

STREATTHAM SOCIETY NEWS

Published quarterly

No. 250 Autumn 2022



LAMBETH LOCAL HISTORY FAIR 2022

Florence Eshalomi Vauxhall M.P. opening the event *(See p.8. Photo DF)*

MEMBERSHIP 2023 - Subscriptions now accepted *(See p.25)*

CELEBRATING NEWSLETTER ISSUE 250 *(See p.27)*

STREATHAM SOCIETY MEETINGS & EVENTS PROGRAMME 2023

MEETINGS

Our monthly meetings are held on the first Tuesday at 7.30pm in St. Leonard's Church, Streatham. Non-members are very welcome but are requested to donate £1 to help cover costs.

Tues 6 Dec **Members' Christmas Party** - Including a talk by John W Brown on **A Streatham Christmas**. Snacks and drinks with a donation will be provided. *2022 & 2023 paid members only please, see p.25.*

2023

Tues 3 Jan **Cubitt's: Streatham, Lambeth and Beyond** Talk by Chris Everett

Tues 7 Feb **Bell Ribiero-Addy, M.P. for Streatham** gives a non-political talk

Tues 7 Mar **The Life and Work of Charles Voysey - The Voysey Society**
Talk by Richard Havelock

Tues 4 Apr **Freemasonry:** Talk by Michael Neville

Tues 2 May **Heritage without a House - Remembering Hester Piozzi's Streatham:** Drs Cassie Ulph and Kate Fennely report on their project and recent study day at Streatham Park Bowling

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

STREATHAM ROUND AND ABOUT

PLANNING IN STREATHAM

The Society has been reviewing how it can play a more active role in local planning in Streatham. It's had a long pedigree in shaping Streatham's development seeking to preserve local heritage and improving wellbeing – the Sainsbury's site on the former Silk Mills is testament to what can be achieved.



Arguably now is the time for us to be exerting a stronger local influence. Nationally there's a lot of talk about pride in place and how local communities can play a greater role in planning. One effect of the pandemic has been making people become more aware of their heritage and conservation of heritage assets is becoming more important – 87 per cent in a recent survey agreed with the statement for finding new uses for historic buildings rather than demolishing them. And there are expectations that public authorities should lead in protecting our heritage. Of the 62 conservation areas in Lambeth (thirty per cent of the Borough) we have a fair number in our area, so we have a lot to protect. "Building Better, Building Beautiful" has been the subject of a major report on development and "Good design" is now being mooted as a key principle for planning. All very laudable.

But there are many challenges. Does Lambeth's Local Plan, which is meant to shape planning across the Borough, have enough emphasis on heritage and history and do busy planning officers and councillors fully understand and recognise these assets? The dominant pressure for development means that heritage considerations in planning applications can be sparse or even side-lined. Pubs for example are part of the history of our community and we're seeing two in Streatham looking as though they've come to the end of their day.

And can we genuinely influence the planning process? There are criticisms that civic societies as voluntary groups aren't in the position to have meaningful engagement at the early proposal stage with developers. As the recognised local amenity society, we are meant to be consulted by Lambeth Council on planning applications for environmental heritage and conservation. But we recognise in common with other civic societies that commenting and keeping up with developments requires demanding work, good intelligence, and local expertise.



Even with our current conservation areas there's a risk they get eroded over time with multiple changes allowed, which combined make the area less attractive. And just walking around for example on Streatham High Road you can see the street clutter piling up – unsightly advertising hoardings and signs etc. As Historic England state “Too much clutter, such as a multitude of road markings or large flashing screens, can create impressions which severely damage historic landscapes”. This combined with the poor state of repair of large buildings such as Century House (*left*) with its clocks stopped at 8.40 and 12.35 detracts from the quality of our townscape.

Our broad high-level objectives can probably be summed up as what one other civic society has claimed as, “preserving the best and improving the rest”. This focuses on preserving our built heritage, ensuring major developments are well planned and take on board heritage aspects and preserving or enhancing value of the characteristics of Streatham including its street scene. Fundamental will be a balanced, expert, and constructive view on planning rather than saying no all the time!

But key will be devising a set of principles to help guide our work and effort and we will be looking at these over the autumn. Involvement in selected planning applications though

will be just one activity as we're very conscious we need to ensure Lambeth Council take heritage into account more prominently and we also need to help protect conservation areas. We'll also be looking at how to provide more “lay information” on the planning system in the newsletter and on our website plus highlighting planning issues on social media. Surveys show that only 56 per cent of people knew they lived in a conservation area and what that meant for them.

We recognise that this is a big agenda and need to have clear priorities. And we will be looking to set up a wider advisory group with expertise in planning, architecture, and heritage as well as local interests.

We would very much welcome thoughts and ideas – please contact via our new email address - streathamsociety.planning@gmail.com

Tim Whitaker, Trustee

MOVED AND TAKEN

Readers will know that Streatham and Brixton Chess Club worked with John Brown of the Society to publish, in October 2021, an account of the first 150 years of the club: *Movers and Takers – a Chess History of Streatham and Brixton 1871-2021*. It has been well-received in chess circles: “Too good to put down; an engrossing whistle-stop tour of 150 years of chess history”. “Wonderfully put together”, said another – a tribute to its fulsome illustrations, many provided by John. The book is a social history of the game in a London neighbourhood, and has been held up in the chess press as an encouragement to other clubs to document their histories. The first print run has sold out!

Another chapter in our long history could now be added: we culminated our 150th anniversary celebrations in a 40-strong chess ‘rapid-play’ tournament at the Mark Bennett Streatham Centre on the 17th of September 2022. We played six fiercely contested one-hour rounds over the day, beginning with a presentation of *Movers and Takers* to Bell Ribeiri-Addy, Streatham’s MP. She made the ceremonial first move of the tournament, and is shown here with the eventual winner Venkat Tiruchirupalli. Bell kindly donated a prize for the lower-strength Minor section.

In addition to many members of S&BCC, we had participants from 14 other clubs across London. It was lovely to have two juniors from Ukraine taking part - over here with parents to escape the war. One of them took first prize in the Minor section, and the other has become a regular team player for the club.

Find out more about us, and our drop in sessions at Streatham Library, from our website <http://streathamchess.org/>

Martin Smith resident, Streatham and Brixton Chess Club



CHRISTOPHER KINGDON'S VISIT



Christopher Kingdon and family

Christopher Kingdon and a number of other members of his family have for many years been members of my Facebook page on the “History of Woodbourne Ave, Streatham”. Christopher also follows the Streatham Society Facebook page.

I was delighted when Christopher, who lives in Stockholm, contacted me earlier this year to ask if we could meet as he intended to visit Streatham. His father Peter (who still lives in Stockholm) lived in Streatham for the first 4 years of his life and Streatham is where his grandfather Hugh Sewell Kingdon had made an enormous impact to our history with the development of Streatham’s entertaining centre in the late 1920’s

John Brown and I met Christopher, his wife Annarikka, and sons Sebastian and Max (*above*). We shared information on Hugh Kingdon and his family and took a brief tour of the area.

Christopher’s father Peter lived at 66 Woodbourne Avenue with his parents Hugh and Gwendolyn (picture courtesy Christopher Kingdon)) in the 1930’s and we showed them the house and also neighbouring “Worcomer”, on the corner of Garrad’s Road and Woodbourne Avenue where Sir Frederick Galer lived. Galer

and Kingdon were two of the three subscribers of the Streatham Hill Playhouse Ltd in 1928. The third subscriber was Sir Nigel Playfair

Hugh Kingdon is the man who bought up the houses between Streatham Hill Station and Telford Avenue to set-up the entertainment centre of the Locarno, Gaumont Palace and Streatham Hill Theatre in Streatham and to whom we owe a great debt.

While in Streatham Christopher made a recording for the Streatham Hill Theatre which can be viewed at: <http://streathamhilltheatre.org/grandson-of-theatre-creator-hugh-sewell-kingdon-visits-streatham-hill>

Gwendolyn Kingdon

Mark Bery



STREATHAM COMMON AWARDS - LONDON IN BLOOM 2022

Streatham Common Cooperative thank the Streatham Common Team of dedicated volunteers and staff, including Streatham Common Community Garden, whose hard work and enthusiasm pushed The Rookery forward to be the best small park in London! The Rookery Gardens and Streatham Common were each awarded Gold and the Streatham Common Local Nature Reserve Silver Gilt.

