

NEWSLETTER

New Year issue 2005

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Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk



Researching your family history? See page 3 for how we can help.

Filling the New Diary

Dates are already confirmed for some events that we are likely to be involved in, stretching well into the year ahead:

- Brockwell Park Tree Celebration, Sunday 5 June.
- Lambeth Country Show, 16 & 17 July weekend.
- London Open House weekend, 17 & 18 September.

More dates are set out overleaf, but members still have a few weeks left to feed in ideas before we firm-up our commitments for the rest of 2005.

We also try to share information from kindred groups, and I know there are more such dates in the pipeline which

we will share with you as soon as we can. Some dates are already set for the series of guided walks around Lambeth next summer, but if you're keen to get out sooner, there's a...

Brockwell Park Walk

The Friends of Brockwell Park are holding a Winter Walk on **Sunday 16 January**. Meet at 2 pm by the clock tower in the centre of the Park.

Brixton Society's 30th Birthday Celebration - Our Winter Social

Thursday evening 10 February

From 7 pm at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road, SW2 (Effra Road end, facing Windrush Square).

Due to delays in compiling and issuing this winter newsletter, the social has been put back to February, though we are still within 2 weeks of the Society's "official" birthday on 30 January, the date of our inaugural meeting in 1975.

Admission free to members, but to help our planning, please confirm as soon as possible if you are coming, to Bill Linskey on (020) 7274 3835 or by e-mail to: wjdcl@globalnet.co.uk

Editorial Contact:

We welcome news and comment from all interested in the Brixton area, so opinions expressed in these pages are not necessarily those of the Brixton Society. Material for the next issue should be sent by 1st March to the Secretary, Alan Piper, at 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ, or e-mail to APiperBrix@aol.com or (020) 7207 0347.

Brixton Society meeting dates

In addition to our special events and displays, the Executive Committee usually meets on the second Thursday of the month to plan activities and agree our responses to local developments. All meetings at 7-30 pm, currently at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road, SW2 (near Effra Road, facing Windrush Square): contact the Secretary to check details.

- **13 January**
- **10 March**
- **14 April**
- **12 May**
- **9 June (AGM)**
- **14 July**
- **8 September**
- **13 October**
- **10 November.**

Brixton Area Forum

For meeting details of the Forum and its working groups, contact the Town Centre office on (020) 7926 1077. We know the following meetings are coming up:

Environmental Quality:
Thursday 6 January in Room 101, Town Hall, at 6-30 pm.

Forum Board:
Wednesday 12 January, Room 1, Town Hall, 7 pm

Tulse Hill Ward:
Monday 17 January 7 pm at St.Martin's Library Centre, Upper Tulse Hill.

Ferndale Ward:
Tuesday 18 January at 7 pm (venue tbc).

**Coldharbour Ward/
Angell area:** Wednesday 19 January, 7 pm at St.Matthew's Church in Lilford Road, SE5.

Forum Meeting date yet to be announced.

Links with other groups

We suggest checking with organisers in case of changes since these details reached us. Some events may be charged for, and most groups welcome donations in any case.

Future entries to Alan Piper (Secretary) at 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ, tel/fax (020) 7207 0347 APiperBrix@aol.com

Until 28 January – Twin Lens Reflex:

A selection from the local studio portraits taken by Harry Jacobs from the 1950s to the 1990s, set against the more casual photos taken by Bandele Ajetunmobi in East London from c.1950. Wednesdays 1 – 7 pm, Thurs, Fri, Sat, Sundays 1 – 6 pm, at 378 Coldharbour Lane, SW9. *Black Cultural Archives.*

8th to 29 January – Donald McGill's Comic Postcards:

The local connection of the originator of saucy seaside postcards is the theme for the latest exhibition at Carnegie Library, Herne Hill Road: Mondays 1-8 pm, Wednesdays & Fridays 10 am – 6 pm, Saturday 9 am – 5 pm. *Friends of Carnegie Library.*

Tuesday 11 Jan. – Friends of Windmill Gardens:

With progress reports on funding, condition of the windmill and educational policy. St.Saviour's Hall, 24 Blenheim Gardens, SW2, at 7 pm.

