



STREATHAM SOCIETY NEWS

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**STREATHAM HILL'S SLEEPING BEAUTY:
FRIENDS SEEK TO REVIVE UNIQUE 1920s THEATRE**

(See p.3. Photos MG & JH)

STREATHAM SOCIETY MEETINGS & EVENTS

THE JOHN GENT POSTCARD COLLECTION - A continuation

Talk, John Hickman & Carole Roberts

Monday 19th March 8pm

April 2nd - No meeting (Public holiday)

BRIXTON WINDMILL -

Its past present & future

Talk, Jean Kerrigan

Monday 16th April 8pm

May 7th - No meeting (Public holiday)

KITE DAY - Streatham Common

Sunday 13th May

MRS BEETON - The Life and Times of a Victorian Celebrity

Talk, Tina Baxter

Monday 21st May 8pm

HENRY TATE GARDENS TOURS

Meet main gates, Streatham Common Nth, close Leigham Court Rd
Buses 249, 417. No parking or toilets on site. Strictly no photos of private houses. Free but donations welcome; bookstall.

Sunday 27th May 2pm and 3pm

BYGONE STREATHAM

Talk, John Brown

Monday June 4th 8pm

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING and Review of the Society's Year

Monday 18th June 8pm

Meetings are at The Woodlawns Centre, 16 Leigham Court Road SW16 2PJ, unless otherwise stated. Visitors welcome, but £1 contribution is requested.

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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 with the editor's permission.

STREATHAM ROUND AND ABOUT

STREATHAM HILL'S SLEEPING BEAUTY: FRIENDS SEEK TO REVIVE UNIQUE 1920s THEATRE

There is a 'sleeping beauty' waiting to be awoken in Streatham, South London. A unique gem, a lavish Grade 2 listed theatre, designed and built in the late 1920's for an audience of over 2500 with a stage large enough to take the very biggest shows.

Opened in 1929 as Streatham Hill Playhouse, the theatre attracted big name stars (including John Gielgud and the newly discovered Vivien Leigh) and big shows either prior to their West End runs, or as transfers from the West End. It survived major bomb damage in 1944, being rebuilt and reopened in 1950. By 1962 the theatre succumbed to the downturn in theatre-going, closing briefly to be reopened by Mecca as Britain's biggest bingo venue. The building was left largely untouched by its switch to bingo, preserving the theatre in suspended animation. A number of recent events have allowed visitors to admire the interior and explore normally closed areas behind the scenes.



Bingo ceased in January 2017 and since then Praesepe plc, the owners of Beacon Bingo, have been seeking a new cultural use for the historic building. The local community is also keen to see such a use for the theatre, to provide a centre for Streatham's significant and growing arts and cultural activities. They are also concerned for the



The foyer and beneath the stage



future of the beautiful and much-loved building, with the risk of it falling into disuse and deterioration, or being lost to redevelopment, or split up making cultural use unsustainable.

To this end the ‘Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre’ has been formed to focus the campaign to save the building for future generations, and bring it back into cultural use for the benefit of the local community. This could, for example, be in partnership with a commercial organisation or a community-led initiative.

A multi-purpose cultural centre based in a renewed Streatham Hill Theatre could be a key part of London Borough of Lambeth’s bid for Mayor of London Sadiq Khan’s ‘London Borough of Culture’ initiative, providing a counter-balance in the south of the borough to the cultural centre on the South Bank.

Founding ‘friend’ David Harvey said, “I know this lovely building well, having helped stage theatre and run tours there, with great support from Beacon Bingo. Everyone who sees the theatre is in awe of this hidden gem and wants it to be brought back to life. The Friends plan to hold a public meeting in the New Year – perhaps in the theatre – to give everyone a chance to get involved”.

To join the Friends, please like us on Facebook at facebook.com/StreathamHillTheatre, follow us on Twitter twitter.com/StreathamHillT or email sht@qaz.me.uk. We will keep you up to date with progress.

The Friends already have support of local residents, businesses and community organisations, as well as working with theatre heritage organisations such as the Association of British Theatre Technicians (ABTT) and the Theatres Trust. They would love to hear from others able to support their aims in any way.

What’s that?! Can it be the sound of a sleeping beauty stirring from her deep sleep?

Here's the latest news - all good!

- Beacon Bingo's owners Praesepe plc are currently in negotiation with a potential new user for the building. We understand that they are planning a performance-based use and will want community involvement.
- There is a film company looking at using the theatre early in the new year as a location.
- The ABTT's Historical Research Committee has been researching the history of the theatre and have published details and photographs. We are in regular contact with them.
- The theatre was added to the Theatres Trust 'Theatres at Risk Register' for 2018 at a launch event led by Dara O'Briain who is a trustee of the Theatre Trust. It was one of two new entries, and is one of six at risk theatres in London. ITV London's evening news (23 Jan) led their report on the launch with video of the theatre and a brief interview with me, representing the Friends of Streatham Theatre. Many of the other theatres at risk are currently in poor condition. SHT has the advantage of still being in good condition so we really need fast action to get it back in use before it too deteriorates.

Notes:

Streatham has a long history in theatre and entertainment and was known as 'the West End of south London' - and due to the wealth of talent living in the area - as 'The Beverly Hills of London'. Arts and cultural activity of all kinds continues in modern day Streatham. Streatham Hill Theatre was opened in 1929 as the Streatham Hill Playhouse. It was bombed in WW2 but was rebuilt and reopened in 1950. It closed to theatre in 1962, becoming a bingo hall. Much of the original theatre and its equipment remain. Bingo ceased in 2017. It is located at 110 Streatham Hill, SW2 4RD.

The theatre was granted a Grade 2 listing in 1994 as 'an unusually lavish example of a theatre built in the short-lived revival of building in 1929-30; as a suburban example of this date the building may be unique'. The Streatham Society has published a book about the theatre, written by John Cresswell. (*See p.33.*)

Theatre returned to Streatham Hill in 2013 when the newly formed Streatham Theatre Company performed 'Then and Now: The Glamour Days of Streatham' for the Streatham Festival. The company has since produced a number of plays, a series of promenade-style site-specific shows, and guided tours in the theatre.

David Harvey, Friends of Streatham Hill Theatre

www.streathamtheatre.org.uk

The photos were taken in 2013 when Brian Bloice and the Streatham Society led the first tour. Not widely publicised, we expected about 30 people. About five times that number flooded in, proving a considerable local interest.

See 'Hugh Sewell Kingdon' p.15 & 'Streatham Hill Theatre programmes' p.16.

ROOKERY CASCADE TO FLOW AGAIN



Barring any last minute hitch, the long defunct water cascade in the Rookery should be flowing again early this year. News that a bid for Heritage Lottery Funds (HLF) for this, and for other restoration work nearby, is very likely to be successful was received in early November. Confirmation and the necessary sign offs and paperwork have been completed.

The bid was led by Barbara Wright on behalf of the Streatham Common Cooperative (SCCoop) which manages the Rookery. Over half of the nearly £150,000 costs of the project will come from the HLF, but SCCoop itself and Lambeth Council have chipped in substantial contributions, with smaller amounts coming from the Streatham Society and the Streatham Common Community Garden. The Friends of Streatham Common is also a partner in the project.



The cascade, which dates back to the opening of the Rookery in 1913, has long suffered from leaks as a result of ageing, and patching the leaks up had become increasingly ineffective to the point where there was no use in trying. The entire cascade, including all the pools and the connecting gullies will now be resurfaced, starting in January. Later on, after appropriate research, the defunct Rock Garden that is nearby will be renovated and replanted. A healthy budget has been set aside to improve and enhance the planting in much of the Rock Garden while saving many of the existing mature specimens, such as the acers,

which give this part of the garden its own atmosphere.

In addition, deteriorating crazy paving in the area will be replaced primarily on the steps surrounding the upper part of the cascade. Last, but not least, one of the huts in the Streatham Common Community Garden area will be converted into an education centre and there will a programme of teaching people about the heritage of the cascade.

To enable all of this work to be carried out effectively, the funding allows for three people to be employed part time - a project manager, a garden designer and a community gardener. Volunteers will be recruited for the Rock Garden project.

It will be enormously pleasurable to see and hear water flowing down the cascade again and to have pools of water harbouring aquatic plants, frogs, newts, water boatmen, dragonflies etc.

NEW PLAYGROUND

Work is completed on the completely refurbished playground at the foot of Streatham Common. After a stage of removing the old play equipment, the existing hard-top surfacing and the long defunct paddling pool (where once stood a pond), drainage was installed and the whole area was re-levelled and re-landscaped. New play structures have been installed and the much anticipated new playground was officially opened on December 16th.



Gone are metal structures; wooden ones have replaced them. Gone is the equipment that inappropriately attracted body builders and gym trainers. Gone are two mature trees, removed to make room for play structures; but a number of new trees will be planted in their place.

