

NEWSLETTER

Summer issue, July 2007

No.186, Quarterly, distributed free to members

Registered with the Civic Trust and the London Forum of Amenity Societies, Registered Charity No.1058103

Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk



Our next appearance: Lambeth Country Show 21 & 22 July weekend

It's that time again and we will be part of this big event in Brockwell Park, so look for our stall in the usual area, near kindred groups covering different parts of Lambeth – once again we are on site J6.

Do take the opportunity to check out our current publications, renew your membership and chat about your own interest in Brixton.

Sunday 9 September: Brixton Hill Walk

Meet at 2-30 pm at the corner of Brixton Hill and New Park Road Road, for a guided walk led by Alan Piper. Based on the "upper" half of our Brixton Heritage Trail No.1, the route will also take in nearer parts of the Clapham Park NDC.

Thursday 11 October: The Heart of Brixton

A progress update on developments in Brixton Town Centre, including the Central Square, new transport links, the Railway Hotel and more.

An opportunity for members to share their views and ask questions.

7 pm at the Vida Walsh Centre, 2b Saltoun Road, SW2.

Further details in our Autumn issue.

More dates listed inside...



"TUDOR CLOSE"
BRIXTON HILL, S.W.
For the Bachelor, Spinster and Married Couple

A magnificent block of Miniature Flats (in course of erection). Accommodation includes Entrance Lobby, good Reception Room with Bed Recess, well-equipped Kitchenette and Bathroom, CENTRAL HEATING, CONSTANT HOT WATER, RESIDENT PORTER AND HOUSEKEEPER (who will undertake full service at very moderate charges, if desired), GENERAL LUGGAGE ROOMS, **THREE FULL-SIZE HARD TENNIS COURTS**, **LARGE BATHING POOL** (with filtration plant), **BEAUTIFUL GARDENS.**

Rent :
30/- per week
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Saturday 6th October Lambeth Archives Open Day

10 am to 5 pm at Minet Library, corner of Burton and Knatchbull Roads, SE5. *If any member can spare an hour or two to help staff our stall during the Open Day, please speak with Glyn Kyle (Chair) on (020) 7326 5070.*

Brixton Society meeting dates

The Executive Committee usually meets on the second Thursday of the month to plan activities and agree our responses to local developments. All meetings **7 pm** at the **Vida Walsh Centre 2b** Saltoun Road, SW2. Contact the Secretary to confirm details.

- **13 September**
- **11 October**
(open meeting)
- **8 November.**

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.

Saturday & Sunday 21/22 July:

Urban Art Fair:

Once again the railings of Josephine Avenue will be festooned with the work of 90 living artists, at prices from £50 to £500. Open 10 am to 6 pm each day.

www.urbanart.co.uk

Sunday 5th August – Brixton Splash:

Both Coldharbour Lane and Atlantic Roads will be closed from their crossroads down to Brixton Road, for this community event. The event runs 12 noon to 7 pm but road closures will be effective all day until 9 pm. There will be live music in Windrush Square/ Tate Library Gardens, with various entertainments, children's activities, music and food in the closed sections of Coldharbour Lane and Atlantic Road.

Further details from the Town Centre Office on (020) 7926 1097 or the Employment Café at 64 Railton Road, tel. 020 7733 8878

Metro Sports Foundation Ltd, tr/as Brixton Splash.

Sunday 19 August – Peckham and the coming Tram:

A walk through Peckham to see where the Cross-River Tram will run and what may be lost as a result. Meet at **2 pm** at Peckham Rye Station, SE15.

Peckham Society.

Monday 3rd Sept. - London's Markets, Market Halls and Exchanges:

Illustrated talk by Dave Perrett, 8 pm at The Woodlawns Centre, 16 Leigham Court Road, Streatham SW16.

Streatham Society.

Monday 3rd to Friday 7th September – Music Hall:

Recapture the flavour of entertainment from a century ago at the Stanley Halls, South Norwood Hill, SE25, at 7-30 pm nightly. Box office 020 8776 1064.

The Croydon Stagers.

Sunday 9th Sept. – The Big Draw:

Once again FoBP are organising a "chalk on the path" day based on Rangoli patterns – and hoping the rain will not wash them away as quickly as 2006! All welcome to join in.