Wednesday 19 Jan. – Lambeth history through Landmark:

Nilu York will talk about her recent work in putting thousands of pictures from Lambeth Archives onto the Lambeth Landmark website. 7-30 for 8 pm at Clapham Manor Primary School, Belmont Road, SW4. *Clapham Society.*

Monday 24 Jan. – Minet Conservation Association AGM:

Annual General Meeting, 7-30 pm in the hall of Michael Church, Burton Road, SE5. Enquiries to (020) 7737 8210. *Minet Conservation Association*

Thursday 3 Feb. – Clapham Park:

Alan Piper presents recent research on this suburb which was once Stockwell Wood. 7-30 pm at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road, SW2 *Lambethans' Society.*

Monday 7th Feb. – Herne Hill Heritage:

A talk by Robert Holden, based on the recent Heritage Trail book, 8 pm, Woodlawns, Streatham Darby & Joan Club, 16 Leigham Court Road, SW16. *Streatham Society (local history group).*

Wednesday 9 Feb. – Inns & Inn Signs:

Illustrated talk by Joan P.Alcock, 7-45 pm at Herne Hill URC Hall, c/o Redpost Hill and Herne Hill, SE24. *Herne Hill Society.*

How can we help with...

Family History

The number of enquiries that we receive in this field has been increasing, particularly via the Internet. We can expect even more in 2005, following the recent BBC TV series "Who do you think you are?" and its spin-off book which was prominent in the bookshops just before Christmas. Time then for a few reminders about how best to use local societies like ourselves...

Clarity: Please be clear what you are asking from us, so that we do not waste time finding out something which you already knew. If you can tell us dates and house numbers, they can help to focus our efforts. It is usually possible to say fairly promptly if you are exploring the right area, but further enquiries can take a while.

Context: We are well placed to tell you what the area was like when your ancestor was living here, whether their house is still standing or if the road name has changed. However, Brixton has seen enormous population turnover in the past 60 years, so the prospects are slight that any of us will actually remember your Great Aunt Ethel unless she ran a well-known shop or was otherwise prominent in local life.

Sources: We know some of the strengths and weaknesses of local Archive sources. For example, local directories give good coverage for the last quarter of the 19th century, but never 100% because they always depend on the willingness of people to subscribe. Thus the poorer or transient residents were not recorded, and residents in general faded from postal directories between the two World Wars as phone directories became more important. Trade listings are more reliable, even after 1945, so a business can usually be found by type or by alphabetical listing.

Synergy: We are happy to publicise enquiries in our Newsletter (even on the website) if our readers are likely to be

interested, but remember that we only publish quarterly, with a core distribution of 250, so don't expect a big or rapid response. It is possible though that your enquiry may get picked up and relayed by someone in another group or society on our mailing list. If we find other people researching the same topic, we will try to put you in touch. In fact, we have already found some clusters of reminiscences and enquiries, e.g. Blenheim Gardens, or even networks of former residents, e.g. Ferndale Court.

Serendipity: In other words, you never know what might turn up, so it's always worth asking. For years I have tried to note or copy anything I see with a Brixton connection. Guy de la Bedoyere, Time Team's expert on the Roman era, chanced upon an old family bible whose owners were Brixton residents in the mid-1800s. It may not be his local patch or his period, but he kindly passed word on that the story of Mary Duck's bible is on his website at: www.romanbritain.freeserve.co.uk

Accuracy: How reliable are the facts you already have? Details easily become garbled when transmitted orally down the generations, and people have often preferred an entertaining story to hard facts. Even on birth certificates, Census forms and the like, people have been known to lie. So we may have to tell you that Grandfather did not own half of Brixton after all!



Consulting on the Black Cultural Archives

A year has elapsed since we reported on BCA's aspirations to adapt the front portion of Raleigh Hall to house the Black Cultural Archives. Wheels are turning though, and Haidee Bell of ABL Consulting came to our November committee meeting to discuss the proposals. Members present were generally supportive but made various comments in the light of experience with previous projects:

- BCA has had a low profile locally with limited opening hours. Capacity needs to

Local History Focus

be increased, perhaps through partnership with other agencies and groups.