The new wooden structures look as though they will encourage Imaginative play and offer a wide variety of play experiences. Most are for younger children. Two table tennis tables will be in place for older children or, indeed, parents to use.

Although the banners around the playground mention that there will be a kiosk - providing drinks and snacks for parents and some income for looking after the playground - that announcement is somewhat premature. Lambeth has not yet definitely come up with the 'phase 2' funds for this, improvements to the public toilets and, possibly, more. We can but hope.

Peter Newmark

The above two articles are reproduced from 'Common Knowledge' (December 2017 Issue 62), the newsletter of the Friends of Streatham Common, with thanks. (Photos JH)

MORE NEWS FROM THE ROOKERY



Dominic Leavy, Head gardener and manager employed by the Streatham Common Cooperative (SCCoop), sent us this photograph (*left*) and reported the planting of new lavender bushes at each side of the central steps in the Rookery. These were bought with a donation of £500 from the Streatham Society.

The Society is also sharing the cost of the restoration of the Rookery ‘wishing well’ with SCCoop and the Friends of Streatham Common. The well was one of three original wells of Streatham spa water dating from 1659. To mark this, the wishing well was presented by the Streatham Society in 1982.

ALL HAIL WASSAIL!



On January 7th Streatham Common Community Garden held their fourth annual Wassailing event in the Rookery Orchard. The trees were toasted with cider, produced in the autumn from the apples pressed on Apple Day last October, using a traditional style wooden wassailing bowl made by Peter Noy. Local folk singers, musicians and dancers ‘The Campaign for Real Wassail’ led traditional wassailing songs. **JH**

CYCLING ON THE PAVEMENT: THE WAY FORWARD?

In the Autumn 2017 edition of Streatham Society News in an article entitled 'Healthy Streets?' I described a correspondence in which I tried unsuccessfully to persuade Transport for London to reinstate the 'no cycling on pavements' notice which used to be fixed to the pedestrian guardrail in front of Streatham Hill Station. It occurs to me that the article did not consider the cyclists' point of view and that to redress the balance a further article might try to speculate on what a more cycle-friendly policy for riding on pavements might look like. I should, first, declare an interest, or the lack of it: I am not a cyclist - I sold my bike about 30 years ago because I thought cycling in London was too dangerous.

The general background to the problem of cycling on pavements seems to be that with the growth in the number of cyclists in the last decade or so there has been a recognition by both the authorities and by cyclists that cycling on the road can be dangerous and that two wheels and four wheels do not mix, and that as a result there is an increasing tendency for cyclists to ride on the pavement. The response of the authorities has been to make some efforts to accommodate cyclists by providing dedicated cycle lanes and safe routes and other similar measures but their efforts are often frustrated by the physical limitations of our streets and pavements. They do not seem to have taken any positive steps to come to terms with these limitations but have simply turned a blind eye to the enforcement of the existing legislation like the Highways Act 1835.

I would like to speculate that a more radical cycle-friendly attempt to accommodate cycling on pavements might take the following form:

There is a presumption that cyclists must cycle on the road where it is safe to do so but that, when cycling on the road is not safe, cycling on the pavement is permitted when not specifically excluded, subject to the pavement being at least 2 metres wide, a 5mph speed limit and the requirement that a cyclist must always give way to a pedestrian. The change of practice is to be accompanied by an on-going programme of education and enforcement.

To educate cyclists in the new rules of behaviour all cyclists over the age of 10 would be required to pass a cycling proficiency test and to display a name badge showing details of the test. The rules would be enforced by the police and community support officers with violations punishable by a fine. The proficiency test might also promote greater use of vocal communication between cyclist and pedestrian to supplement the rather harsh tones of the bicycle bell, for example, by the cyclist shouting "Bike behind on the left (or right)" when approaching a pedestrian from behind. Some simple unobtrusive signage would be required to indicate those pavements where cycling was specifically excluded; it might take the form of a large white letter L on the surface of the pavement in which the horizontal bar of the L indicated the point from which the exclusion began and an arrow on the top of the vertical bar indicated the direction in which it applied.

If the rules I have proposed were applied to Streatham High Road and Streatham Hill I think the judgement would be that cycling on their pavements was to be specifically excluded. Although cycling on the A23 trunk road is clearly not safe, these pavements are often busy with crowds of shoppers and commuters. The pavements are also quite narrow in places, most particularly in front of Streatham Hill Station. I presume that the variable width of the pavements makes the introduction of a cycle lane on the pavements impractical with, ironically, the additional obstacle at present of the proliferation of the little-used bike stands.

The new rules I have proposed for cycling the pavement may not be the final answer but I hope they provide a basis for discussion and suggest the general direction changes in the rules might take.

Andrew McKay

LAMBETH ARCHIVES

We are pleased to report that Lambeth Council has taken note of the suggestions of the Lambeth Local History Forum, of which the Streatham Society is a member. In recognition of the importance of the heritage of our borough and the vast collection already deposited with Lambeth Archives and its excellent archives service, there is to be a new, dedicated building in Kennington Lane. A feasibility study is underway to determine the final design.

This will be a vast improvement on the cramped conditions in the Minet Library, which is also rather inaccessible. All in the Archives service and the Local History Forum are to be congratulated in their efforts to create a venue and service which Lambeth's heritage and residents deserve.

LAMBETH TOWN HALL

In December pre-booked tours of the Town Hall were held prior to its official opening on January 5th 2018. An hour-long guided tour led us throughout the building which has been impressively refurbished. It includes more community space and, in the basement, offers start-up space for new businesses. An attractive booklet was given to visitors which outlined the history and refurbishment of the Grade II listed building in the heart of Brixton.

The colour scheme has reverted to the 1908 original and some later extensions and additions removed. Refurbishment has restored the most important 'heritage' features while reconfiguring the interior design to create a more open-plan environment. The Council Chamber remains almost the same. Upgrades to services, lighting and heating include additional secondary glazing and unobtrusive blinds to protect from traffic noise and strong sunlight. A new courtyard provides outside seating and a route through to Buckner Road. The new Civic Centre further along Brixton Hill opens officially in March.

JH

LOCAL HISTORY MATTERS

STREATHAM ARTIST'S MADONNA AND CHILD FEATURED ON CHRISTMAS STAMPS

The painting of the Madonna and Child by the noted Streatham artist, William Dyce, featured on this year's First Class Christmas postage stamps. The painting shows the Virgin Mary reading a small book while holding the baby Jesus in her arms. The picture was purchased by Prince Albert in 1845 and was described by his wife, Queen Victoria, as "a most beautiful painting ... so chaste and exquisitely painted". The painting has remained in royal ownership for over 170 years and is one of a number of paintings by Dyce in the Royal collection.



William Dyce was born in 1806 in Aberdeen and became one of Britain's most famous artists and a pioneer of the pre-Raphaelite movement. In addition to his paintings, he also designed the Victorian florin, the modern-day equivalent of which is the 10p piece.



Dyce came to Streatham in the late 1850s and lived, and had his studio, in Bedford House which used to stand behind the shops at 111-119 Streatham High Road. He later moved to a large house called Woodlawn at No. 1

Streatham High Road, which stood at the southern junction with Leigham Court Road. While living there he was commissioned to paint the murals in the new Houses of Parliament.

The strains and pressures of such a prestigious commission took their toll on his fragile health and in early 1864 he was brought home to Streatham suffering with exhaustion. He died a few days later on St. Valentine's Day. He was buried in St. Leonard's churchyard; his coffin being led to the church by the choir boys from the Chapel Royal with representatives of Queen Victoria and the Royal Academy being present at the funeral service.

Dyce played an active roll in Streatham life and was Churchwarden of St. Leonard's from 1862 until his death. He designed the Chancel extension of the church and the Dyce Fountain, which now stands on Streatham Green.



This is the second time work by Dyce has featured on Britain's Christmas stamps and an earlier painting of the Madonna and Child by him, painted around 1827, was on the 2nd class stamp in 2007, which was reissued in 2008, when it became the only British commemorative stamp to be used for two successive years.

John W Brown



William Dyce, The 2007 stamp and the Dyce Fountain on Streatham Green

A SHEET OF PAPER

The day was grey with a gentle wind blowing in from the southwest. It was Monday, February 12th 1798, when Streatham householders gathered in the committee room at the parish workhouse. They had been drawn together because they feared a French invasion. The fear was nationwide. At sea and on land British armed forces were battling against the aggression of revolutionary France and, with much of the army committed abroad, it was paramount that the country be prepared for an invasion.

In anticipation, the government began boosting the local militias and listing all males between the age of 16 and 60 for voluntary or paid service. These and other proposals became embodied in the Defence of the Realm Act of 1798, which saw the creation of a national force of armed local volunteers, better known as fencibles. This was to be a people's war against a French invasion and, along with other communities across the country, Streatham responded; and in the same year formed the Streatham Armed Association, or Volunteers. The householders of Streatham who were called to the workhouse meeting were well aware

of the measures being taken and decided to make a further contribution towards the effort.