Friends of Brockwell Park

Wednesday 12 September – My Life in Show Business: Part 2- the Santa Years

by Robert Holden, 7-30 pm for 7-45 start, at Herne Hill United Church Hall, corner of Redpost Hill and Herne Hill.

Herne Hill Society.

Saturday 6th October Lambeth Archives Open Day:

10 am to 5 pm at the Minet Library, c/o Burton Road & Knatchbull Road, with talks in the Michael Church across the road. This year's theme is Sport & Leisure.

Lambeth Archives Dept.

Saturday 13 October Henry Tate Gardens

In case you missed the tours in May, they will be repeated at 2-30 & 3-30 pm, around the gardens of Park Hill, home of Sir Henry Tate from 1880 to 1899.

Meet at entrance gate on Streatham Common North, near junction with Leigham Court Road, SW16.

Streatham Society.

Summer Walks Programme

Lambeth's amenity societies are putting on a series of guided walks in and around the borough, running into October. We are giving out the printed list at the Lambeth Country Show, and it's on our website, so we have only mentioned a couple of highlights in this issue.

Brixton Area Forum

For meeting dates of the Forum and its working groups, contact the Town Centre office on (020) 7926 1077 or e-mail to: PAMathie@lambeth.gov.uk

Christmas Lights switch-on – Friday evening, 30 November.

Open House 15/16 September

It's that weekend when over 600 buildings open their doors for free, over most of Greater London. It's a mix of old and new, to show a range of dates and types, but most are not normally open to the public. The Buildings Guide will be out in mid-August at local libraries, or can be ordered from the website www.openhouse.org.uk

We must stress that some sites may only open on one day and numbers may be limited at smaller sites, so check the Guide or website to plan your visits.

Among the buildings open locally will be the upper floor of Brockwell Hall in the Park, the refurbished Brockwell Lido, Brixton Windmill, Tree House in Lyham Road, and the Greek Chapel in West Norwood Cemetery.

Over in Southwark, the remains of the Rose Theatre will be open. Further afield, I will be assisting at Biggin Hill airfield on Sunday, when the RAF Battle of Britain Memorial Flight will also be using the airfield, so we are guaranteed authentic sound effects during our tours!

Alan Piper.

Researching House History?

In the week after London Open House, Lambeth Archives will present a cluster of evenings on researching house history at several libraries around the borough. In

each case, speakers will provide some local context and examples. *More details expected next month.*

Tuesday 18 September
West Norwood Library, with Don Bianco (English Heritage and also Crystal Palace Community Association).
Durning Library, with Jim Nicolson (Vauxhall Society).

Wednesday 19 Sept.
Carnegie Library, with Alan Piper (Brixton and Lambethans' Societies).
Streatham Tate Library, with Brian Bloice (Streatham Society).

Thursday 20 September
Clapham Library, with Peter Jefferson-Smith (Clapham Society).
Waterloo Library (speaker to be confirmed).



Too late alas for one of the older houses in Palace Road, SW2, snapped by member Phil Angold as demolition started in May.

Tracing family and friends...

We receive frequent enquiries about people who have lived in Brixton in the past. Some are easier to respond to than others, but all add to the mosaic of Brixton Life in past decades. We have included a few here in

case any readers can add any information.

The Cheeky Chappie

My name is Jack Strutt and I am a member of the Max Miller Appreciation Society, based in Brighton. I edit the Society's quarterly magazine, "There'll never be another". During the past couple of years we have been aware that this public house in Vassall Road was due for demolition. I understand that this has now taken place and the site is being developed.

As the pub was presumably named in Max's honour, I wonder if you - or somebody else in your society - can let me have any details of the pub's history. I am particularly keen to find a photo of the pub in its heyday, including any shot of the interior if they exist.

Jack Strutt,
JackStrutt1t@aol.com

Bardach family

I am looking for information on the Bardach family, long-lost relatives that lived at 44 Arodene Road, SW2 from 1944 to 1977. The father was Rudolf, a tailor and radio dealer. The mother was Adele and the daughter was Henny or Henriette. The family was from Austria: Henny was one of Nicholas Winton's kindertransports while Adele was interned in 1940, probably because her country of birth was Germany.