- Lambeth's own Archives have developed a higher profile in recent years but their location is poor and their involvement in this project would provide them with a more central point of access.
- The project needs to be ambitious enough to justify the cost of restoring the building, but running costs are critical..
- If Heritage funds are invested in the building, it ought to be open to public access, e.g. as exhibition space. A good local model for gallery management is Photofusion.
- There is a shortage of good local venues for meetings so rooms for hire would be welcome.

Crime and Punishment on Brixton Hill

During one of last Summer's guided walks around Brixton Hill, I mentioned Jack Gutteridge, a local villain whose body was left hanging alongside the road to deter other offenders. There are passing references in a few sources, but nothing in our Town Trails because the details only came to light last June, when Graham Gower published an account in the Newsletter of the Southwark & Lambeth Archaeological Society. I hasten to say that no-one has dug up the body, but Graham did find a contemporary newspaper report about the case.

Historical hearsay records that Jack Gutteridge committed his highway robberies during the 1720s, along the Road known as Brixton Causeway, that stretch of the Croydon Road which ran from Brixton to the northern limits of Streatham Village. Furthermore, we are told that when caught he was duly executed and his body displayed above the road, close to the 5th milestone from London at Brixton Hill. Until recent times the stone stood outside 256 Brixton Hill, almost opposite Holmewood Road. Although little detail was known, it appeared that such an event had been commemorated in the naming of Gutteridge Field (marked on the 1810 Inclosure Map and now part of the Roupell Park Estate) which was then part of Brixton Causeway Farm.

To local historians, Jack had long been an elusive figure, and we knew nothing of his crimes, until by chance he was "caught" again. Not this time for his misdeeds, but spotted in the pages of an obscure weekly broadsheet, the *Weekly Journal or Saturday's Post* for the week ending 5th October 1723, where the following report appeared:

One evening during last week some men made their way to the house of Mrs Howland, mother of Her Grace the Duchess of Bedford, at her house in Streatham. On arriving at the house the men knocked at the gate, whereby the housekeeper opened a window and asked what they wanted. The men answered by asking if they could come in. The housekeeper replied by asking what their business was. The men said they must have some meat and drink. She said that as the family was not at home she could not open the door and let them in. The men did not like this and threatened to break down the door if she did not let them in. The housekeeper, remembering that there were several men working nearby in the garden and about the house, shouted out to them for help. Realising their situation, the men at the gate quickly left and went away swearing at her.

Some time after leaving the house the men overtook a poor servant at Brixton Causeway and robbed him of the little money he was carrying. The men then stripped him naked and tied his hands behind his back and then started to force him into a ditch, which was overgrown with brambles. While he was pleading with them to spare his life, he heard the sound of horses and began shouting out "murder".

To keep him quiet one of the men put a pistol to his mouth and fired. At the same moment the pistol went off the servant turned his head, but unfortunately the shot blew away part of his cheek. Not content with shooting him, they stabbed him in two places and then made their escape. The poor servant has since died of his wounds.

On Monday last the men were captured in London, two of them in Kent Street and one in the Mint. Their names were Pugh, Guttridge and Blunt. When being questioned by Justice Lad they confessed to the crimes and set about accusing each other, and other members of their gang.

Where the trial of Gutteridge took place is not known, neither his place of execution, which was not at Kennington Common where many others perished in the 18th century. As a felon he would have suffered a public hanging, after which his body was taken to the temporary gibbet erected at the place where he and his accomplices carried out their murderous act. Then, caged in iron or wrapped in chains, the body would be left hanging as a stark reminder that crime doesn't pay.

Graham Gower.

Changes planned for Tate Library Gardens

The council's current proposals for short term changes to Tate Gardens seek to prevent crime and anti-social behaviour by increasing the visibility of the square to the police and removing hiding places for stashing drugs. This involves the lowering of brick walls in the square and the undertaking of some well-needed maintenance. The extent of the work is determined by what the contractor is able to achieve within the £50k budget the council has made available.

The Friends of Brixton Library and Tate Gardens has been involved in a parallel discussion with the council, instigated by the Parks Department, which looked at other, larger scale approaches to short-term alterations and interventions in the square.