However, those of today would be none the wiser of this meeting and of the decisions made had it not been for the survival of a single sheet of paper of scribbled notes. These were penned by Richard Bullock, the Rector of Streatham and chairman of the meeting, which was called to raise money 'in support of our country'. Between those present it was decided to open a book and list the voluntary contributions made at the meeting. Immediately the sum of £149.3s.5d was collected. This amount was later increased when donations came in from those who were

not present. Such was the mood at the meeting that it was agreed that the patriotism of Streatham people should be known and given wide publicity. A short list of popular newspapers: *The Times*, *The Morning Herald*, *The Sun* and *The Star* were noted down at the meeting and a press release was issued later.

The press release did its work and Streatham got the publicity. If we turn to the newspapers for the month of February 1798, we see that Streatham was indeed given prominence under the column Voluntary Subscriptions, which appeared in most papers. This column listed individuals and places that had made a contribution to the Government's fund for the defence of the country.

In the *Kentish Gazette* for February 13th, we find some praise for Streatham and read that that 'the Streatham subscription is not expected to fall short of £5,000'. The paper goes on to say that Streatham by example will 'encourage other parishes to adopt a plan calculated to furnish every inhabitant with an opportunity of subscribing according to his means, towards the support of his country'. Moreover, having seen the requisition for this meeting, the *Kentish Gazette* points out that it was signed by 'men of first respectability in that part of the County of Surrey'. In their edition of February 16th, the paper tells more when we are informed that about forty respectable householders of Streatham, along with a con-

made
Times
Morning Herald
Sun
Star
Streatham Febry 12. 1798

At a Meeting of the Householdry of this Parish
held this day a book was opened for a voluntary
subscription in support of our country when the
sum of ^{149.3.5d} was immediately subscribed
by the contributors to ~~the~~ ^{the} ~~meeting~~ ^{meeting} ~~present~~
with the most perfect unanimity and a committee
was appointed to receive the further subscriptions
of such persons as were present attending here
to day. This by order of the Meeting
Richard Bullock Rector
Chairman

Resolved unanimously that the thanks
of the meeting be given to the Rector
for attending the meeting and for his
conduct -

The rough notes penned during the Workhouse meeting by the Reverend Richard Bullock on February 12th 1798

siderable number of tradespeople and farmers, attended the meeting at the work-house. They were reported as being ‘animated by the same patriotic sentiments’. Subscriptions were forthcoming, ranging from five shillings to one guinea, with a certain Mr Mills giving £500, a contribution that was widely reported in other newspapers. Mrs Ray, who kept a Streatham school, made a ‘handsome subscription’ and presented a contribution made by her pupils.

On February 17th, the *Caledonian Mercury* carried a similar report of the meeting and, on the same day, the *Northampton Mercury*, in mentioning the Streatham contribution, stated that ‘the amount of which, we are informed, now exceeds £1.600’. Furthermore, on Thursday March 6th, the *Kentish Gazette* listed, under their column of Voluntary Contributions for the Service of the Government, that Streatham Parish had now contributed £2,180 and not, as it seems, the anticipated £5,000. Nevertheless, it appears at the time that this was a substantial contribution in national terms, as the contribution was placed third in the list and followed the contributions made by Manchester and Birmingham.

This large contribution from Streatham reflected the wealth of the parish during this period, much the result of the gentrification of the area. Into this establishment of local wealth and privilege was placed the Reverend Richard Bullock as Rector of Streatham in 1785. This was a gift of the Duke of Bedford, Lord of the Manor, who also gave Bullock the benefice of St Paul’s Church, Covent Garden, the place where he is buried. Bullock died in the Rectory of St Paul’s in James Street, aged 80 years in 1809. He was noted as being a scholar and a gentleman of polished and amiable manners. He was high born and socially well connected, and the one who initiated the Streatham meeting, capitalising on his contacts and influence to raise money for the nation.

Once the national emergency had passed the paper trail of this meeting vanishes. Nowhere it seems is there a record of this particular meeting, save that reported in the newspapers. Hence our knowledge of this inaugural meeting and what occurred would be absent had it not been for the recent discovery of the above mentioned sheet of paper. As it happened, it was found in a drawer of mixed documents, unsorted for some thirty years, and in the stock of a Rochdale book-dealer.

However, the real value of this single sheet of paper lies in the fact that it captures the moment in time when the people of Streatham met together and contributed their money towards the defence of the country. This spirit of patriotism did not disappear over time. When the country was again threatened during the dark days of 1940, Streatham people came forward once more, and contributed their money towards the war effort. This time it was for the Spitfire Fund, when the Government appealed to the public for money to produce these fighter planes - one of which fought in the skies above Britain whilst carrying the name ‘Streatham’.

Graham Gower

NOTES ON HUGH SEWELL KINGDON AND THE STREATHAM HILL THEATRE

In the summer of 2016 I enjoyed a tour of the Streatham Hill Theatre (Beacon Bingo). The tour was interspersed with delightful bite size scenes from Shakespearean plays. The plays had been performed there over the years and was a celebration of Shakespeare's 400th anniversary. The tour and the players were beautifully provided and presented by The Streatham Hill Theatre Company.

I was amazed to see the wonderful interior of the listed theatre. It had opened in November 1929. Subsequently I obtained a copy of *The Streatham Hill Theatre* by John Cresswell. This fascinating book gives a very detailed picture of the development and use of the theatre. It also includes details of the main persons involved in the development and management, plus details of plays and shows staged and the entertainers.



One person stands out to me; this is Hugh Sewell Kingdon. His vision and endeavour brought about the development of the theatre. However in October 1928, barely three months after construction had commenced, control of the theatre company passed to Joseph Charles Clavering. This must have been a blow to Hugh S. Kingdon who then focused his business attention on the Locarno Dance Hall which opened in October 1929. Unfortunately his business interests in the entertainment industry turned sour during the 1930s. At the end of the decade he was doing simple jobs.

World War II started in September 1939. In May 1940 more than 300,000 allied men were ferried to Britain from the beach at Dunkirk. On 7 September 1940 the London Blitz began when waves of German bombers unleashed high explosive, delayed action and torpedo bombs on London. In nearby Balham on the night of 14 October 1940 a 1400kg (1.38 tons) bomb dropped on Balham High Road. A huge explosion led to the collapse of the underground station tunnels and there were at least 64 fatalities including four employees of London Transport.

To quote John Cresswell, 'In 1940...Kingdon was a caretaker in a food store overlooking Streatham Common when it was hit by a bomb which killed him. He lies buried in an unknown grave, his memory forgotten; but his memorials, Wren-like, live on'. Also '...the Crown Lane food store for which he was caretaker was struck'. I was intrigued by these details and decided to do some research.

The food store was at a house named Gresham Lodge. The house was on Streatham Common North and, with a few other large houses, overlooked the very top part of Streatham Common. They were located on the section of Streatham Common North on the east side of the junction with Leigham Court Road. These houses were in the Borough of Lambeth. Another of these houses was named Fern Lodge. Gresham Lodge was not the only house to suffer bomb damage. The grand houses have long since gone. A housing estate now occupies this land. It is the Fern Lodge Estate.

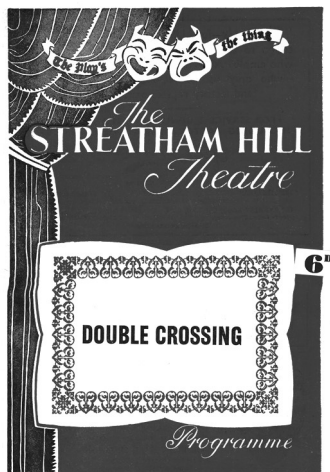
Gresham Lodge would have been requisitioned by the Local Authority or LCC to serve as a wartime food store. Since it was in Lambeth it is likely that it supported Rest Centres, Feeding Centres and perhaps Mobile Canteens in the borough.

The funeral of Hugh S. Kingdon was held at West Norwood Crematorium. It appears that he is not remembered on one of the local Civilian War Memorials. The only place where he is remembered, as far as I know, is the Civilian War Dead Roll of Honour 1939-1945. The Roll consists of seven leather-bound volumes. The Roll was placed at Westminster Abbey in 1956 and 1958.

Acknowledgements: The Streatham Hill Theatre by John Cresswell (2000)*; Wandsworth Borough Local History and Heritage Service; The Commonwealth War Graves Commission. (*See Publications p33)

David N Whitefield

STREATHAM HILL THEATRE PROGRAMMES



Double Crossing Programme
1955

Since bingo ceased to be played at Beacon Bingo earlier this year the future of the building, the former Streatham Hill Theatre, has remained uncertain. The building is still open for use of the 'one arm bandits' in the gaming section of the premises but its long term future as a venue used by Beacon is doubtful.