Love Lambeth reported Lambeth an overall London in Bloom winner for the first time in over 60 years of the Awards. The borough as a whole won the Large City category. Of the 26 applications Lambeth entered, it won 17 Golds (up from 15, last year's previous high) and 9 Silver Gilt.

West Norwood Cemetery and St John's and St Leonard's churchyards were also awarded Gold. Eardley Road Sidings, Palace Road Nature Gardens (Small conservation category), Brockwell Park, Streatham Common's Local Nature Reserve (Large sites) all received awards. Hillside Gardens and Clapham Common were also awarded Gold.

A complete list is shown on Lambeth's *Love Lambeth* website.

Congratulations all!

JH

LAMBETH LOCAL HISTORY FAIR *(Photos MB)*

Held at St John's Church, Waterloo on Saturday 3rd September, this was a wonderful event.



I have attended all these since the early days as Archives Day in Lambeth Archives at the Minet Library, then later with talks in the church community hall opposite. This was a popular venue for many, especially car rivers, but not so easy by public transport. Space was limited and for older visitors access to the community hall was difficult.

The Lambeth Local History Forum then decided to hold the annual event at various town centre venues throughout the borough, the first of these being a great success in our St. Leonard's Church. The only drawback there was the lack of a separate quiet space for talks.

After a Covid break, the next was in Brixton Library, a very good central venue but with limited parking and requiring a lot of book shelf moving.

St Mark's Church, Kennington, also a good central venue was well attended but again a separate talks venue was not possible.

Apart from the prohibitive cost to drive to this year's event at St.



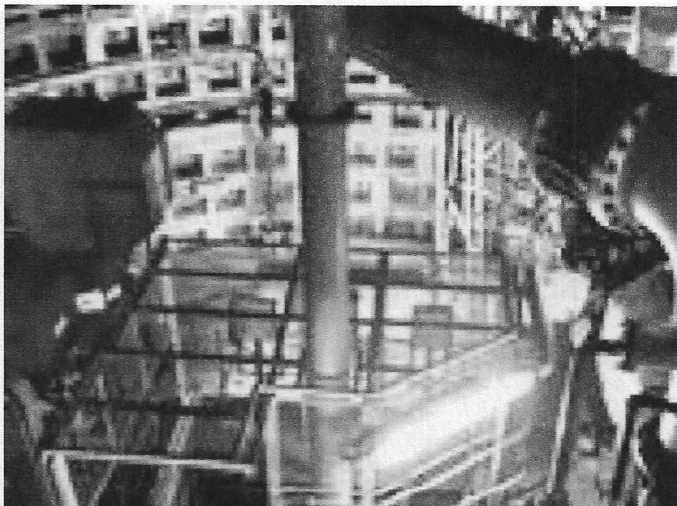
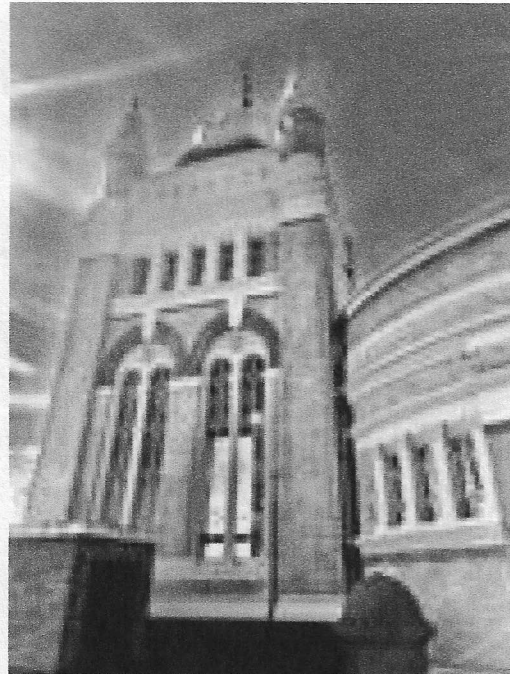
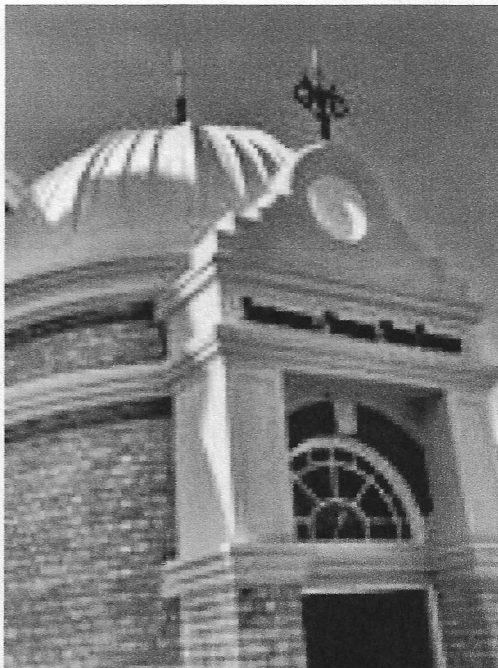
*Marion Gower and John Brown
on the Streatham Society bookstall*

John's, Waterloo, with no parking, this was a perfect venue. The recently refurbished church is a well-designed community centre; light and spacious with a separate refreshment area by the entrance and a large space for talks and displays in the crypt.

Thanks to Dan Fieller who cycled to my house to collect and return our book stock then travelled by train to and from Waterloo, we took more stock than originally planned. We don't sell well outside our area and it is almost impossible to gauge what will sell. Happily proceeds exceeded expectations.

This is an enjoyable event and excellent PR for our local amenity and history societies. Next year's should be closer to home. **JH**

CONYERS ROAD PUMPING STATION - OPEN HOUSE *(Photos MB)*



Again tours round this fantastic building on September 16th and 17th were quickly fully booked. The interior displays some original features, despite now having modern machinery. This time visitors were allowed down into the vast basement (*left*).

Both days had good weather. John W Brown sold local history publications and publicised the Streatham Society on Saturday.

HENRY TATE'S PARK HILL GARDENS TOURS - September 25th



Another brilliant afternoon at Park Hill. Thanks to our tour guides Robert Doyle and John Brown and our new helper Freda Graham (*Freda and John pictured*).

Thanks to the residents of Henry Tate Mews putting up with 70 odd strangers walking through their beautiful gardens.

MB



ART DECO AND MODERNISM *(Photos MB)*

On Sunday July 24th Adrian Whittle led a most enjoyable and informative new walk along Streatham High Road, Streatham Hill and Brixton Hill looking at some of the wealth of buildings from this era we have in Streatham. Included was a glimpse inside The High one of several blocks of flats built at this time. Hopefully this walk will be repeated in 2023.



STREATHAM FESTIVAL - October 7th-16th

Unfortunately our newsletter copy date and therefore a completed newsletter meant there was no opportunity to report on the wide variety of Festival events.

However all were publicised online and in *Heart Streatham* Autumn Issue 75. The latter is no longer distributed to Streatham households but is available from Streatham Library and several participating businesses, including cafés.

Congratulations to all volunteer organisers who, despite recent problems, again managed to produce a lively and interesting programme.

As all other events, volunteers are always needed. Contact the Festival committee for 2023 planning if you would like to help .

STREATHAM SOCIETY SUNFLOWER CHALLENGE

(G/E) Sunflower • Use: Annual. Germination 10 - 15 days. An approx. 2 - 3 m tall sunflower with bright yellow flowers and a dark flower base is highly decorative. Suitable as sight protection on fences and as cut flower. In the winter, the kernels are a productive food source for songbirds! A nutrient-rich, permeable soil is recommended. Fertilize regularly.



Earlier this year the Streatham Society handed out sunflower seeds to encourage those attending our meeting to grow them in their gardens to admire their lovely blooms, provide seeds for birds and pollen for bees in the autumn and to show support for those suffering in the Ukraine for whom the Sunflower is the national flower.

I decided to accept the challenge and planted my seeds in pots and when large enough transferred the young plants to my front and back gardens with varying results.

Those in the front garden grew to over six feet tall, but the poor quality of the soil there resulted in small blooms. However, the bright yellow flowers atop each plant added a much welcome splash of colour to the front of the house and the pollen was greatly appreciated by the large number of bees that made a late autumn visit to my garden.

Those seedlings transplanted to various locations in my back garden fared much better; the quality of the soil there being richer and well cultivated. The plants had larger and stronger stems, huge leaves and massive buds swaying seven feet high in the summer breeze. But then disaster struck. Over a period of a couple of weeks when things were looking so promising and the blooming of the buds

were imminent, when I ventured into the garden I found the massive buds had mysteriously vanished. Some of the leaves were broken from the stems and my plants looked sad and bedraggled.