I found that Henny and Rudolf became British Citizens in 1948. Henny belonged to Brixton

Synagogue, and in 1949 was being trained as a buyer with Dickins & Jones in Regent Street. What I would like to do is locate Henny if she is still living. My cousin and I are trying to create a family tree. My grandfather was Adolphe Bardach, brother of Rudolf, Henny's father.

Deanna Armstrong
deannaa@adelphia.net

Gates on Brixton Hill

The Marie Stopes Centre opposite the parade of shops on Brixton Hill has recently had a new fence after the old one fell down. Glad to see that they have kept the old gate posts and moved them to the main entrance. Anyway, I noticed a pair of identical posts on Arodene Road behind the second-hand furniture shop on the corner. Do you know what the significance was? Was that an entrance to a coach park maybe for the old cinema? Would be interested to know your thoughts.

Stephen Joseph,
Stephen_joseph21@hotmail.com

Church Institutions

Robert Kibblewhite wrote from Witney, Oxfordshire to identify a St. John's Institute in Foxley Road, SW9, where a distant relative had been an active member in 1887. We are confident this was in effect the church hall, at a time when many parish churches were providing a range of social activities and welfare services whilst publicly funded services

were still limited to the workhouse. However, if you can add any detail, please let us know.

International Profile

In a rare quiet moment a couple of months back, I checked the figures for the Society's website. Over the past year we have been getting 250 to 350 "hits" or visits to the site each month. Over a third of the visitors were from overseas – a wide range of countries but top at 7% each were the USA and Poland (is it anything to do with that new Polish delicatessen in Stockwell Road?).

Within the UK, the site monitor will give the County and an approximation of the borough or district – so I know that in April there was interest from Oxford, Windsor, Norfolk, Dorset, Nottingham, Manchester, Kirklees, Rutland, Cardiff, Warrington and Brighton, as well as several other parts of London. Individual details are unknown though unless you contact us directly by e-mail or more traditional means.

To contact us...

News and Views:

Material for the next issue should be sent by **31 August** to the Secretary, Alan Piper, at 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ, or phone or fax to (020) 7207 0347, or e-mail to: APiperBrix@aol.com
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.

Publications orders & Membership:

Publications orders, membership renewals and updates to the mailing list should all go to Diana Linskey, Membership Secretary, at 32 Stockwell Green, SW9 9HZ, or e-mail to wjdc1@globalnet.co.uk

Planning issues:

If you are concerned about a local planning application, contact David Warner on (020) 7924 0618 or by post to 290 Coldharbour Lane, SW9 8SE or to: david@scriabin.force9.net

Brockwell Lido at 70!

The builders are still very much in evidence but the swimming season opened as promised on 2nd July. More facilities will be opening in September including a gym and spa, so that the Lido is no longer wholly reliant on a short swimming season for its income.

Meanwhile, to mark the 70th anniversary of the opening of the Lido in 1937, a photo exhibition is being put on in a marquee in the Park during the **Lambeth Country Show**. BLU - the Brockwell Lido Users group has also published a book recording the Lido's past 70 years, with support from the Awards for All Lottery Fund. It has been researched by Peter Bradley and draws on reminiscences from many past users.

Keeping up with Planning Applications

It's always been difficult to publicise most local planning applications in our newsletter – apart from space limitations, the information really needs to reach you within the 3-week time-frame allowed for comments, which rarely works with our quarterly distribution.

The answer has now appeared in the form of www.PlanningAlerts.com which will provide e-mail summaries of anything being proposed within a chosen radius of your postcode.

The website has been put together by Brixton-based Richard Pope, together with Mikel Maron, Sam Smith and Duncan Parkes. It first launched in December 2006, and is hosted by mysociety.org. It searches local councils' websites and then e-mails you about any applications near you. About a third of London Boroughs are covered so far, including Lambeth, and coverage is rapidly extending nationwide.

Community Involvement

On 3rd August Lambeth's "Replacement" Unitary Development Plan finally takes effect. All the well-intentioned policies about retaining neighbourhood pubs and encouraging "greener" development are no longer diluted by long-outmoded ambitions from earlier plans. Despite the time spent by interested parties, even this plan may be stale

and out of touch. Time it seems to start the plan-making cycle once again?

Lambeth has already begun by producing a draft **Statement of Community Involvement** which sets out how any new Borough or local Plans will be consulted on, as well as individual planning applications.