For many years now members of the Streatham Society have been endeavouring to obtain a complete collection of programmes for the various shows performed at the Theatre. This was started by our former Secretary, John Cresswell, and his holding is now held with his papers which are deposited at Lambeth Archives. For ease of reference and consultation I also maintain a collection in my Streatham Archive and fellow Streatham Society member, Kevin Kelly, has also a substantial holding of pro-

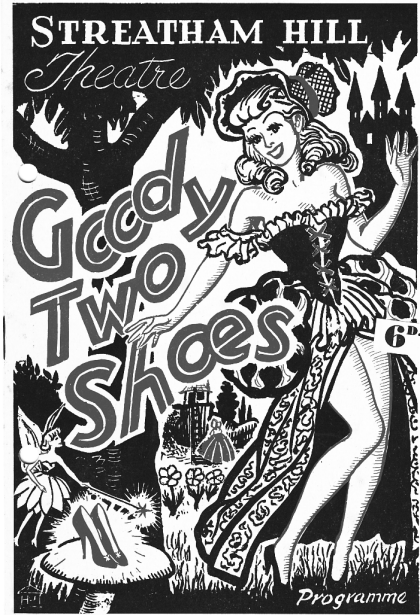
grammes in his collection of Streatham memorabilia.

During the more than 30 years the theatre was in operation I would estimate just under 1300 shows were performed there, given that some performances, such as pantomimes, ran for more than a single week. Thanks to a very generous recent donation of programmes from Carol Daw, of Amersham in Bucks, I can advise our holding of programmes now totals 699 programmes of which 12 are photocopies, the remainder being original complete programmes.

As to be expected, it is the pre-war years for which our holdings are thinnest with a very good run of programmes now held for the post-war productions. Until the donation from Carol, our holding of Second World War programmes was also very thin, but are now much more representative of the shows held in the Theatre to boost morale of war-time audiences. In addition I hold a collection of duplicate programmes which I use as swaps with other collectors who have programmes I can add to our holding.

It is fascinating to read the information the programmes contain concerning the shows which were performed in the theatre, but of equal interest is the large number of advertisements for local Streatham traders they also contain. I was recently able to supply a magnificent full page advertisement for The High flats from an old programme to the management committee of The High who were looking for material to mount a display to mark the 80th anniversary of the building.

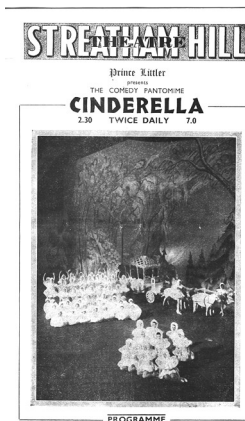
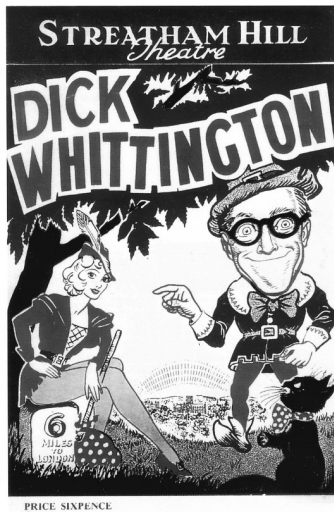
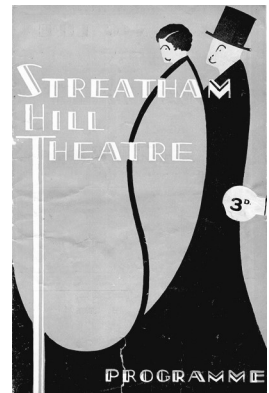
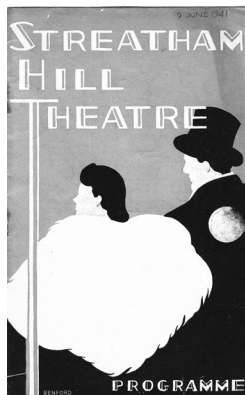
Programmes for Goody Two Shoes and Good Night Vienna





Any readers who have unwanted old Streatham Hill Theatre programmes they no longer require can be assured they will find a welcome home in our collection and in this regard we are pleased to acknowledge Carol Daws's wonderful donation and to record our thanks to her for taking the time and trouble to forward her collection to me.

JWB

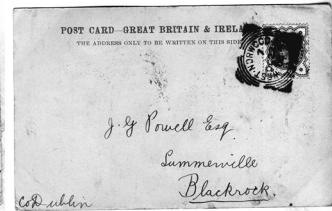
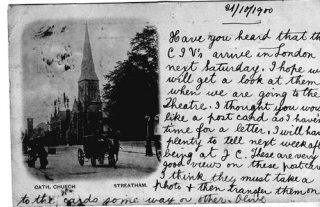
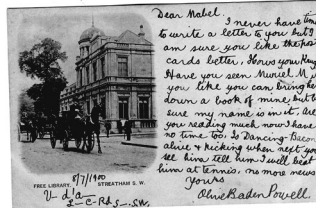


*The Apple Cart 1930; SHT programme Garrison Theatre June 1941;
Jack and the Beanstalk 1937; Dick Whittington; Cinderella;
Humpty Dumpty 1941*

OLIVE BADEN POWELL, PAUL KRUGER AND THE CIV

Marion and Graham Gower recently gave me two very early postcard views of Streatham.

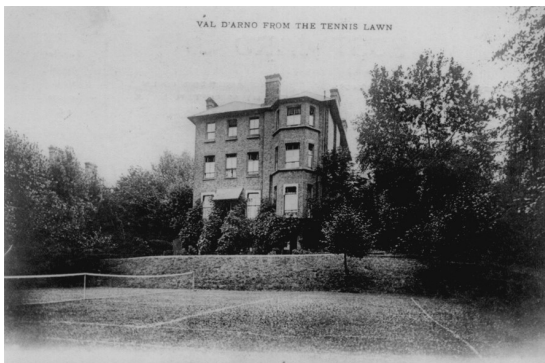
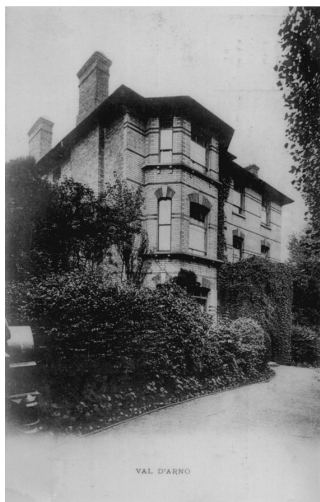
One shows the Library and the other the church of the English Martyrs in Mitcham Lane. In both views there is a fine horse and carriage trotting along Streatham High Road, which appears to be the same vehicle in both pictures. The images have been printed on light blue card with a space on the right hand side for the message with the reverse of the card being used solely for the address of the person to whom the card is sent, as was the legal requirement up to 1902. This makes the cards among the earliest issued in Streatham and provides a fascinating glimpse of our town in the opening years of the 20th century.



What added greatly to the interest of the cards were the messages written by the same person, Olive Baden Powell, to members of the Powell family living at Summerville, at Blackrock in Dublin, Ireland.

The earliest of the two cards captioned 'Free Library, Streatham S.W.', sent on 8th July 1900, was addressed to Miss M Powell. 'Dear Mabel,' it begins, 'I never have time to write a letter to you but I am sure you like the post cards better. Hows your Kruger? Have you seen Muriel M if you like you can bring her down a book of mine but be sure my name is in it. Are you reading much now I have no time too. Is Dancing Bacon alive and kicking when next you see him tell him I will beat him at tennis. No more news. Yours Olive Baden Powell.' The card is unstamped so may have been sent inside an envelope.

The second card entitled 'Cath. Church Streatham' was sent a couple of months later on 21st October 1900 to J G Powell Esq. 'Have you heard that the CIV's arrive in London next Saturday,' the message starts. "I hope we will get a look at them when we are going to the Theatre. I thought you would like a post card as I haven't time for a letter. I will have plenty to tell you next week after being at JC. These are very good views on these postcards I think they must take a photo + then transfer them on to the cards some way or other. Olive'. The card was posted on 22nd October and the franking stamp clearly shows it passed through the West Norwood sorting office.



Val D'Arno (front) and (rear) from the tennis lawn. A croquet lawn and playing fields were behind the tennis lawn.

Other than the fact the cards were written by the same person, there was one other thing that immediately caught my eye. Under the date beneath the picture of the Library Olive had also written 'V- d'A- L- C- Rd S-. S.W.'. To the casual observer this may appear to have been a cryptic message like the word SWALK written on the back of an envelope being shorthand for 'Sealed With a Loving Kiss' or the delightfully naughty and saucy appendage used by Alan Bennett, the playwright, 'NORWICH'! But to the Streatham local historian it could mean only one thing, the card had been sent from Val D'Arno, 182 Leigham Court Road, Streatham, S.W.