However, I continued to water them and they continued to grow. Then, some weeks later, to my great surprise, small buds appeared on new shoots which had sprouted from above the broken leaf stems. Later, these small buds bloomed with one plant having as many as eight small sunflowers blossoming at various place along its stem.

Then, one morning as my brother and I were enjoying a late breakfast in the garden, the mystery of the original disappearing buds was solved when we saw a small squirrel climbing one of the sunflower plants using the large leaves like a ladder. When it finally reached one of the flowers it bit it off and dragged it away to eat behind the shed.

It is sad that our plants suffered so, but as we encourage birds, insects and squirrels into the garden it is a price we have to pay.

The sunflowers were much admired by friends who enjoyed a hot tea or a cold beer in our garden throughout the summer and it is good to know the plants also provided sustenance to the many bees and at least one squirrel which paid us a visit as well.



*John's sister Pam and brother Allen inspect the sunflowers
in the front (left) and back gardens*

John W Brown

LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

STREATHAM'S 'GRAND OLD MAN OF LOCAL NEWSPAPERS'



Sir Ray Tindle



Sir Ray Tindle & Lady Tindle with the Queen at the Newspaper Society Golden Jubilee Luncheon at the Savoy in 2002



190 Eardley Rd

Streatham Directory. However, shortly afterwards a brewery engineer called John Tindle, and his wife Mary, took up residence here and on 8th October 1926, their second son was born called Ray.

As a young boy he attended the Strand School in Tulse Hill. The school was evacuated in 1940, and whilst queuing with his school mates at Paddington Station Ray briefly left them to visit the toilet after which he inadvertently joined the wrong queue and ended up in Torquay where he subsequently attended the Torquay Grammar School.

It is always pleasing to read about those who were born and bred in Streatham who have made a major contribution to society, particularly if they were raised in one of our town's smaller houses and later their greater wealth enabled them to enjoy a larger and more comfortable home.

In this regard I refer you to No 190 Eardley Road, a humble house built in the 1920s which appears to have originally been occupied by James Keane, who is listed at this address in the 1925

Accommodated with a family in Paignton, his neighbour there was the advertising manager of the *Torbay Herald & Express*, with whom he became a good friend and from whom he acquired his deep love of local newspapers which was to remain with him for the rest of his life.

Following his demob in 1947, as a Captain in the Devonshire Regiment, he used his £300 gratuity to buy the *Tooting and Balham Gazette*, which at that time had a circulation of only 700 copies an issue. From these humble beginnings Ray built up a huge publishing empire of local newspapers and radio stations which, at its peak, comprised more than 220 titles covering the south and west of England, Wales and the Isle of Man. It also included the *South London Press*, which he bought from *Trinity Mirror* in 2007 and owned until 2018 when it was sold to its present owners which now trade as MSI Media Ltd.

It was Ray's proud boast that he kept his business debt-free.

He was a generous benefactor and supported the Prince's Countryside Fund and a number of ex-servicemen's charities. He was awarded the OBE in 1973, the CBE in 1987 and was knighted in 1994 for services to the newspaper industry, having been president of the Newspaper Society and Master of the Stationers' and Newspaper Makers' Company.

In 2017, at the age of 91, he stepped down as Chairman of his company, Tindle News, in favour of his son Owen, whilst remaining lifetime president of the organisation.



Tooting & Balham Gazette - Early Office at 130 Tooting High Street with detail below





*2-4 Leigham Court Road
South London Press Offices*

As a young boy Ray watched the veteran car run to Brighton as it passed through Streatham which prompted his interest in veteran cars and led to him participating in the event no less than 50 times.

Sir Ray Tindle died on 16th April 2022 aged 95.

When next you visit Streatham Common Station, take a minor detour down Eardley Road to Ray's old family home at No 190 and marvel that from such humble origins, he embarked on such a long and successful career which led to him being widely known as 'the grand old man of local newspapers'.

JWB

A STREATHAM PUZZLE



*On Streatham Common by William John Ferguson
(Print from the Gower Collection)*

captivating view of the Silk Mill by Streatham Common in the 1800s given to me as a special gift by Marion and Graham Gower.

This wonderful image is reproduced from a painting they have, and includes the impressive gold frame surrounding the canvas.

My brother, Allen, and I got into the habit of doing puzzles in the periods of lock-down during the Covid pandemic over the past couple of years. Normally, we have a puzzle 'on the go' all the time and family and friends make their contribution to its completion when they visit us.

Christmas saw a welcome addition to our stock of puzzles, including one with a fas-

Called *On Streatham Common* the painting is by William John Ferguson, a landscape artist born on 5th December 1829 at St. Anne, Soho. He died on the 18th August 1900 in Cricklewood. Thus, I suspect the painting was probably undertaken sometime in the latter half of the 19th century.

The view of the Common captured by Mr. Ferguson is not one that is immediately recognisable. It appears not to include Immanuel Church, which was built in 1854. This prominent building opposite the common may be hidden by the trees or, more likely, did not exist at the time William put his brush to canvas which would more accurately date the painting to the early 1850s at the latest.

The view shows a wealth of trees, shrubs and undergrowth, which emphasises the rural aspect of Streatham in the mid-1800s.

As is our normal practice when starting a puzzle we separate all the edging pieces and put them together to make the framework within which the puzzle could be completed.

Most of the remaining pieces in the box are either gold, being parts of the frame, the various green hues of the common and trees, and the white of the edging pieces and sky.

Over the next couple of days I complete the gold frame, within the edge pieces, and am then ready to slowly join together the various green pieces to reveal the expanse of the common.



Completing the Puzzle

The most difficult part of the puzzle to complete is the wide, white edging pieces as they are all the same colour and offer no clue as to their position on the board.

After several days of pleasurable puzzle making, eventually the challenge is complete and the image of Streatham Common in bygone days is revealed in all its glory.

Having spent so much time putting the pieces together I now feel I know the Victorian expanse of Streatham Common as well as I would have had I been alive a hundred and fifty years ago and had wandered over its green grass or sheltered under one of its numerous trees.

Over the many years I have been researching the local history of Streatham, I have solved many mysteries and puzzles concerning our town's past. However, none has provided me with the unique challenge of assembling 500 mis-shaped, multi-coloured, cardboard pieces as the puzzle kindly given to me by Marion and Graham Gower.

JWB

BONES AND BURIALS IN PLAGUE INFECTED STREATHAM



St. Leonard's - Plague or Black Death

Graham Gower's article on *A Matter of Bones and Burials* in the Spring 2022 edition of the Streatham Society newsletter was a fascinating exploration of Streatham's history during the time of the Black Death in the 14th century. It is a period for which we have few surviving records but Graham used his customary skill and expertise to raise some interesting suggestions worthy of further investigation.

We do know that the parish church of St. Leonard was rebuilt, or enlarged, in the middle of the 14th century by Sir John Ward, either as a thank offering for his safe return from the French Wars or for the deliverance of Streatham from the Black Death, both events occurring at around the same time and being incidents which prompted similar actions elsewhere in England.

As to the burial of plague victims beneath the floor of the church this may well have happened. However, under normal circumstances such burials there were

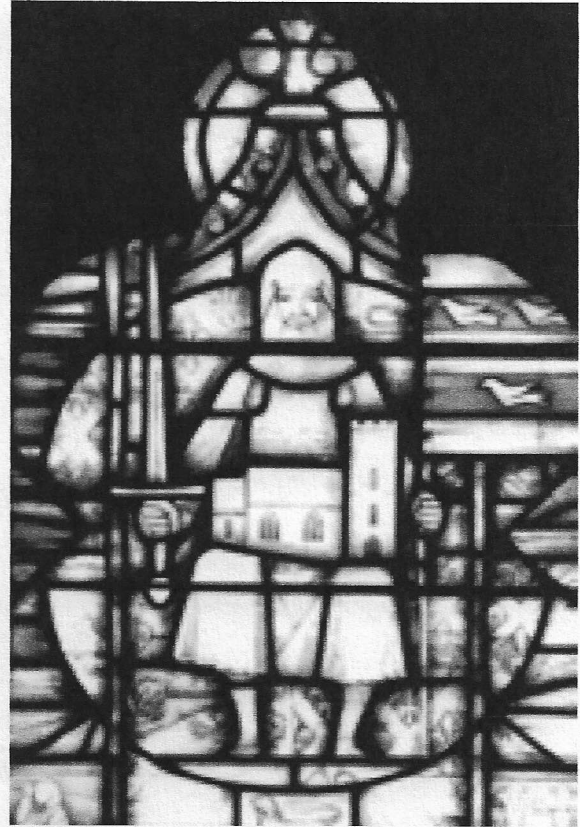
normally limited to the wealthiest residents of the parish with ordinary inhabitants interred in the graveyard surrounding the church.

