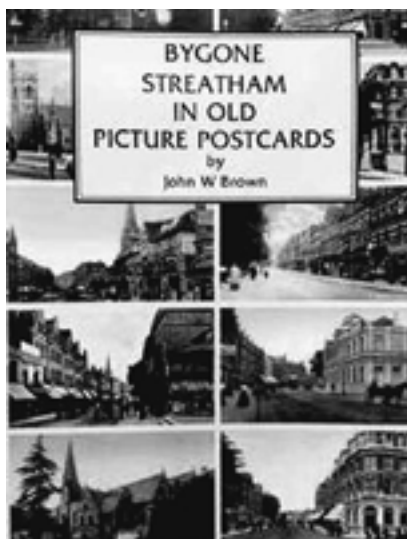
For some years, Mike has fronted our Programming Team with Jill Dudman and Russell Henman. He has now decided to resign. He writes that he feels technology has beaten him and he has therefore "passed his use by date". He is happy to continue helping in any way he can.

Our secretary, Mark Bery, replied with the following appreciation: "Sorry to hear this news. Although I am relatively new to the Society I have been impressed with the breadth of topics and number of talks that have been arranged by the you and the team." Thank you Mike.

JH

PUBLICATIONS

IDEAS FOR CHRISTMAS PRESENTS - From our bookstall or website



The books shown here, published by John W Brown's Local History Publications, are sold via the Streatham Society's website and our meetings and events book stalls. John is our archivist and also that of St Leonard's Church.

He has a wide knowledge of Streatham's history. His books are illustrated from his extensive postcard, photograph and picture collection.

John is happy to answer local history enquiries. His contact details are on p.36.

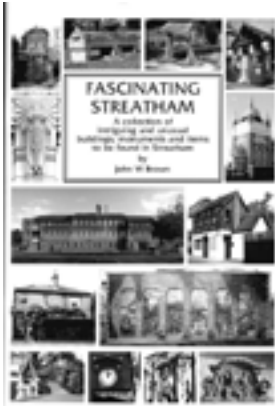
Some 60 local history titles are shown on our website.

The two *Bygone Streatham* books shown are John's most recent publications in his annual series of books which build up to a complete survey of Streatham's local history and development, particularly its expansion over the last 300 years.

The books were the subject of John's October talk 'Bygone Streatham', which followed our AGM.

Bygone Streatham in Old Picture Postcards
and

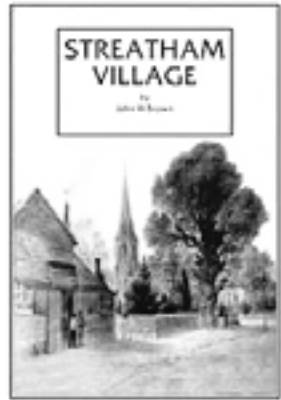
Bygone Streatham Streets in Old Picture Postcards
£6 each (£7.80 incl. p&p)



Fascinating Streatham
£6 (£7.80 incl. p&p)



A Streatham Christmas
£5 (£6.80 incl. p&p)



Streatham Village
£6 (£7.80 incl. p&p)

A SIGN OF THE TIME? - 2

A photo of this new road sign was posted on our Facebook page just too late to include in our last issue. I'm sure those of you who missed it will agree it deserves another airing.

Mark Bery's comment on Facebook is entirely appropriate: "Oh dear! A lovely new road sign but..."

A correct sign has since replaced it.

Please email me any similar local howlers to give us a laugh (?).



The new road sign in Mount Ephraim Lane

JH

CHRISTMAS AND NEW YEAR GREETINGS TO ALL!

May 2022 improve on 2021 and encourage us to meet and enjoy friends and family again.

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

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