The reason why this was so well known to me was that in 2006 I was in correspondence with John Crawford Hudspith of Powys in Wales, whose grandmother, Marian Robey Bates, attended the girls' school which was based at Val D'Arno which I researched at that time. John sent me a collection of old photographs of the building.

Val D'Arno was run by Mary Wells, who was born in Tollington, Middlesex, c1833. She appears to have specialised in schools that placed an emphasis on continental languages and education, as was evident from the large number of teachers with foreign names mentioned by Marian in her diary.

Mary Wells had earlier run another school situated in a large house, also called Val D'Arno, which stood in Thurlow Park Road, Tulse Hill (part of which was also situated in the parish of Streatham). Here she employed Christina Windermere, a French teacher from Brussels, and Mary Laschek a German governess from Prussia. She had some 10 girls at the school in 1881 ranging in age from 12 to 17. Although head of the school, she ran it in partnership, probably with a widow called Sara A Alston, born c1844 in nearby Clapham, who was living at the school in 1881 and described herself as principal of a private school. Two

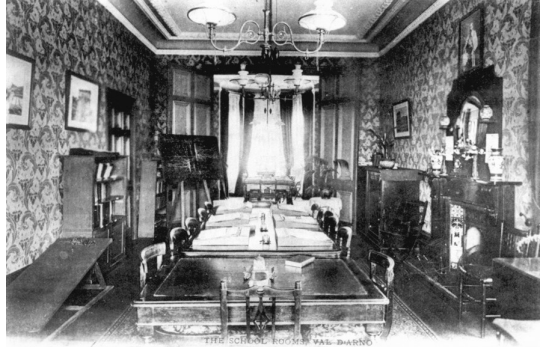
servants and a scullery maid were employed to look after the household and the girls who boarded there, four of whom were born overseas in Calcutta, Baghdad, Oudepoor and Paris.

It was around this time (1881) that Mary Wells decided to establish her school in Streatham and set up business at Val D'Arno in Leigham Court Road where she first appears in local directories in 1882. The house appears to date from this time and I presume it was newly built when Mary Wells took up occupancy there and christened the house with the same name as her earlier School in Thurlow Park Road. The size and nature of the establishment is evident from the photographs John Hudspith forwarded. We learn from the 1891 census that only three pupils were in residence at that time with no staff living on site. However, the large domestic staff comprising a housekeeper and three housemaids suggest a large number of day pupils to warrant such a big staff.

Mary Wells continued to run the school until 1896 when a Miss Therese Bertha Eva Hummel (aka Bertha Hummel) took over the school which continues to trade under the name of Val D'Arno. A reference I have discovered to the school at this time refers to it as being run by Madam Hummell.

By 1901 the number of pupils lodging there had risen to 10, aged between 13 and 18, Olive being one of them. Three teachers resided at the school, Lydia Hobbs, Johanna Ricket (born in Germany) and Hermancee Jonannean (born in France). The domestic staff then comprised a cook and a housemaid. The school was still in operation under the headship of Miss Hummel in 1905 although by 1910 the property had become a private residence and Sir John Edward Thrift was living there.

Unlike many of the other private schools for girls to be found in Streatham at that time I have seen no adverts for Val D'Arno in the contemporary local press



*The Dining and Drawing Rooms
182 Leigham Court Road*





THE LARGE SCHOOL ROOM, VAL D'ARNO

Val D'Arno: The Large School Room

suggesting that most of the pupils came from further afield. With most of the students aged between 16-18 I would suspect it was seen as a finishing school for young ladies, many of whom probably later embarked on tours of the continent. The 'select' nature of the school is further borne out by the fact that in various local publications issued around the turn of the 20th century numerous

private schools are detailed but Val D'Arno fails to get a mention and I have only found a single mention of it in contemporary local publications of the time when it is listed in Coles Miniature Guide to Streatham.

In the 1920s and 30s when local historians were listing the various private schools that used to operate in the parish no mention is made of the school. I have discovered only one very brief mention of it in an item on the history of Education in Streatham in which reference is made to there being a private girls' school in Leigham Court Road run by Madam Hummel.

Marian Bates mentions many names in her diary including a Mr Head, the drawing master, who was probably Mr AW Head who was Treasurer of the Streatham Art Society in the 1920s. Unfortunately, as Marian attended the school around 1893 this was well before the time Olive Baden Powell was in residence there in 1900/01 and so she is not mentioned.

Marian details the daily routine at the school which is likely to have been the same during Olive's time there. Pupils were woken at 6.30am and after their ablutions attended prayers followed by breakfast. Then there were lessons; a walk before lunch followed by more lessons and another walk before dinner followed by 'work' in the evening before bed. On Sundays the resident pupils attended the nearby St. Peter's Church in Leigham Court Road and Marian mentions sermons preached there by a Mr Osborn and a Mr Cox. She also makes several mentions of the head of the school, Miss Wells, and advises she taught Italian; John Hudspith advises this was 'a pleasure my grandmother was glad to forgo!'.

So what then of Olive Baden Powell? It is tempting to assume she was related in some way to the founder of the Scouting movement, Robert Baden Powell, whose wife was called Olave, often misspelt as Olive. However, detailed research undertaken by Christine Jones reveals this not to be the case. Indeed, Christine's investigations almost certainly indicate that Olive was in fact Flor-

ence Olive Gwendoline Powell, who was resident at the school at the time the 1901 census was compiled where she is listed as Florence O G Powell, an 18 year old 'school girl' from Ireland.

The JG Powell Esq. to whom she sent the Streatham postcard showing the Church of the English Martyrs, was her father, James George Powell, born c.1851. He was a stockbroker and became president of the Dublin Stock Exchange and was a prominent Irish Freemason. The Miss M Powell, who had the card showing Streatham Library, was Olive's younger sister by two years, Edith Mabel Powell. The family lived in Summerville, a large house in its own grounds at Booterstown in Blackrock, a suburb of Dublin. The house survives today and is now known as 21 Cross Avenue.

The reason why Olive chose to be known by one of her middle names may have been because her mother was also called Florence and this may have avoided confusion within the family. The appendage 'Baden' added to her surname may have just been a nick-name by which she became known. At the time of writing her cards, the Second Boer War was under way and in May 1900 the 217-day siege of Mafeking was relieved and the commander of the garrison there, Robert Baden Powell, became the hero of the day. He later went on to found the Boy Scouts in 1907.

This link may also explain various references in her postcards with South African connections. The card of the 8th July asks her sister Mabel 'Hows your Kruger?'. This would almost certainly refer to Paul Kruger, the President of the Transvaal and the South African Republic, against whose forces the British and her allies were fighting. Perhaps Olive was a supporter of the British in the Boer War and hence her wish to be associated with the hero Baden Powell, while her sister Mabel was sympathetic to the Boers.

In her postcard of the 21st October she enquires if her father has heard 'that the CIV's arrive in London next Saturday' and she hopes to see them when she goes up to town to attend the theatre. Here she is referring to the City of London Imperial Volunteers (CIV) which was raised in December 1899 to fight in the Boer War. All the officers and men in the corps received the Freedom of the City of London before departing for South Africa in the early months of 1900. Some members of the CIV took part in the relief of Kimberley and returned to Britain later that year in October.

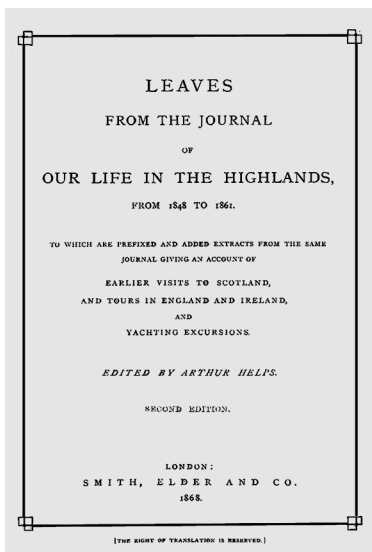
By 1904 Olive had returned home to Ireland and the Boer war had been over for a couple of years so it is interesting to note that postcards she forwarded to Mabel at that time were simply signed 'Olive' with no reference to 'Baden' Powell. Olive died on 28th December 1962 at which time she was living at 111 Regent Street, Wellington in Shropshire. She never married but obviously stayed in close contact with her sister (Edith) Mabel, who was the executor of her estate which was valued at £23,912 6s at the time of her death.

JOHN W BROWN & CHRISTINE JONES

WHAT A HELPFUL MAN MR HELPS



*St Leonard's Graveyard &
Queen Victoria's Highland
Journal*



Surrounding our ancient parish church of St. Leonard is 'God's Acre' in which thousands of former residents of our town have been buried over the centuries since a church first occupied this spot in Saxon times. We know from the parish registers and other sources that between 1538 and 1944 at least 10,682 people were buried in the small graveyard surrounding the church. Obviously over the years the graves of many of these people have disappeared as the plots have been reused and their original memorials have disintegrated.