The area around the altar of the parish church, known as the chancel, was normally held by the Rector, who would allocate (or sell) space there for burials to only the most wealthy of inhabitants, such as Lords of the Manor and local gentry as well as reserving space there for himself and his successors. This is evident should you visit old churches today where the finest memorials are to be found in this area of the church indicating the wealth and status of those interred there.

Other, less influential but well-off parishioners would be buried beneath the floor of the nave, the main body of the church. Indeed, a number of gravestones for these burials can still be seen on the floor of St. Leonard's Church. It was in such a tomb under the floor of the church that Henry Thrale and members of his family were originally interred.

In the churchyard, many graves of less prominent residents, were originally marked with grave boards, rather than headstones, which were very expensive for humble inhabitants to afford. Grave boards were simple planks of wood set up along the length of the grave on which were carved, or written, details of those interred in the grave. When the grave board rotted away through the passing of time the grave was reused.

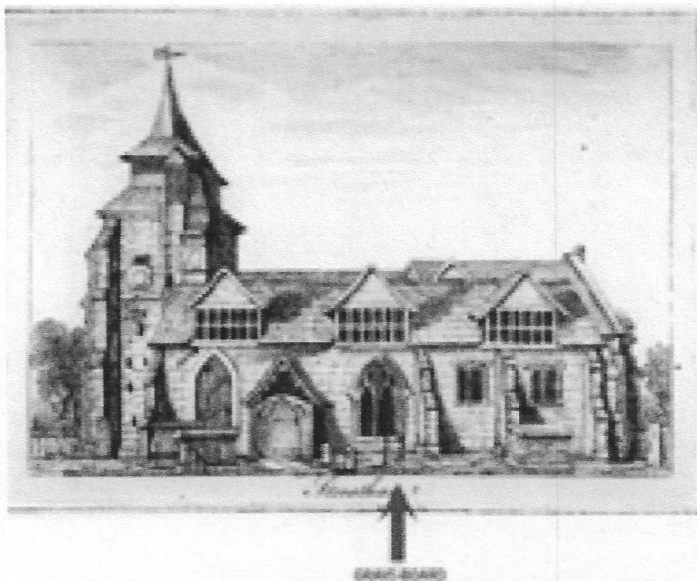
We know that between 1538 and 1944 10,682 people were buried in the small graveyard surrounding the church, indicating that during this period many



*Sir John Ward and the Church he built
mid-14thC*



Sir John Ward's Effigy



*14thC St. Leonard's Church
showing a grave board*



*Croydon's Parish Church (late 19thC)
showing a large number of grave boards*

graves would have been reused over and over again to accommodate such a large number of past residents of the parish.

The churchyard was closed for new graves in 1875. At the present time it accommodates some 282 identifiable graves suggesting that each grave space would have been used over 30 times since 1538. This suggests the 'life' of a grave in the church yard from 1538 onwards was only around 11 years. However, as it was not until the middle of the 19th century that the population of the parish rapidly increased these assumptions are exaggerated. Burials recorded in the parish registers show 691 internments between 1538 and 1599, 1,656 in the 1600s; 4,302 in the 1700s, and 4,033 from 1800 to 1862, the date of the last surviving register; this figure also includes some additional burials we are aware of which took place after this date up until 1944.

As a comparison, between 1538 and 1900 there are 14,084 baptisms recorded in the registers and between 1538 and 1899 4,630 marriages.

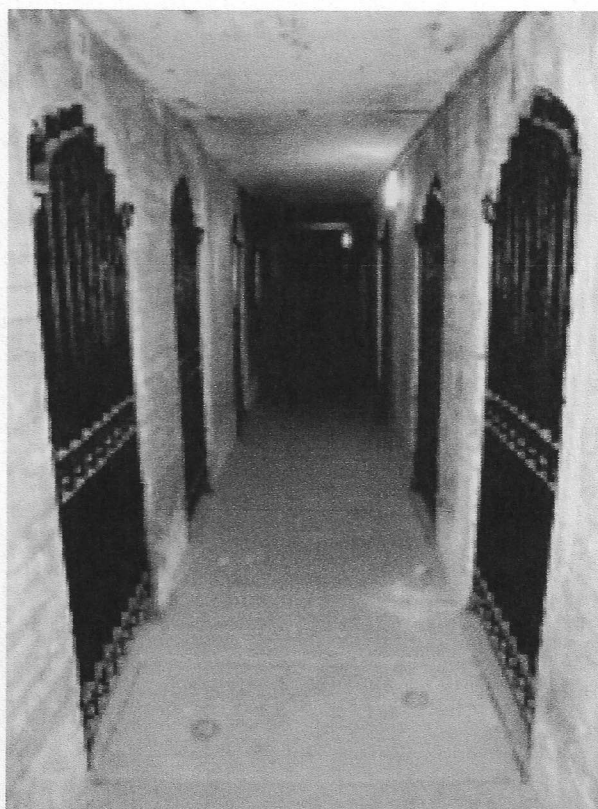
The surviving parish vestry records, which date from 1722, make no reference to there being a charnel pit beneath the church housing the bones of the departed. If such a pit existed and was in use at that time then it is likely evidence of it should be found in the vestry books and parish accounts as payment would have had to be made to those opening the pit and securing it after the deposit of bones. I have been unable to find any such entries in the accounts, although there are numerous payments made for similar mundane tasks such as winding the church clock, pumping the organ and 'mending ye churchyard gate'.

When the main body of the church was rebuilt and extended in 1831 it was necessary to dig down some 8 feet or so beneath ground level to secure adequate foundations for the new building. It was therefore suggested that a crypt beneath the church be laid out in this area in which spaces could be sold to help raise funds for the rebuilding of the church and this was done.

At the same time it was agreed that any surviving coffins beneath the floor of the old church would be allocated a space in the crypt. Should any of the coffins have disintegrated with the passing of time then the surviving bones would be placed in a charnel pit which was dug beneath the central aisle of the crypt. In addition, any bones discovered in that part of the churchyard which was surrendered up for the enlargement of the church, would also be laid to rest in the charnel pit. As Graham advised, the charnel pit is at least 21 feet deep, and may well be deeper, placing its base at least around 30 feet beneath the floor of the old church and therefore unlikely to have existed previously.

Recent work undertaken in the church in the past few years necessitated the raising of one of the stone slabs sealing the charnel pit which revealed bones solidly and tightly packed up to the level of the floor of the crypt, with no space for further bones to be added.

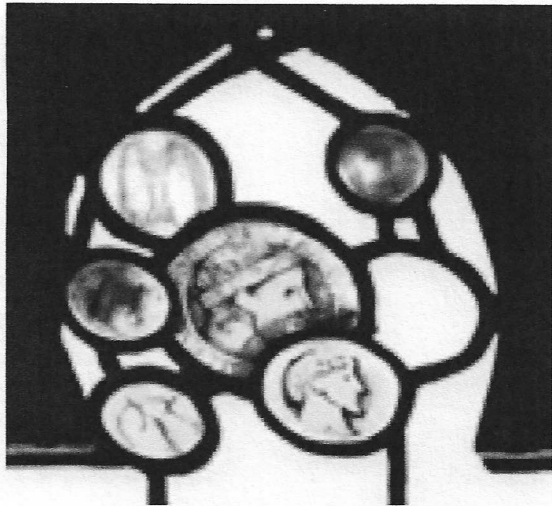
This fact was obviously known many years ago for any bones discovered when roadworks are undertaken in the High Road or Tooting Bec Gardens, which have migrated through the earth from the churchyard, are deposited, with due ceremony, in a modern coffin kept in the crypt for this purpose.