The Friends Group's attitude through these discussions has been that prevention of anti-social behaviour is best served by increasing and diversifying activity in the square, that any short-term works should largely retain the squares' current physical form while opening up a clearer access route to the library across the square, and that any work should help, or at least in no way interfere with, the Council and Brixton Area Forum's ongoing long-term design process to develop a new central square, which the Friends Group fully supports.

In the meantime, while we feel that an active, managerial approach could have both a more significant impact on current crime and anti-social behaviour in the square, as well as contribute to an active, experimental approach to the long-term design process, we recognise that the money for these is not available.

On this basis, we endorse these limited alterations, and hope they have the effect intended.

An outline of the discussion we have had with the Parks Department can be seen at the Brixton Society website:
www.brixton society.org.uk/square1.htm/

The Friends Group is passionate about making the centre of Brixton a great place for all parts of the community to live, work and hang out. If you're passionate about it too, join us!

Ben Tunstall.

The next meeting will be on **Thursday 13 January** at 6-30 pm at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road, SW2. Details of further meetings will be on the diary section of the website, but for the time being will normally be on the same evening as the Brixton Society's own committee meeting. If in doubt, check with Glyn Kyle on (020) 7326 5070.

Lambeth Planning Framework – Preparing for the Public Inquiry:

Lambeth Council planning policies on major developments like Effra School – and on smaller ones like domestic conversions – are set out in its Unitary Development Plan. Two successive drafts of a new plan have been issued for comment, and a Public Inquiry into objections will be held this year, starting on **Tuesday 8 March**. It will continue until 20 May, working through the plan section by section.

This means objectors may need to attend on several occasions if they are concerned about different aspects of the plan.

The Brixton Society has made objections to several proposals in both drafts, so will probably present evidence

to the Inquiry. There is not space to set out all our points here, but some have been only partly addressed in proposed changes, while a few fundamental differences remain.

We are keen to collaborate with other groups or individual objectors where there is common ground. If you want to discuss this, please contact Alan Piper initially (see page 1 for contact details).

The Inquiry is conducted by a Planning Inspector appointed by Central Government, though his report will still only be a recommendation to the Council. For detailed arrangements and timetable enquiries, contact the Inquiry's Programme Officer, Pauline Butcher on (020) 7926 1266 or e-mail to pbutcher@lambeth.gov.uk. She will be based in Room 31 in the Town Hall, where Inquiry documents can also be inspected.



Where UDP policies matter - the Freemans site in Clapham Road, one of the more complex local planning applications in the past year.

Effra School Site Update

Things have moved on since our report last April. In May, Goldcrest Homes received outline planning permission after an Appeal, for 3 broadly similar schemes of mostly one and two-bedroom flats in a block of up to 5 storeys ranged along Effra Parade.

In September the site was sold on to Bellway Homes, who have been a little more receptive to neighbours' concerns.

They recently submitted their own detailed proposals for full planning permission, for 2 schemes with slight differences in the mix of flat sizes, but the total density is about the same. The block is now to be 4 storeys high, with flat roofs and the top floor slightly set back. However for residents on the other side of Effra Parade, the benefit of this lower roof-line could be negated by an overhanging canopy above the 3rd floor balconies.

Meanwhile, the 1930s school has already been demolished save for the toilet blocks along the boundary with Barnwell Road properties – though there is still a big pile of bricks to be shifted.

Alan Piper.

Herne Hill Intersection

Improvements to this complex road junction have been under discussion for some time, and some of the problems have been mentioned in past editions. Based mainly on discussions with the Herne Hill Forum, a package of measures was published early in December, and will be considered by the Council's Brixton Area Committee on **2nd February**.

The £530,000 set aside by the Council is not enough to do all the work, so it will be split into 2 phases. Phase 1 consists of:

- Closing the southern end of Railton Road to vehicle traffic.
- Reversing the one-way flow in Rymer Street to take south-bound traffic from Railton Road into Dulwich Road.
- Making Hurst Street one-way northbound for traffic to enter Railton Road towards Brixton.
- Temporary removal of the slip lane from Norwood Road past the main gates of Brockwell Park.