In ancient times most of the graves would have been marked with a simple wooden grave board. This was a plank of wood placed lengthways on the grave on which would have been painted or carved details of the departed interred therein. When the ravages of time had caused the board to decay the grave would have been reused. Most of the bodies would have been buried only in a woollen shroud and so would have been devoured by nature at the time of reuse. By the 17th century gravestones had become more popular and provided a permanent marker for the resting place of the departed limiting the reuse of graves.

Today, some 282 gravestones have been identified in the churchyard. The earliest is that of Humphrey Townsend who died on 1st November 1708 aged 17, the latest is that of the Montefiore family which was the last grave to be opened, when in February 1944 90-year-old Edith Montefiore was interred there.

During last year's Lambeth Heritage Festival a number of tours of the graveyard were conducted revealing the lives of some of our former parishioners who now reside there. One of which is Sir Arthur Helps. His

name is little known today but in Victorian times he occupied a permanent position in court and was well known. His family live in Balham, then a hamlet in the parish of Streatham. Sir Arthur died on 7th March 1875 aged 61.

Helps was clerk to the Privy Council and an important confidant to Queen Victoria after the death of her husband, Prince Albert. In 1862 the Queen asked him to revise Prince Albert's speeches for publication and he also edited the Queen's Highland Journal which was published in 1868. He is frequently mentioned in Queen Victoria's diary, a typical entry being such as this recorded at Balmoral on March 9th 1870: 'I saw Mr Helps this evening at half past six, who introduced me to Mr. Charles Dickens, the celebrated author'.



Arthur Helps

For 15 years Helps remained at the very heart of court life, until in 1875 he caught a cold and died suddenly, after which he was brought to St. Leonard's Church for eternal rest in his family grave which stands at the northern end of the churchyard.

Long-time Streatham Society member Andrew Christos was on one of the graveyard tours and, on hearing about the life of Sir Arthur, was moved to commemorate the occasion in the prose below:

MR HELPS

What a helpful man Mr Helps.

What a wonderful man.

Helping Queen Victoria with her Highland Diaries.

Helping her edit them.

What a helpful man Mr Helps.

What a wonderful friend for Queen Victoria.

What a helpful man Mr Helps.

You deserve your eternal rest in Streatham.

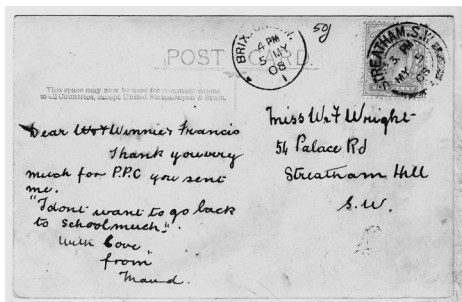
What a helpful man Mr Helps. *Andrew Christos 3rd September 2017*

JWB

THE MYSTERY OF ST ALBANS

I have written before about the remarkable knack Marion and Graham Gower have for discovering old pictures of Streatham. Over the years we have gained much pleasure in researching some of them and have been surprised at what we have discovered. Such was the case with an old postcard view of a large Victorian house which was among the items Marion and Graham kindly gave me at Christmas.

The only clue to the location of the property was the name printed at the bottom of the card 'St. Albans' and the fact that the card was probably posted in the Streatham Hill area as the reverse showed a Streatham and a Brixton postmark. The earliest of the two postmarks was that of Streatham timed at 3pm on the 5th May 1905 with the Brixton postmark timed at 4pm on the same day. The card was sent to Miss W & F Wright of 54 Palace Road, Streatham Hill, and the mes-



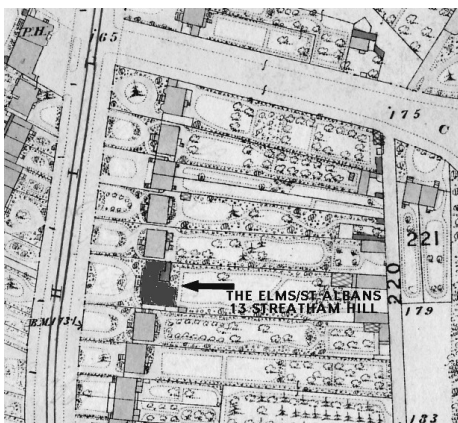
The Elms - St Albans, 1908 postcard

Street Directory (the nearest one I have to 1908) I discovered that No. 13 Streatham Hill was detailed as being called St. Albans! The house was then occupied by Mrs. Oswald Bell. The identical entry is also shown in my 1905, 1912 and 1913 directories. In the 1903 and earlier directories the house is merely shown as No. 13 with no name. The first

sage was obviously from a young girl as it reads 'Dear Winnie & Francis, Thank you very much for PPC* you sent me. I don't want to go back to school much. Much love from Maud'. (*Picture Post Card).

The picture of the house shows a fine Victorian villa-type property of two storeys in height with a grand entry porch richly embellished with elaborate architectural features, as are the windows. The doorway to the house is guarded by a pair of magnificent female sphinxes and opposite the entrance is an ornate cast iron lamp post. The view shows part of a grand carriage driveway leading up to the porch with carefully manicured gardens fronting the dwelling.

The obvious question was where in Streatham was this grand house located? Going through my 1910 Streatham Directory I have that gives a name to the property is that published in 1888 when a Mr Charles Zetterquist was named as the occupant and the property was known as The Elms.



1860 O.S. Map

An examination of the renumbering map for Streatham Hill shows No. 13 when this number was allocated to The Elms on 23rd September 1891. Although it is a simple outline of the front of the house, based on the large scale OS map, it matches perfectly the profile of the property shown in the photograph. It even shows the house set back slightly from its neighbour at No. 15 as depicted in the picture.

The postcard view appears to be the only surviving picture of the house as it was not included in the photographic survey undertaken by the London County Council (LCC) prior to the development of the Claremont Estate as the house had been lost in bombing during the Second World War. No doubt it had been demolished at the time of the LCC photographic survey as it does not appear on my OS map published in 1950 which shows the site as empty of any buildings with the neighbouring house (No. 15) marked as being a ruin.

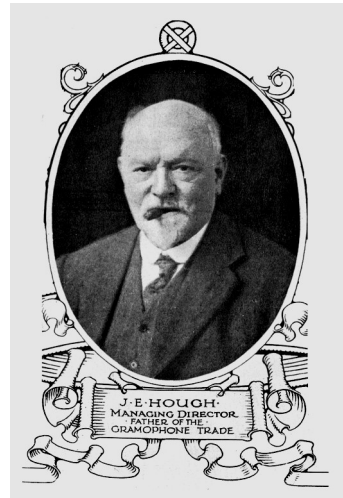
It would appear that at some time following Mr Zetterquist's residence of the house it was renamed St. Albans, either as a preference by a new owner or occupier, or to avoid any subsequent confusion with other properties in Streatham called The Elms of which there were a number.

Today, the southern end of Wray House stands on part of the land formerly occupied by 13 Streatham Hill. Further research reveals it was built in 1840 for Thomas H Bennett a hat maker. Originally known as 7 St. Ann's Place, it was probably subsequently named The Elms by Charles D Zetterquist, an Indigo blue manufacturer, who moved into the property in 1849 and lived there until his death in October 1883 aged 81. He was buried at West Norwood Cemetery. His family continued to live in the house until c.1893.

Around 1904 Mrs. Bell, the widow of the Revd. Oswald Bell of Stirling, took up residence there and it was she who changed the name of the house to St. Albans. Her husband was the minister at Muiravonside, Linlithgow, in Scotland between 1885 and 1896.

James E Hough was next to occupy the house and was probably its most prestigious resident. He moved here around 1916 and continued to live in the property until his death, aged 76, in 1925. The week before his demise he had suffered an accidental fall in the street and had dislocated his shoulder. His widow continued to live in St. Albans until the early 1930s.

Mr Hough was known as the 'Father' of the UK gramophone industry and in the early 1890s successfully sold phonograph machines in Britain. However, Edison Bell sued him for infringement of their copyright but later granted him a licence for a UK patent and he became their General Manager in Britain. He later acquired the UK business of the Edison Bell Company and under the name of his own firm, J E Hough Limited, ran the Edison Bell factory producing gramophone records, as well as operating a laboratory and recording rooms at Glengall Road, Peckham, and a depot at 43 Cranbourne Street in Leicester



James E Hough

Square in London.

Hough met with considerable success in this venture and became one of the UK's leading producers of gramophone records. His company was later involved in the radio industry manufacturing wireless components. James was also an early pioneer in the Kinetoscope industry which used gramophone records to provide silent films with speech and music.

St. Albans continued to grace the eastern side of Streatham Hill until the early days of the blitz, when on the night of the 9th September 1940, a high explosive bomb fell at the rear of the property which was so badly damaged by the blast from this explosion it was subsequently demolished.