*St. Leonard's Crypt Central passage
beneath which is the charnel pit
at least 21ft deep*



*Skeleton discovered in the wall of
St. Leonard's north porch April 2019*



St. Leonard's stained-glass window showing gold coins

It is assumed that the depth of the charnel pit was probably originally calculated from the huge pile of bones gathered together when digging out the foundations for the church and its northern extension. At that time the massive hole dug by hand, which today forms the crypt of the church, was probably the largest pit ever dug in Streatham. It would have been hard and difficult work. Then to have dug a further trench over 21 feet deep for use as a charnel pit, would have been a further excavation of great labour and effort. Because of the huge amount of work involved it is unlikely that the pit was dug any deeper

than required. The unanswered question this raises is what happened to all the earth dug out to form this huge void under the church?

When work was undertaken on the north porch of St. Leonard's Church a couple of years ago a skeleton was discovered entombed in the wall of the porch. When the chancel extension was built in 1863 the builders must have come across this coffin and rather than go to all the trouble and bother of exhuming it decided to encase it in cement to form part of the foundations of the porch without bothering the church authorities with news of their discovery.

Whilst digging in the north-east corner of the graveyard, probably in the early 1850s, three Roman coins were discovered. These coins are depicted in the Streatham stained glass window in the north chapel of the church. One is a brass coin showing the head of Carausius (died 293AD) who was Emperor in Britain in the days of Diocletian Maximian; another is a small brass coin showing the head of Constantius Chlorus (died 306AD) the reverse of which shows the Emperor dragging a captive by their hair and the third coin shows the head of Constantine the younger (died 340AD). These coins were in the possession of the Revd. Walter Field, Curate of St. Leonard's at the time, and he mentions them in a talk he gave to the Surrey Archaeology Society in 1856.

These coins, together with a Roman votive figure of Venus, discovered when digging the foundations of the Church of the English Martyrs, opposite St. Leonard's Church, suggest the area may have been one associated with pagan worship at that time. We know that it was not unusual that Christian churches were built on the sites of ancient places of religious significance, and this may well have been the case when a small chapel was originally erected on the site now occupied by St. Leonard's Church in Saxon times. It is therefore quite possible, as Graham suggests, that burials may have been undertaken on the land now occupied by St. Leonard's Church as far back as Saxon and even Roman times.

The highly contagious nature of the Black Death in the 14th century was well known. If the parish churchyard became full at that time then burials would have to have been undertaken somewhere else and this is likely to have been a location some distance from the inhabited area of the town.



Large mound on Streatham Green thought to be a plague pit was a WWII Air Raid Shelter

As Graham mentioned, folk tales of there being a plague pit on Streatham Green are of relatively recent creation. Indeed, the raised area of ground on the Green was the site of an old Second World War air raid shelter that was filled in after the war. Some years ago I traced possibly the earliest known reference to a plague pit on the Green to a newspaper article published in the 1960s. It is quite surprising that within 20 years of the end of the war local folk memory had completely forgotten the Air Raid Shelter on the Green which, within the space of a generation, had changed into an ancient medieval plague pit! No references to a plague pit on the Green can be found in any of the published sources predating the war.

So then, where would a plague pit or burial ground have been located in the 14th century? As previously mentioned, this is likely to have been an area well distant from the inhabited part of the town. Well distant that is, in terms of the small village of Streatham in the 14th century. This may have been an area of the waste of the manor, or common land, or as Graham suggests the fields that later became known as 'burylonds' and 'cherchelond' or bury lands and church land. These fields may not have been part of the waste or common land, but fields owned by the church either by purchase or bequest.

However, with the passing of time the location of any plague pit or burial ground was soon forgotten, much in the same way as the location of the air raid shelter on the Green was forgotten a couple of decades after the war.

Old bones are hardy survivors of time, as is evident in the discovery of Roman and Saxon remains today or the skeleton discovered entombed in the wall of the north porch of the church. So, dig with care in your garden for who knows, should you unearth ancient, decomposing bones you may have discovered Streatham's ancient plague pit concealed beneath your vegetable plot for almost 700 years.

JWB

STREATHAM HILL LOOKING NORTH FROM STREATHAM HILL STATION c1905



This old postcard shows the impressive buildings erected along the eastern side of Streatham Hill in the early 1890s.

These properties were laid out on the western boundary of the Leigham Court Estate which had been acquired in 1889 by the Artisans' Labourers' and General Dwelling Company for £96,000.

Over the next 37 years the company developed the 66-acre estate with housing for rent mainly by the middle classes of the day with few labourers and artisans being able to afford the rents charged for the properties here.

The estate was known locally as the ABCD estate, after the initial letters of the roads running through the estate from Streatham Hill: Amesbury, Barcombe, Cricklade and Downton Avenues which were all places associated with directors of the company.

Note the small single storey shops on the right which were erected on the bridge over the railway line which could not accommodate larger properties due to their weight.

JWB

STREATHAM SOCIETY REPORTS

MEMBERSHIP 2022

Thank you! We now have 293 paid members, well above my estimated 250. If this newsletter has been posted to your address - you've paid!

New members: We welcome Gillian Tyson, Sarah Skinner (household), Glenn McKee, Michael Luxton, Anita Dyson, Ross & Lynn Warner and Ronnie Hackston. We hope they enjoy our events and publications.

MEMBERSHIP 2023

Subscriptions: Payments are now due. They will be collected from November 2022 online, by post and at meetings. Donations are always very welcome.

Those members who have paid their 2023 subscription by mid-October are acknowledged on this issue's address label.

2023 subscription renewals: To receive our quarterly *Streatham Society News* uninterrupted, your subscription should be paid by March 31st 2023. Payment details are given below.

2023 payments last until December 31st 2023. Subscriptions remain unchanged at: Individual £10; Household £15; Life membership (single or couple) £180.

Payment is via bank transfer (BACS) or standing order to The Streatham Society (business) account: Sort Code 30-84-68 a/c no 39526068.

If you use direct bank payment, please identify the amount (subscription/donation/ publication) and email me confirmation to activate registration details.

Payment is also accepted by cash or cheque, payable 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: Tax payers: Boost your subscription and any donation by 25p of Gift Aid for every £1. A form can be sent to you on application or is available on our website to email or post to our secretary.

Your email address: Please supply this for our contacts list as it is now our only method of communication, apart from our quarterly newsletter.

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: Payments will be acknowledged by email; in-person payments will have been recorded at meetings.

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

Life Membership

Life membership: single or couple at the same address, is £180. Especially with Gift Aid, this is a welcome source of income.

We have 36 Life Members, a good percentage of our membership. Please identify any household partner if you have not already done so.

Particularly welcome to the list are several of our oldest members. They may not benefit financially but much will be a donation - with the added bonus of not having to remember to pay annually!

PLEASE REMEMBER TO IDENTIFY YOUR PAYMENT AND AMOUNT (subscription, donation or publication) and confirm to me as I do not have immediate access to the Society's account.

Judy Harris

RECENT MEETINGS AND EVENTS

MEETINGS

Sept 6 **The Art of Music Hall & Variety:** Over 70 members and guests enjoyed Alison Young's presentation at our meeting as part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival.

Oct 4 **The Rise and Fall of Dr Gully and the Balham Murder Mystery:** Colin Fenn's new slant on a familiar event attracted c.60 members and visitors. Colin conveyed his new research with his usual enthusiasm.

EVENTS

Aug 28 **Open Garden Ripley House, 10 Streatham South:** Our second visit to this lovely garden with our bookstall was as enjoyable as that in July. John W Brown made successful sales, gained two new members and gave local history information to many visitors.

Thanks again to Lindy and Mark Cuniffe for hosting the event, making all very welcome - and selling a wide variety of very tasty refreshments.

Sept 3 **Lambeth Local History Fair** St John's Church, Waterloo. See p.8.

Sept 16 & 17 **Open House London - Conyers Road Pumping Station:** John W Brown took his bookstall on the Saturday. See p.9.

Sept 25 **Tours of the Grounds of Park Hill, Sir Henry Tate's House in Streatham:** Part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival. See p.10.

Sept 26 **Tour of St. Leonard's Church:** Also a Lambeth Heritage Festival event, led by John W Brown with Marion Gower on the bookstall.

THE STREATHAM SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER ISSUE 250

Part 1: PUMP 1974 - 1986

The Streatham Society was initiated in 1974, joining similar new groups. Our early publicity stated it "was formed at a time when insensitive planning was destroying heritage. Whilst not against change, it was felt some retention of local identity provided a legacy for future generations, appreciation of which makes us all care". It was described as "a campaigning organisation".