- Improved pedestrian crossings around the main railway bridge.
- New Pelican crossings over Dulwich Road (by the Brockwell Park Tavern) and Milkwood Road (behind the Sorting Office).

Phase 2 will consist of:

- Repaving Railton Road from the corner of Rymer Street past the railway station, including parking bays.
- Cutting off the corner of the Park to reinstate the slip road from Norwood Road into Dulwich Road, with a more gradual curve than at present.
- As part of this, the Park entrance area would be redesigned and the toilet block demolished.

Based on Lambeth Transport report, with additional information from the Herne Hill Society.

Towards a Sustainable Community Plan...

As reported in our last issue, the Lambeth Community Plan has set several issues for the Environment Theme Partnership to get to grips with over the next year or two.

To strengthen input from local community interests, the Lambeth Community Empowerment Network needs to know which groups are most interested in these issues, so that consultation can be more effective. We are trying to set up a meeting around Environment issues early in the New Year, but here's a few points to think about. Do take the opportunity to feed your views back to us in some way.

Defending Bio-Diversity

One measure of the quality of the local environment is the diversity of different plant and animal species that live in it. Inner London seems to have recovered

somewhat in recent years but pressure for development could easily set things back. It's also easy for a few tough species to dominate while others are squeezed out, so thought has to be given to protecting a variety of different habitats to ensure any diversity.

A draft bio-diversity policy is already circulating among some of the interested parties.

To bin or not to bin...

Probably the biggest disincentive to **recycling** is the huge extra bin capacity that residents were given when wheely bins were introduced. The "family" size wheely bin offers nearly 3 times the volume of the traditional dustbin, so you scarcely have to worry about fitting it all in. However, now that the recycling collection includes cardboard, plastic bottles, and even aerosols, in addition to the familiar paper, glass and cans, there is not much left that really ought to go in the bin. Surely the solution is to opt for smaller bins – which would free up more pavement space for us pedestrians!

If you are keen to trade down to a smaller bin, contact the Council's streetcare call centre on (020) 7926 9000.

You can also request extra recycling sacks or other services by completing the streetcare service request form at: www.lambeth.gov.uk/recycling

Road Safety

I was not being entirely frivolous about pedestrian safety just now. In fact, Road Safety issues will probably be the toughest targets that the Environment Theme group will have to deal with. The broad consensus is pro-Public Transport but like the Herne Hill example referred to above, changes cost serious money and take time.

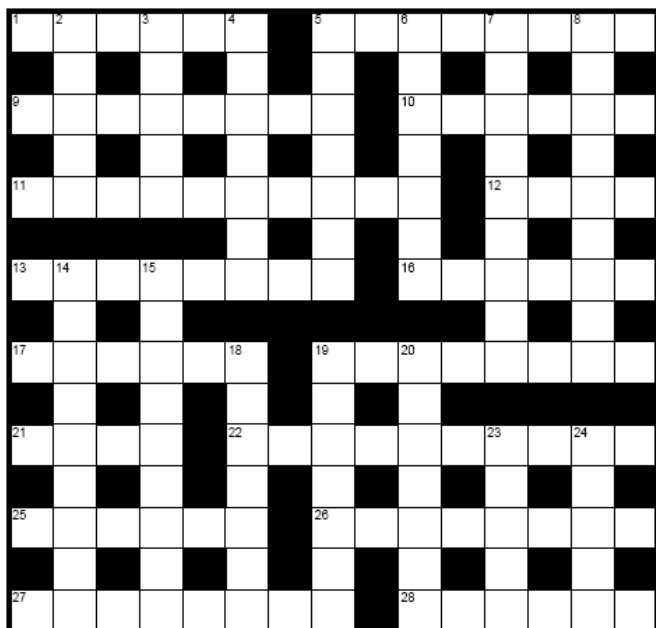
Alan Piper, Vice Chair of Environment Theme Partnership, Lambeth First.

Order! Order!

Number each list in order, from the least to the greatest following the "length" example.