JWB

THE BIGGEST BURIAL AT STREATHAM CEMETERY - CORRECTION

In the Winter 2016-17 issue of our newsletter we published an account of 'the biggest burial at Streatham Cemetery' on January 1st 1936 concerning the world's self-proclaimed 'fattest women', Hilda Wilson. Further research by Geoff Simmons has revealed that although newspaper accounts of the event referred to the burial taking place at Streatham Cemetery, it did in fact occur at Streatham Park Cemetery in Rowan Road where Hilda was laid to rest in grave 33346 in Square 24 of the burial ground.

TOOTING HISTORY GROUP

We are pleased to report that the very active Tooting History Group are expanding their activities and producing a programme of ten talks in addition to their Summerstown182 events. The 2018 programme can be viewed on their website or obtained at meetings. Annual membership is £10.

The talks take place at the United Reformed Church, 2 Rookstone Road, Tooting SW17 9NQ and start at 7.30pm. The church is a short walk from Tooting Broadway tube station and the following buses also stop nearby: 44, 57, 77, 127, 264, 270, 280, 333, 355 & G1. Talks include:

March 13	The Irish Community in Tooting, a Reminiscence evening
April 10	Tooting Allotments - speaker Geraldine Kelly
May 8	Memories of Tooting in Wartime - speaker Beryl Kingston
June 12	The Common Story HLF Research Project - speakers Philip Bradley & Janet Smith
July 10	Dr Johnson and Hester Thrale of Streatham Park - Cathy Ulph
August	No meeting
Sept 11	Members' evening - various speakers
Oct 9	Cinemas of Tooting, Balham & Streatham - Richard Gray
Nov 13	The Commonwealth War Graves Commission: the Early Years

STREATHAM SOCIETY REPORTS

COMMITTEE REPORT

Items discussed at recent committee meetings

- Wreath for Remembrance Sunday
- Rookery wishing well donated by the Society now in need of repair, quotes being investigated
- Consideration of donation requests. The Society has raised enough funds to give occasional donations to local charities mostly run by volunteers. The consideration for these is to donate to established organisations which benefit the widest possible number of residents or help to preserve our heritage.
- Acknowledgement of extra help given by our printers Printinc (contact see back page) and SRA Copyshop, West Norwood
- Next programme and 2018 events planned
- Planning applications as reported in last *News*.

EVENTS REPORTS

MEETINGS

‘The Angels’ Voice’ - A Magazine for Young Men in Brixton 1910-1913

On October 16th Dr Alan Argent gave a most interesting illustrated talk on *The Angels’ Voice*. The Young men’s Bible Class of Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton, produced this magazine for their own entertainment. It gives us an insight into the lives of members of a dissenting church in the years prior to the First World War.

Alan Argent, a lifelong resident of Brixton, is minister of Trinity Congregational Church, Brixton, and a keen historian. He has published articles and books on many aspects of the history of Congregationalism.

Editor’s note:

This talk took me back to a vivid memory of my childhood. When I was about ten, a friend and I spent some days producing a magazine. We made a large scrap book of folded paper, held together with plaited wool, then wrote, drew and coloured stories, jokes, puzzles and illustrations. These were carefully cut out and glued into place. I loved it. Unfortunately my friend kept the magazine.

Years later, when I was a primary school teacher, I typed and photocopied children’s stories, poems and illustrations for class anthologies (which I have still). I again enjoyed this, particularly the layout. The contributors were delighted.

Today I do the same with the *Streatham Society News*. Again it's the layout and the fillers I enjoy most. Of course, using a good publishing program, it is now easy to produce a professional-looking publication. This is very satisfying but much of the thought, planning and organisation is done for you.

I hope today's young people feel the life-long pleasure I did with their computer generated publications. Looking at the number of current adult information publications which show no consideration to layout, legibility or detail, they could easily produce something much better - and print it out to keep.

The Story of Sidney Lewis, Britain's youngest First World War Soldier

On November 6th Geoffrey Simmons, coordinator of the Summerstown182 project, displayed his considerable enthusiasm in this presentation. Sidney Lewis was the thirteen-year-old from Tooting who fought at the Somme. Geoff told us how the house where his family lived in Garratt Lane was identified. 500 people turned up to see Sidney's son unveil the newly installed commemorative blue plaque on September 26th 2016, almost one hundred years to the day when his father had returned safely home. The Summerstown182 community project is currently Heritage Lottery Funded to promote knowledge of the First World War in south-west London.

Christmas in Streatham

On November 20th John Brown gave his annual talk on his latest publication *A Streatham Christmas* (reviewed in our last issue). As usual, he attracted a large audience who appreciated his professional, informative and amusing presentation. The book has proved a popular Christmas present and should still be available up to next Christmas.

Editor's note:

These talks again illustrate the wealth of local history ephemera and interests available. The collectors and researchers involved in their preservation and publication are to be congratulated. Although I have much enjoyed the vast resources of on-line research, I wonder how much of today's ephemera and research will survive. I don't print out most of my photos which are stored in increasingly large files (but I do identify and delete where appropriate). Also three times, with help, I have had to upgrade storage systems for my research. Surely vast files of unidentified photographs and information will disappear probably without trace into the foggy mists of the world-wide web or be deleted for ever?

Members' Christmas Party

Our Christmas party on December 6th attracted 56 members who contributed plenty of food. Graham Gower gave his annual illustrated quiz which involved shouted answers, and Allen Brown's book titles presentation generated lots of laughter. As usual there was much chat and jollity. The raffle made an amazing £94. Many thanks to our team of helpers who made it all run smoothly.

MEMBERSHIP

We welcome new members David Whitefield, Mrs Ann Henderson and Richard & Sabrina Bush. Thanks to all our members - over 100 - who have paid their 2018 subscription before the reminders are sent. If a reminder is enclosed with this *News*, please pay as soon as possible. If you paid in late January, after we went to print, please ignore the reminder. The subscription remains at £10 individual or £15 household (at the same address, please give names). Cheques should be payable to the Streatham Society and sent to me (contact back page).

Life membership (£180 individual/£120 each per household) is also available. We now have 17 life members. This facility was set up in 2002 when the subscription was £6 individual/£4 concessions. The subscription was raised to its present level shortly afterwards. The concession rate was abolished as the majority of our members are in that category. The student rate was also abolished as we had only two in ten years. The household rate replaced these.

Some members ask why we still have membership cards as all details are held on a (secure) database. Some years ago we discontinued them and included printed reminders on the address labels. Many complaints were received so I decided to reinstate them. The SRA Copyshop has recently removed from me the onerous task of cutting them from the card sheets. Their efficient cutter can cope with my uneven margins much more easily than my trimmer. So our cards will continue. To quote a Copyshop manager: "We aim to please!"

Our first life member was our noted local historian, archivist and publisher, John W Brown. He is still waiting to be in profit. I estimate he's got about four years to go! But at least he doesn't have to remember to pay and he receives his new membership cards automatically.

One of our recent life subscribers was long-term member, Dr Charles Mansfield. He paid his life subscription in July 2016, plus a £20 donation. I was rather surprised as he was almost 90. However I met him regularly at our meetings and concerts at St Peter's Church and, although he became very frail, his mind seemed as sharp as ever, so I was reassured he knew what he was doing. He died less than a year later in May 2017. His membership of £10 therefore left a total donation to the Streatham Society of £190. Thank you so much, Charles.

Charles was a well-known and respected Streatham resident. I first met him at Brian Bloice's Local History class at the Adare Centre. He was born in Copley Park, off Streatham Common South, and died peacefully at his home, almost opposite, at Streatham Common North. He was educated at Dulwich College and studied medicine at King's College Hospital. He was a GP in West Dulwich and later in Norwood. He and his wife Rosaleen brought up their family in Valleyfield Road. St Peter's Church, Leigham Court Road, played a big part in their lives. Both were very active there and in the local community.

Judy Harris

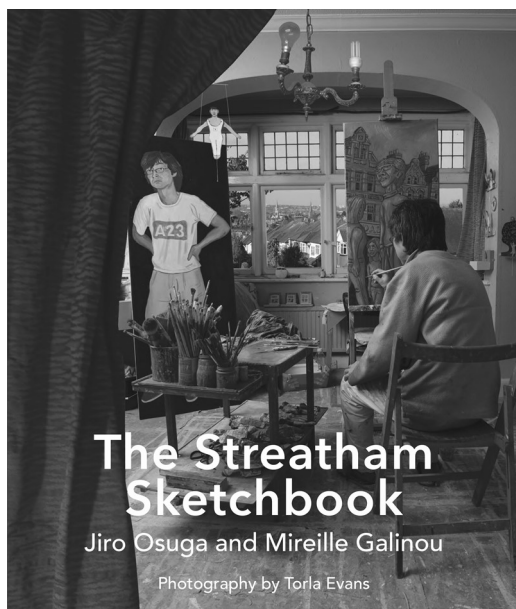
PUBLICATIONS OFFERS

THIS IS A LOST STREATHAM LANDMARK

Can you tell what it is or where it was?