The first *Streatham Pump* was published in the Spring of 1974, a single double-sided sheet (*over*). Society Officers listed were WW (Bill) Marshall BA, FRCS, FCS, Chairman; N Howard, Vice-chairman; C Allwright, Secretary; Mrs Brenda Hargreaves, Treasurer.

What is striking from the first issue are the enthusiasm and ambitious plans shown. Impressively, by the time I joined the Society 10 years later most of these plans had materialised or were well underway. But looking at people who contributed to this very active group, most of them were young - aged around 30 when it was formed. Women were often parents or carers at home or only worked part-time, able to rely on their husband's or another's income.

Also interesting is that newsletter reports did not and still do not necessarily reflect all the Society's activities. These are reliant on whoever submits articles. For example, few local history items unconnected to planning issues appeared until John W Brown's contributions much later.

In our 1990-2010 period many active members were in their 50s and 60s. Several had been made redundant, taken early retirement, or worked part-time. Today, older first-time parents and grandparents, later retirement, the need for two or more incomes, the internet and social media have changed the way we live. But the Streatham Society has met all challenges and continues to thrive.

Streatham Pump No.1 Newsheet of the Streatham Society (1974) From the start, planning issues were important. The first meeting on June 4th at 8pm in Streatham's Tate Library advertised a discussion on Transport, with several speakers including representatives from the Transport and General Workers Union, a London Transport executive, British Rail and the Pedestrian Association for Road Safety. It was stated bikes would be a "must" in future and an Integrated Transport Policy was essential.

The main traffic problems identified were Leigham Court Road, the proposed A23 terminal, lorry parking and juggernauts. It asked whether traffic was causing the ruination of what was once one of London's finest shopping centres. The Press would be present, and reports were expected on BBC Radio London, London Broadcasting and Capitol Radio.

A letter was to be sent regarding the old Fire Station in Mitcham Lane to Sir Reg Goodwin, GLC leader, to ask for permission to use this as a Community Centre (*now the South London Islamic Centre*).

STREATHAM no: 1. **PUMP**

Newsheet of the Streatham Society

comment

THIS IS THE FIRST ISSUE OF THE STREATHAM SOCIETY'S NEWSLETTER. IT IS SMALL. SO ARE WE, BUT WE WILL GROW.

ALREADY WE HAVE MADE OUR PLANS. ON JUNE 4TH AT 8 PM IN THE TATE LIBRARY THERE IS TO BE A DISCUSSION ON TRANSPORT, A TOPIC VITALLY IMPORTANT TO STREATHAM IN THESE DAYS OF JUGGERNAUTS AND CHANNEL TUNNELS.

IN THE AUTUMN WE HOPE TO PUBLISH A BOOK OF POEMS BY STREATHAM POETS TOGETHER WITH A VOLUME OF PRINTS OF STREATHAM AS IT WAS.

THE SOCIAL COMMITTEE IS BUSY ARRANGING GET-TOGETHERS OF VARIOUS KINDS, THE FIRST OF WHICH IS SCHEDULED FOR JULY 18TH.

THE SOCIETY IS ALREADY INVOLVED IN SEVERAL PROBLEMS SUCH AS THE LACK OF A COMMUNITY CENTRE, THE NEED FOR MORE YOUTH CENTRES AND FACILITIES FOR THE AGED, AND ALDERMAN ALAN VIRGO IS TO TAKE UP THE MATTER OF THE BROKEN AND BADLY LAID PAVING STONES NOW TRIPPING UP THE UNWARY. FROM THE POINT OF VIEW OF CONSERVATION, A SURVEY IS BEING UNDERTAKEN AND A CONSIDERABLE AMOUNT OF WORK HAS ALREADY BEEN DONE ON THE PRODUCTION OF AN AUTUMN EXHIBITION.

ALL CHANGE TO BIKES!

This may well be your decision after June 4th when a host of people with many and diverse views on the problems of modern transport will put those problems before you and ask for and offer solutions.

Among the speakers will be Mr Richard Feildon who will tell why bikes are a must; Mr. R.B. Banks with an Integrated Transport Policy; Mr. Len Scholey of the Transport and General Workers Union; Mr. R.J. Prior, a London Transport executive, and representatives of British Rail and the Pedestrians Association for Road

Safety. Streatham has many traffic problems; the Leigham Court Road problem; the proposed A23 terminal; lorry parking, juggernauts etc. And is it traffic which is even now causing the ruination of what was once one of London's finest shopping centres?

Come and air your views. The press will be there, and if you listen you will certainly hear about it on BBC Radio London, London Broadcasting and Capitol Radio.

PLACE: THE TATE LIBRARY
TIME: 8 PM.



1066... and all that!

We doubt if many of us in Streatham can trace our ancestry back to William the Conqueror; but there are many whose history goes back many a long year. The Kershaws, for example, must be one of the oldest families in the area.

Does YOUR ancestry date back to Elizabeth? Did YOUR Great-great-grand-daddy fight at Waterloo? Did your family know or meet Dr. Hoadly? Mr. Thrale? Gabriel Piccolini? Dr. Johnson? Drop us a line and tell us! We are anxious to find out.

A book of poems *The First Fifty* by local poets was planned. Entries had to be typed on one side of paper and sent to Peter Brookes c/o Village Books, 7 Shrubbery Road SW16, Mrs C Cox or Norman Howard. A volume of *Prints of Streatham* was another advertised venture.

The first social event, *Streatham Life*, was a coffee evening on July 18th 8pm at Streatham Baths, 20p entry, to discuss any aspect of local life; including conservation, a street survey to preserve valued possessions, and organising a Festival of Streatham. Problems identified were the lack of a community centre, insufficient youth centres and facilities for the aged, and broken and badly laid paving stones. A conservation survey was suggested for an Autumn exhibition. A request was made for members' research into any famous forebears.

A competition with a prize was announced for a Streatham symbol for the top left of p.1, being the best representation of Streatham and what the Society stood for. A gossip column *Around the Pump* was suggested for the submission of brief comments about Streatham. Other groups' events were advertised.

All communications to the Society newsletter were sent c/o Village Books at 7 (mid-1970s) then 17 (mid 1980s) Shrubbery Road. This was an alternative/left-wing bookseller, one of about 100 throughout the UK. It was part of several similar organisations formed in the 1960s which included history projects.

Until its closure Village Books remained the sales outlet for the growing number of the Streatham Society's local history leaflets and booklets. Hundreds were sold. How easy it was then to supply the shop. John Cresswell would be politically sympathetic to the movement and all he and others had to do was take stock from their nearby homes. Those were the days!

Streatham Pump No. 2 (1974) This had a yellow first page. Advertised were the Clapham and Norwood Societies' events, including a sale of out-of-print histories from both the Dulwich and Clapham Societies. All our meetings were now advertised on the Tate Library noticeboard.

No hall was available for a September meeting. A discussion was held on Thursday October 3rd at the library on *Streatham's Old Buildings* with a speaker from GLC Historic Buildings informing of research in South London. Bill Marshall, chairman, also spoke. A second October meeting on the 30th at 8.15 was *Meet the Police* from Streatham Station. A Christmas social was planned.

An article on Lambeth's three large amenity groups: the Clapham, Vauxhall and Norwood Societies, proposed that, together with the Streatham Society, meetings should be more formal and a Joint Liaison Committee set up. There were attempts to form a Brixton group. Membership of one group for all and reduced rates for publications sales were suggested.

Compulsory purchase orders: the Wellfield/Sunnyhill area hearing was planned for late Autumn. A members' meeting to discuss this was held on November 13th with another to discuss the Unigate Dairy site to be held at a later date.

Bill Marshall requested photos, postcards etc for loan or purchase for a small exhibition then later a large one on Streatham's Past. Also, a visual street survey by members of houses, shops, churches, footpaths in their roads was suggested.

Streatham Pump No. 4 (1975) was held back because of the serious fire at St. Leonard's Church.

A 2nd Streatham Festival of the Arts was advertised at St. Margaret's Church. Organised by the Festival Committee, it was a platform for local contributors: musicians, artists, poets etc, to include a choral and orchestral concert, chamber music, an evening of poetry, with local poets reading their work, an exhibition of paintings, a pageant of Streatham arranged by St. Leonard's Primary School, an organ recital and an evening of choral music sung by the Streatham Philharmonic Society Choir. A Festival fete and disco were also planned. The Streatham Society launched its first publication, the book of poems, at the event.

In addition to the price of admission, people were urged to give 5p or 10p extra donation to a St. Leonard's Reconstruction Fund. It was hoped the Streatham Society would donate a special item for its refurbishment.