LENGTH	PREFIX	BEAUFORT	WEIGHT	VOLUME	NAVY	
CENTIMETRE	1	FEMTO	CALM	CARAT	BARREL	ABLE RATING
FATHOM	7	GIGA	FRESH BREEZE	GRAIN	BUSHEL	ADMIRAL
FOOT	4	KILO	GALE	GRAM	CUBIC FOOT	CAPTAIN
HAND	3	MEGA	GENTLE BREEZE	HUNDREDWEIGHT	CUBIC METRE	COMMANDER
INCH	2	MICRO	HURRICANE	OUNCE	FLUID OUNCE	COMMODORE
KILOMETRE	8	MILLI	LIGHT AIR	POUND	GALLON	LIEUTENANT
METRE	6	NANO	LIGHT BREEZE	STONE	LITRE	MIDSHIPMAN
MILE	9	PICO	MODERATE BREEZE	TON	PINT	PETTY OFFICER
YARD	5	TERA	STORM	TONNE	QUART	WARRANT OFFICER

ARMY	AIR FORCE	PAPER	BOTTLES	RANK
BRIGADIER	AIR COMMODORE	A4	BALTHAZAR	BARON
CAPTAIN	AIR MARSHALL	CARTRIDGE	BOTTLE	BARONET
COLONEL	FLIGHT LIEUTENANT	CROWN	HALF BOTTLE	DUKE
GENERAL	FLYING OFFICER	DEMY	JEROBOAM	EARL
LIEUTENANT	GROUP CAPTAIN	EAGLE	MAGNUM	ESQUIRE
MAJOR	PILOT OFFICER	EMPEROR	METHUSELAH	GENTLEMAN
PRIVATE	SQUADRON LEADER	FOOLSCAP	NEBUCHADNEZZAR	KNIGHT
SERGEANT	WARRANT OFFICER	HAND	REHOBOAM	MARQUESS
WARRANT OFFICER	WING COMMANDER	IMPERIAL	SALAMANAZAR	VISCOUNT



Five answers are types of 21 across and are only partially clued. All other clues are normal.

ACROSS

- 1 My work in charge is short-sighted (6)
- 5 London newspaper (8)
- 9 A veil back - call it nameless (8)
- 10 Leg able but for a risk (6)
- 11 Being involved in ultraviolet lotion in motion (10)
- 12 Knave (4)
- 13 Safe son becomes jazz pianist (8)
- 16 Execute man in gun sight (6)
- 17 Skin disease that may be an 18d. (6)
- 19 Appropriate that St. Peter mixes with pious but not left (8)
- 21 Iris (4)

- 22 Dissolute is cute loin (10)
 - 25 Large headline (6)
 - 26 Not right, slurs an MP for getting artificial tan (8)
 - 27 Weedy? Weedy? We are not because we are innocent (4-4)
 - 28 Junior officer (6)
- DOWN
- 2 Desire for Guy Earnest without guest about (5)
 - 3 Portia hasn't right to disrupt court (5)
 - 4 Rainbow (7)
 - 5 Number 10 knight's position (7)
 - 6 Star in Pegasus flew in gable (7)
 - 7 Underpants not long but half bottles (9)
 - 8 Unwilling? Not a TNT cluer (9)
 - 14 Absolve former lover of what sounds like selective slaughter of bald head (9)
 - 15 Green New York City space - except the north - is a mess and needs urgent action (9)
 - 18 Abnormal reaction to all energy without the North East (7)
 - 19 Charged accountant second hand (7)
 - 20 Punished audibly types of 21 across (7)
 - 23 Cripples, maims prayer leaders (5)
 - 24 Free price of United Nations stake (5)

RULES: The first three correct entries in each competition win a £10 book token each. If you are in the first three for both, your prize will be increased by another £5 to £25.

Entry is free to all Brixton Society members except the Officers of the Society, who may not enter, but whose decision in the event of any dispute will be final.

Entries will be accepted from those joining the Society, along with their membership application and fee. Membership fees are £5 per annum or £2 for the unwaged. Entries should be sent to: "Competitions", The Brixton Society, 32 Stockwell Green, London, SW9 9HZ to arrive by 28 February 2005 at the latest.

Winners will be announced in the Society's spring newsletter.