© Jiro Osuga



The answers are in *The Streatham Sketchbook*, the new glossy publication which makes Streatham residents proud of their neighbourhood. Have you got your copy yet?

If you do, this image will be familiar (reproduced on p. 111).

If you don't, why not purchase a copy of the book now and take advantage of the publisher's special offer?

The Streatham Sketchbook is not available from the shops. It is beautifully produced and reasonably priced at £17.99.

SPECIAL OFFER to members of The Streatham Society. Un-

til 30 March, the book may be purchased for £15.00 only (delivered to your home). To order, email Mireille Galinou at m.galinou@virgin.net or ring 07950 266 980.

This unique 216 page publication is well worth buying, especially at this offer price. It is lavishly illustrated with a wealth of detail. - Ed

STREATHAM SOCIETY PUBLICATIONS OFFERS

The Streatham Society publications are unique and can only be purchased via the Society. Most of our stock can be viewed on our website (streathamsociety.org.uk). They are also sold on our book stall at meetings and events. John W Brown is our publisher and we sell some of his Local History Publications.

We have over 50 titles on sale so past publications may get overlooked. Those shown here have been chosen because they are the result of considerable detailed individual research.

A few out-of-print publications with few in stock are on sale at most meetings and listed on our publications leaflet.

Checking on e-bay, the few copies advertised are either listed as unobtainable or on sale (second-hand) at inflated prices.

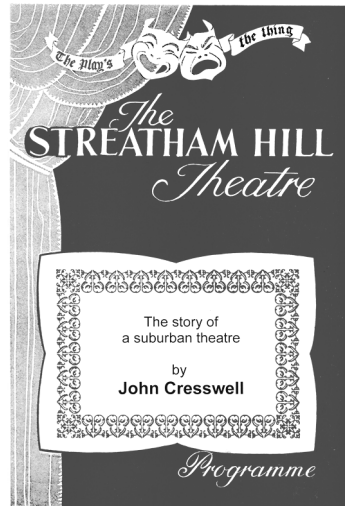
To buy our publications, please send a cheque, payable to the Streatham Society, and your delivery address, to 125 Thornlaw Road, West Norwood, London SE27 0SQ. The books will be posted on receipt. Of course, they can be bought, cash or cheque, from our meetings or (by arrangement) from the above address, post free. All prices shown here include postage.

We can also accept a BACS payment (details on request) but this must be confirmed by you as I do not have access to the Society's account.

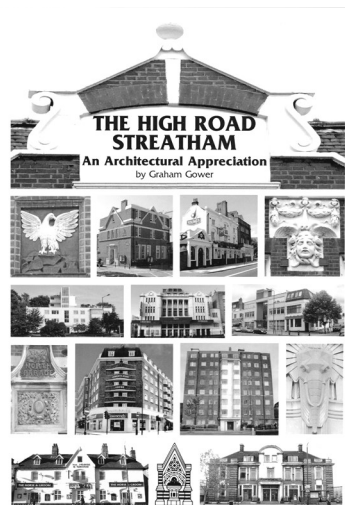
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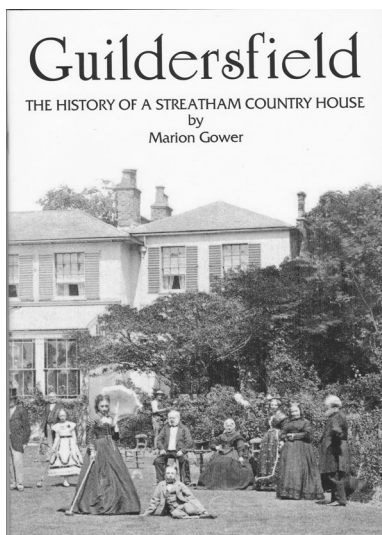
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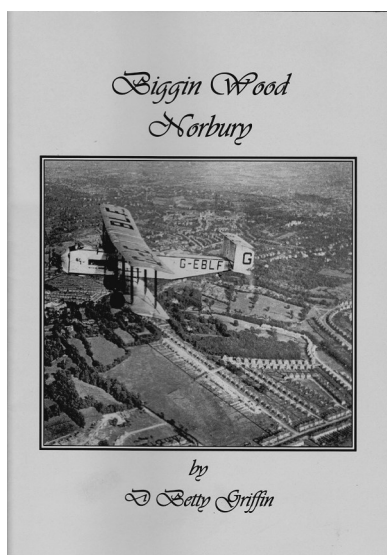
*The Streatham Hill Theatre (2000)
by John Cresswell. A4 60pp £7.30
(See article p.3)*



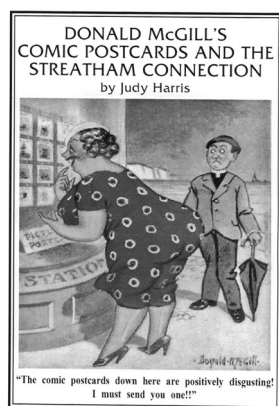
*The High Road, Streatham,
An Architectural Appreciation
by Graham Gower (2008) A4 48pp
£7.30*



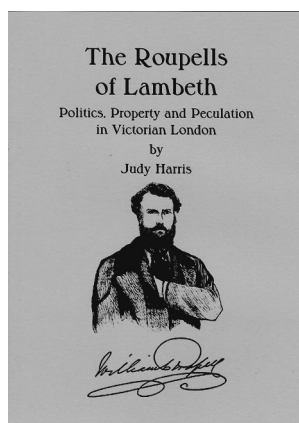
Guildersfield - The History of a Streatham Country House by Marion Gower (2012) A4 36pp £6.30



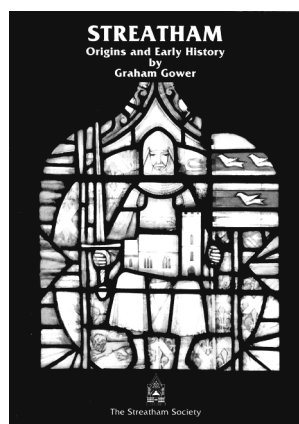
*Biggin Wood, Norbury by Betty Griffin (2005 reprint) A4 36pp £4.80
Local History Publications*



Donald McGill's Comic Postcards and the Streatham Connection by Judy Harris (2013 reprint) A5 20pp £3.70



The Roupells of Lambeth by Judy Harris (2001) A5 140pp £6.30 (Offer price)



Streatham - Origins and Early History by Graham Gower (2008) A5 112 pp £6.30 (Offer price)

MORE DATES FOR YOUR DIARY

MARCH

- Wed 14** **Lambeth's Victorian Architecture** following AGM **7.45pm**
Talk, Edmund Bird. Herne Hill United Church Hall, Herne Hill,
Junction Red Post Hill SE24. *Herne Hill Society*
- Thur 15** **My House, My Street** **7.30pm**
Talk, Nick Tyson, Secretary of the Brunswick Housing Trust,
Hove, explains how to research your house history
Upper Norwood Library, Westow Hill SE19. *Norwood Society*
- Sat 24** **Summerstown182 Spring Offensive Walk** **2.00pm**
Remembering the great Spring Offensive battle of 100 years ago
when so many of the Summerstown182 lost their lives
Starts St Mary's Church, Wimbledon Rd SW17.
- Sat 24** **Spring Concert - French Connections** **7.30pm**
Fauré, Duruflé, Poulenc, Villetta, Franck
Streatham Choral at St Leonard's Church, Streatham £10/£8.50.

APRIL

- Wed 11** **Bees can't eat kind words** - the welfare of London bees **7.45pm**
Talk, Dale Gibson. *Herne Hill Society*, as above.
- Thur 19** **Who's buried at St Luke's?** **7.30pm**
Francis Howcutt introduces his research into the churchyard of the
West Norwood Church and those buried there
Norwood Society, as above.
- Sat 21** **Summerstown182 Walk featuring Streatham Cemetery** **2.00pm**
RAF Centenary - Remembering airmen and women
Start St Mary's Church, Wimbledon Rd SW17.

MAY

- Sat 5** **Come and Sing Parry** **Rehearsal 11am Concert 7.30pm**
St Peter's Church, Leigham Court Rd, SW16 £15 for singers
Refreshments & scores provided. Free concert for audience 7.30pm
Come & Sing events are held at several local churches, including St
Leonard's. For St Peter's events see website, phone 07979191246
or contact music@stpeters.streatham.org
- Thur 17** **Gipsy Hill & Gipsy Road** Explore the area's history **7.30pm**
Talk, Alun Thomas. *Norwood Society*, as above.
- Mon 21** **The South London Botanical Institute (SLBI)** **8.00pm**
Talk, Roy Vickery. Omnibus, 1 Clapham Common North Side,
SW4. *Clapham Society*.

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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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