We have already sent in detailed comments about how the process could be improved. One of the present gaps is the lack of a Conservation Areas Advisory Committee - once a Conservation Area has been set up, there is no way of steering or monitoring its development.

The Bigger Picture

The Government is currently consulting on a number of changes to how Town Planning operates nationwide. One aspect is widening the scope of domestic alterations that can be carried out without planning permission. Deadline for comments on this part of the White Paper is **17 August**.

Our umbrella bodies - the Civic Trust and the London Forum of Amenity Societies - are both sending comments but what are the key issues here in Brixton? If you want us to feed in ANY points about how Planning ought to work, you must tell Alan Piper by **10 August** (contact details on facing page).

Community Strategy

The Strategy is meant to guide all the Council's

activities, and co-ordinate them with other public service providers through the Local Strategic Partnership, "Lambeth First". The priorities in the strategy are being reviewed this Autumn.

Consultation is now channelled through the Active Communities Project at LVAC, which has absorbed the original CEN or Community Empowerment Network. Contact Gethyn Williams at lvac-acp-manager@lambethvac.org.uk or (020) 7737 9467.

Thames Water Flood Alleviation

Some of you may remember the sewer renewal works in Ferndale Road last year. There is more of this to come on the eastern side of Brixton, as Thames Water tries to reduce the risk of sewers backing up or flooding in times of heavy rain.

The first phase, around Loughborough Junction and Herne Hill, will start in October to finish in April 2008, when Phase 2 starts, centred on Railton Road and Effra Parade and due to finish in November 2008.

There will be temporary encampments of builders' huts in Wyck Gardens later this year, and on Rush Common in 2008.

Homes directly affected by construction works should already have been notified, but the traffic effects will doubtless ripple out over a much wider area.

Alan Piper.



DULWICH PICTURE GALLERY

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1 August - 4 November 2007

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Saturdays & Sundays 11 am - 5 pm
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£8; Children are free

Dulwich Picture Gallery
Gallery Road, London SE21 7AD
020 8693 5254
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

The Gallery is located between North Dulwich
and West Dulwich Stations

By bus: P4 from Brixton

By road: Just off the A205, the South Circular
Free parking in the streets around the Gallery.

Brixton Central Square Plans

We expected a formal planning application
to follow the exhibition in Brixton's Tate
library back in May, but urgency seems to
have dissipated as the contradictions
within the proposals become clearer.

Transport for London – the original funders
– destabilised the project by changing their
minds and aiming to reduce Effra Road to
a mere bus lane. The Effra Residents
Group objected vigorously, pointing out
that this would remove the deterrent effect
of passing traffic on street crime,
particularly late at night when buses are
few and far between. Councillors and
GLA seem to have been persuaded and
Ken Livingstone is reported to have
instructed TfL to revert to its previous
layout with Effra Road open to all traffic
heading for Tulse Hill.

This still leaves some contentious
elements within the design. Paving all of
Tate Library Gardens with stone slabs will
prevent water reaching the roots of the
London Plane tree which is meant to be
the central feature, so it would soon die.
We are keen that the gardens should
serve as a welcoming approach to the
front door of the library, but introducing a
raised level with steps will interrupt direct
level access. Management issues such as
delivery access to the library and the Ritzy
Cinema are still unresolved. There is a lot
of interest in trams returning to Brixton, but
the layout pays scant attention to the
prospect.



Several key features were omitted from
the design shown in May, despite being
aired at project team meetings in the
months prior. A café-cum-kiosk with
ground level toilets was to be sited within
the Windrush Square layout but has
disappeared from the plans. Vague
reference to a water feature has raised
concerns that the hazards of the previous
fountain will return. Lambeth Arts officers
have been investigating a means of
projecting artworks onto a screen on the
end wall of the Rushcroft Road flats, but
have not settled where the projector would
be sited or how it would be operated.
Nobody yet knows how the use of Raleigh
Hall by the Black Cultural Archives will fit
in with the rest of the Central Square.

Finally, if we seem to have missed any
issues or problems, be sure to remind us
about them NOW, so they can be included
in our formal comments.

Alan Piper.

Brixton Online Closes Down

One of the projects on which the Brixton Society has been represented was Brixton Online, but after nearly 10 years of providing help, advice and training to local community and businesses, BOL has been forced to close down.