Streatham Pump No. 6 (1976?) All meetings were now open to non-members. At the AGM in April representatives were invited from other organisations to form a Council to organise and co-ordinate cultural and recreational activities in and around Streatham. A new hall at Streatham Station (*in Manor Place, now a church*) was to open soon. This with the Baths and Libraries would help survival until St. Leonard's Church was rebuilt.

The formation of a local history society was discussed. A plea was made for helpers to make Streatham "a livelier place than it has been so far". A May coffee evening was advertised at 8pm at Streatham Baths

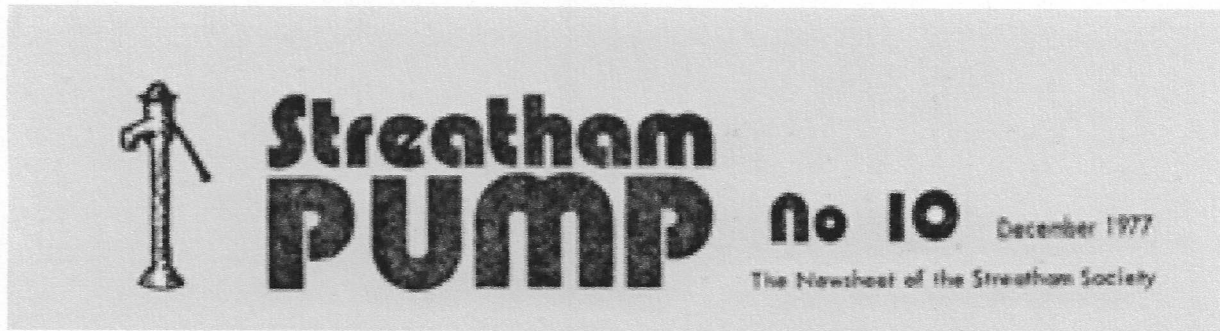
The Streatham Festival of Music & the Arts was advertised May 16th–30th with choral, instrumental, orchestral evening events mainly at St. Leonard's Church.

An all-day exhibition *Streatham's Past* on May 29th displayed old prints, pictures, maps and photographs was to be held in St Leonard's Church Hall (*now the Spires' Centre*): If successful, a larger exhibition was planned for the Lambeth Festival at the end of July. A Streatham Society Local History Meeting was advertised on June 10th 8pm in Streatham Library.

Lambeth Festival's Closing Ball was to be held on August 1st at the Cat's Whiskers, Streatham.

Other items included: The Well House on the Unigate site, Valley Rd, one of Streatham's oldest buildings. A sub-committee hoped to discuss its future with Lambeth Council; perhaps money could be raised for a local community centre.

A raffle was to be started to keep subscriptions low as postage, stationery, printing, meetings etc costs had increased. Annual membership: Adult 50p; OAP, student & school child 20p; Associate member for organisations, schools etc £1.



Streatham Pump No. 10 (December 1977) with a green first page, showed the new Pump logo (*above*) and statement: "The aim of the Streatham Society is to maintain and improve the quality of life for all who live or work in Streatham".

Publication of the anthology of poetry *The First Fifty* was reported to have had slow sales and a Second Fifty was not practical. A public reading of its contents was well-attended and regular poetry and prose readings were suggested.

Three Society members undertook a detailed report on the Well House, off Valley Road, suggesting various community uses to submit to the Council's Amenity Services Committee in June 1977. A bust of Aesculapius, the god of healing, in a niche over the doorway, had been broken and the Society was to provide a photograph to the Council and request it be remodelled.

A second *Streatham Quiz* was held on September 29th at the first meeting in the new Streatham Manor Hall, Station Approach; the hall was described as having austere décor with a badly lit approach.

A Christmas Social Victorian Evening was advertised at the Bedford Park Hotel (opposite Streatham Station); members 50p, guests 70p.

Streatham Pump No.39 (March 1983) – The Newsletter of the Streatham Society introduced *Streatham Pictures from the Past* – the Society's most ambitious publishing venture to date. Over the past year Local History sub-committee members had selected some 130 pictures from those submitted to form "a glossy picture book". It was produced with the financial backing of WHSmith who would have the monopoly of sales until 1984. It was also available from the Society with a special pre-Easter publication order price of £2.

Norwood Grove: Croydon Council dropped demolition plans for this and refurbished it as needed. The Friends of Norwood Grove and the Norwood and Streatham Societies were actively involved. Luxury flats on the upper floors were planned to fund the ground floor community use.

A Streatham Society dramatic performance was reported.

Streatham Pump No. 50 (January 1985) National Environment Week: John Cresswell (who provided 6 of 11 associated articles) hoped the Streatham Society would participate in this first event (April 27th–May Day Bank Holiday). It was initiated by the Civic Trust to involve the whole UK to stimulate public

awareness and concern for the environment in all its natural, human, architectural and historical aspects.

A request was made by John for the loan or donations of items associated with old-established shops and businesses in Streatham. Catherine Doggett (*now Catherine Mahé, still a member*) also requested and referred to offers of help.

Brenda Hargreaves reported the presentation to Bill Marshall of a framed sketch of Streatham from Russell's Footpath, by local artist Dennis Cooper-King, for his 10 years' service as Chairman.

Streatham's Rotary Club provided several new seats around Streatham to celebrate their 150th Anniversary. The *Johnson Bicentenary* exhibition at the British Library was advertised.

The new Lambeth Planning Resource Centre at 23 New Park Road, opened on August 1st 1984. An independent management committee was drawn from Lambeth community groups. It offered week-day free advice on planning issues, vacant land and buildings, housing estate improvements, funding local ideas, objecting to development proposals etc. Restoration Grants for Conservation areas (Section 10) information was obtainable from the Urban Design Group at nearby 9-10 New Park Road.

John Cresswell wrote: "Any housing or neighbourhood association or amenity society worth its salt will already be looking into such issues, and anyone concerned should be working with them. But we all have something to learn, so hopefully this centre could result in a greater exchange of information to the benefit of all."

In 1985 the membership subscription increased: Full: £2, Senior/student £1, Corporate £3.

Hy Hazell, Streatham star, a singer and dancer, once lived in Valley Rd. In 1936 she appeared in *Pageant of Streatham*. John Cresswell was collecting material to write a biography of her.

Meetings were held on Mondays at 8.15 at Streatham Library. In January was *Call My London Bluff Quiz* Streatham Society v. the Lambethans. *Open Spaces*, a talk by Keith Holdaway, followed in February then *History & Problems of London's Green Belt* was the March talk

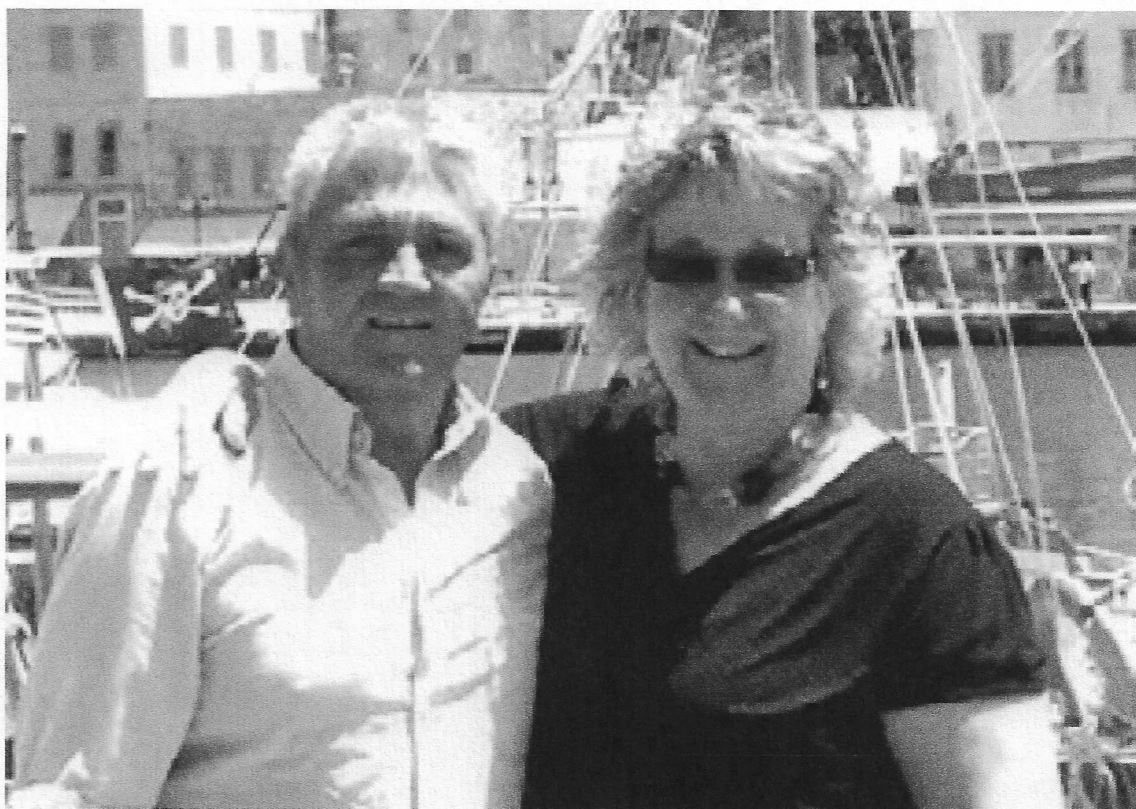
Local History Research Group meetings, chaired by Keith Holdaway, were held on the first Mondays of the month at Manor Hall, Station Approach.