The BOL Story 1997 to 2007

With a start up grant from Brixton Challenge, the social enterprise was successful in developing websites and providing IT training for local people in and around Brixton. That start enabled the company to lever in further government grant aid and set up a commercial web development business as well. BOL was one of the few projects surviving from the Brixton Challenge programme that received funding in the mid 1990's to regenerate Brixton.

Some facts about BOL

In its nearly 10 years of operation BOL succeeded in winning over £4m of funding to deliver support programmes to local community groups, start-up businesses, and individuals. As a social enterprise all its profits were re-invested in the company. It has an impressive delivery record:

- ❖ Over 1,500 people completed training with BOL
- ❖ Helped more than 120 companies and organisations get their websites up and running.
- ❖ Over 500 companies came to BOL for help with their IT

- ❖ Over 60% of BOL's clients came from Black or Asian Minority Ethnic communities
- ❖ BOL held over 50 workshops and seminars targeted at businesses with subjects ranging from how to use the web to market your business to how to computerise your accounts.
- ❖ In partnership with other local enterprise support agencies BOL played a major part in delivering coordinated business support and advice across Wandsworth, Lambeth and Southwark. BOL gained **Customer First** full accreditation as part of a Business Link for London scheme to improve quality delivery.
- ❖ At its height in 2004 BOL employed more than 20 staff and ran a local trainee scheme providing placements for local young people to gain work experience and qualifications.
- ❖ BOL developed key local websites such as Lambethlearning, Lambeth.biz and LambethFirst. The web business, BOL Web Media, will be taken forward by Regenesys.

Based in the Eurolink Business Centre BOL ran training courses and workshops from its training and meeting rooms from July 2000. In 2003 BOL entered a partnership with Red Kite Learning to work on an innovative community IT programme in the Elephant & Castle in South London. That partnership became the **into Partnership** and along with

another social enterprise – Media Citizens – formed a successful project to help talented young people in south London get into the digital media industry. **intoMedia** continues to provide digital media services based in Borough.

As a social enterprise BOL had a set of volunteer Directors drawn from local business and community organisations. It has been dependent on the public sector and government grants to deliver its programme of activities aimed at the most disadvantaged in London. This funding has been crucial in enabling BOL to achieve so much but it also has its down sides. Delays in payments, payment in arrears, cost only contracts and uncertainty over contract renewal made cashflow management very difficult. This came to a head in 2005 when restructuring of several funding agencies, the end of Single Regeneration Budget funding and severe delays to payments for work undertaken for the LDA pushed BOL into deficit for the first time.

The last year and a half have seen BOL work hard to reduce its deficit through cutting costs and winning new business. In the year to March 2007 we made a trading profit, however continuing cashflow problems and the overall reduction of government funding going into the areas that BOL specialises in, forced the BOL Directors to take the hard decision to voluntarily go into liquidation. Liquidators Portland have been appointed by the Board to see through the winding up of the business.

Malcolm Forbes, April 2007

Made in Brixton Launched

A new network was launched on 14 June at the Brixton (Carling) Academy. 50+ people and businesses took part, and to capture the ideas and information coming from them, a group of artists annotated a large graffiti board at the front.

Issues were mainly around the need for a hub, notice-board function, and local space for exhibiting creative work – some of this already happens but links are often lacking. Keenest on the network concept were sole-trading creatives who would like to get out a bit more. One key issue raised was the bigger picture – what is our shared vision for Brixton and a “Made in Brixton” brand? Also, Brixton already has world-wide recognition, if not always for the right things.

Devon Thomas highlighted the work of the Brixton Business Forum, and the personal contact potential of the Brixton Business Club. Levi Roots from Reggae Reggae sauce gave an inspiring talk but reminded his audience that success took him 15 years.

The network has been driven by a few local creative businesses and individuals, and is now getting verbal support from the Leader of Lambeth Council, Steve Reed, and from the local GLA member, Val Shawcross. The next step is to translate the ideas into hard proposals backed by hard cash. As the organisers said, it depends on the people in the area getting involved and doing more than talking about it.

If you want to offer your support, then contact sam@madeinbrixton.org.uk There is already a Made in Brixton creative industries directory and a website – www.madeinbrixton.org.uk Don't worry if you are not in the directory yet – another edition is promised and there will be an online version open to new entries.