Streatham Pump November 1986 Brenda Hargreaves took over as Editor from several previous contributors. The newsletter then changed focus.

To be continued in our next issue... If anyone has back copies of Pump pre-2000 to donate to me, I'd be delighted. I can collect locally or reimburse postage with (new) stamp

Judy Harris

OUR PRINTERS FROM 1991 - KALL KWIK TO PRINTINC



Ian and Carolyn Reilly (*above*) have been associated with the Streatham Society for over 30 years. Ian opened as Kall Kwik, close to Streatham Station for copy, print and design services in 1991. Brenda Hargreaves came along in the first couple of months. Brian Bloice, our late chairman, was also one of their first customers. Both used the copy/print service.

Brenda brought in the typed sheets of the *Streatham Society Pump* for photocopying until c.2007. Ian delivered them to her flat and helped with some problems. When Brian and I started taking over from Brenda, Brian emailed my typed copy to Ian. Unlike many other businesses, they continued accepting cheque payments until our recent on-line banking was established.

Ian ran Kall Kwik until c.2003 then went independent as Printinc. This is situated in the Sutton Business Centre at Wallington. It was an increasingly successful, well-staffed business, providing an additional range of services.

Then came Covid. Both Ian and Carolyn were infected before the vaccine was available. Ian recovered but Carolyn suffered with long-Covid for some time. Their business almost collapsed but both struggled through the worst and thankfully it is now growing again.

Thanks to their help, especially over the last 7 years as I struggled with changing technology, I have been able to edit and distribute the *News* without interruption. Ian, Carolyn and their daughter have continued to deliver the boxes, labels and envelopes to my door. The near-future looks bright!

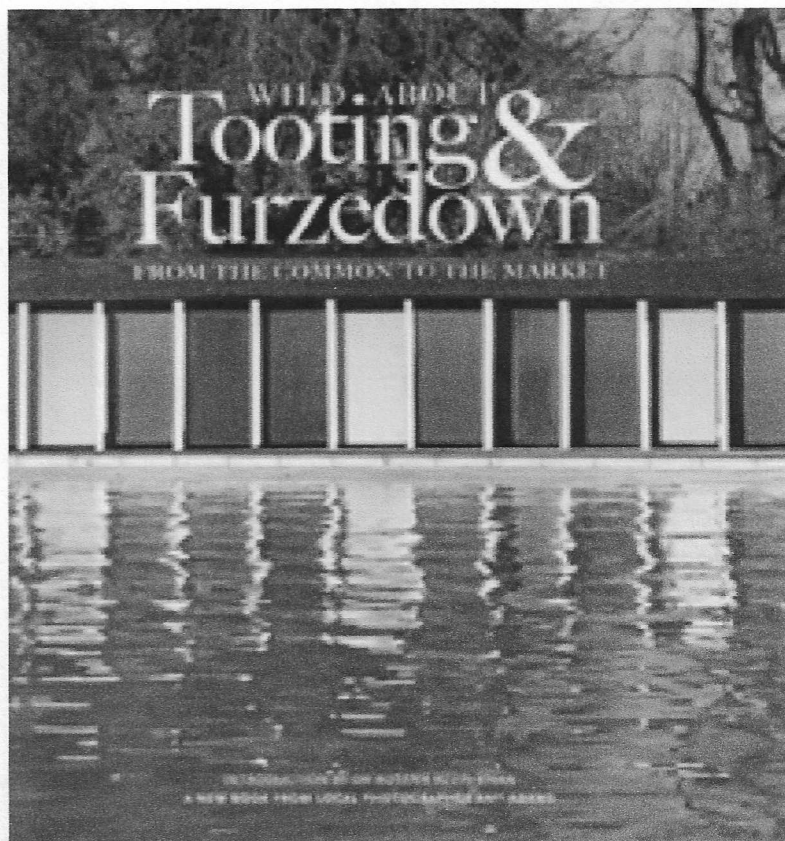
JH

RECENT PUBLICATIONS

WILD ABOUT TOOTING & FURZEDOWN - FROM THE COMMON TO THE MARKET *Amy Adams, local photographer.*

ISBN 978-1-9164858-5-3 RPR £24.99 Hard back 178 pages.

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This beautiful high-quality book is a photographic record of her area by Furzedown resident, talented photographer Amy Adams.

It is divided into sections. Following A Brief History of Tooting by local historian Geoff Simmons, photographs portray Tooting Common, Common Life, Tooting Bec Lido, Welcome to Tooting, Tooting Life, Tooting Bec, Furzedown, and Hidden Tooting.

Each section is further sub-divided into topics including: Four Seasons

on Tooting Common, Tooting Dog Show, Tooting Bec Athletics Track, Amen Corner, St Nicholas Church, The Markets & Night Life, Graveney School, Mitcham Lane, Springfield Hospital and others.

Amy writes, "This project started with one of my favourite places, Tooting Bec Lido, with its iconic multi-coloured doors. From there I set out to picture not only the familiar, the people and buildings of Tooting and Furzedown but also the places many of us (including me) had no idea existed. Green spaces are strongly represented in this book; I hope that my pictures will lead to more exploration of the natural delights on our doorstep."

£1 from the sale of each copy goes to Tooting Bec Lido improvement projects. It is on sale at the Woodfield Pavilion, Tooting Bec Common, 16A Abbotswood Road SW16 1AP.

A perfect Christmas present!

JH

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

Please note: *There is a publication gap of at least a month before events publicised online appear in our newsletter. These subsequently may have been cancelled, changed or updated. Therefore in future I'll only publicise here definite events submitted directly to me or our secretary (see Contacts). Otherwise please check individual websites.*

Streatham Choral Christmas Concerts Sat 17th December 3-5pm & 7.30-9.30pm St Leonard's Church, Streatham High Rd/Tooting Bec Gardens

Streatham Kite Day - May 2023?

Kite Day planned for September 2022 was cancelled for a number of reasons - one of which was the lack of volunteers. It had been hoped to put on a smaller Wind Day as last year, but this also proved impossible.

It is increasingly difficult to raise funding and volunteers for all events and Kite Day requires a large input of both. In previous years it has hosted professional displays, community and commercial stalls and attracted some 5,000 people, many flying their kites.

Such a large event needs prior planning permission from Lambeth Council with all required security, regulations and therefore considerable organisation.

The Streatham Common Kite Day Team has started planning to bring back the full event next year. But it needs much more involvement from local people to succeed. Commitment, enthusiasm and action, however small, are essential.

Can you help? If interested, please contact the Streatham Common websites.

I remember visiting the first Wind Day in 1998. Very much the brainchild of John Cresswell, the Streatham Society's then secretary, together with the newly-formed Friends of Streatham Common, it was planned to promote peace and tranquillity. I walked alone(!) up and down the south side path listening to all the different wind instruments that had been tied to tree branches above me. At the top was a wind harp. It was an enchanting experience.

I don't think John would have approved of the large, noisy, commercial event which evolved but I have since enjoyed every Kite Day. Peace and tranquillity with freely hanging wind-chimes are no longer possible but a huge number of local people of all ages thoroughly enjoy the event.

I know how difficult it is, for a variety of reasons, to plan much in advance. Would you volunteer, perhaps with friends, to form a large enthusiastic team?

Please don't let Kite Day die.

JH

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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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