

THE BRIXTON SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Summer issue, July 2020

No.238, Quarterly issue,
Distributed free to members.

Registered with the London Forum of Amenity Societies, Registered charity no. 1058103,
website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Changing Times

We are back again, at least with a full edition of our newsletter, after a longer absence than expected when events started shutting down in March. Many of the usual summer highlights like the Lambeth Country Show are in abeyance, but we are trying to restore activities where we can, even if some are only on-line or for limited numbers.

This issue tries to bring you up-to-date with what we have been doing, and what is being planned for the next few months. As usual we also have some local history to share with you, and of course it's that time of year when we present the annual report and accounts.

Meetings Programme

Our monthly committee meetings are suspended while the Vida Walsh Centre remains closed, but for the time being are held on-line via Zoom. Alternative arrangements for our Annual General Meeting are explained on page 5.

We usually meet many members at the **Lambeth Country Show**, but this has been deferred to next year, though Lambeth's events team are arranging something on-line during the original 18/19 July weekend.

The **Lambeth Heritage Festival** runs through the whole month of September, and now looks likely to be a mix of live and virtual events. We expect to share the final programme with you in mid-August.



*Contractors clean the memorial to Sir Henry Tate in front of the Library, March 2020.
20200218-110725.jpg, Annick Alet.*

In Memoriam

During the recent controversy over statues of people associated with slavery, there was loose talk about removing the bust of Sir Henry Tate from outside the library he funded. Born in 1819, he was too late for any slavery connection, emerging from an apprenticeship in the grocery trade in 1839, just as the slaves on Jamaican sugar plantations were finally released from their own "apprenticeship". Rather, Tate was one of a wave of self-made business innovators in the late 19th century who were willing to put some of their money back into the community, long before tax relief or planning gain were thought of. Sadly, too much of our remembered "history" turns out to be myths or invention, written to entertain rather than inform – "Print the Legend!" as they said in Hollywood. Yet the real world cannot be divided simply into heroes and villains.

Our mission in publishing local history is to say what really happened, even if it was often messy and muddled at the time. And we want to show the whole panorama, across time and society, so we have been equally anxious to safeguard the memorial plaque to Olive Morris from the Council office block which bore her name and is now being demolished.

Adapting to the Crisis

Walk this way...

The Coronavirus epidemic blew up just after the Lambeth Local History Forum had published the 2020 local history walks leaflet. It includes all the walks planned by ourselves, plus many other interesting walks offered by other amenity groups around the borough and just beyond.

Although you may find a copy enclosed with this newsletter, we must remind you that all these **walks were suspended** when lockdown took effect. Dates run through to March next year, so walks will resume once it's safe to do so. However, for walks provided by other groups, we advise you to check with the organisers first, in case of changes.

For the time being, numbers on our own walks are limited to 5 plus the guide, so please e-mail to apiperbrix@aol.com to reserve a place. All walks start at 2-30 pm – if you are delayed or cannot find the meeting point, please phone 07 951 166 050 after 2 pm. If restrictions are relaxed, numbers may increase on later dates.

Sunday 19 July – Myatt's Fields

(postponed from 17 May)

Sunday 16 August – Rush Common

(as advertised)

Sunday 13 September

(postponed from 21 June)

Sunday 20 September

(reservations to chair@brixtonsociety.org.uk)

Brixton Market walks remain suspended due to restricted space along the route, especially through the market arcades.

Or would you prefer to wander through some part of Greater Brixton at a time and pace of your own choosing? Some years ago, we printed a compilation of **Brixton Heritage Trails**, which still form the basis of our guided walks each summer. The book was intended to provide self-guided routes, so if you don't have a copy on your bookshelf, why not spend a mere £1.50 on a mint copy? We are considering an update so we would love to hear what you discover. Sadly, we can only supply it through our website at present, that is www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

The kindness of strangers

A note from one of our committee members

The World Turned Upside Down,

I started lockdown early on 13 March because I had already heard disquieting news on 6th March when I attended a regular meeting of The Patients' Network. Lambeth Council phoned very promptly to see if I needed support, but I was able to say no because a flyer had already been posted through my letterbox from someone called Stella saying that she was happy to go to the shops and post office for those unable to go out.

Now, after more than 100 days I have met briefly with 3 neighbours in all that time, and seen the stalwart postman and the rubbish bin men. Days have moved past like a dripping tap, pale, uniform and monotonous. Listening to the breadth of topics on Radio 4 has kept me sane.

Every week since leaving the flyer Stella has picked up my long list and then returned with three heavy supermarket bags full of food, each item and the bags themselves carefully wiped with sanitiser. She has become my lifeline and I have an immense amount to thank her for.

Clare Moore

Local History in Lockdown

Despite Lambeth Archives being closed to visitors, the archivists have reminded us of its treasures through a series of on-line local history presentations via Zoom. There are a few more to come, though now scaled down to fortnightly while preparations are made for re-opening.

Thursday 16 July, Camberwell & Vauxhall,

Thursday 30 July, the battle for Lambeth's free libraries,

Thursday 13 August, suburban spread: Clapham, Brixton, Norwood, Streatham.

All sessions start at 6-45 pm, to book a place and receive log-in details, please e-mail to: archives@lambeth.gov.uk

Friends of Tate Library

Until Covid-19 struck, our “Wake up to Tai Chi” sessions at the library were very successful, with 60-plus registered or on the waiting list, and 25 regular attenders every Saturday morning. Since March, the Saturday sessions have continued on Zoom, as one of several sessions put out on-line by Lambeth Libraries. Grant funding from London Community Development Foundation is now running out and we are looking at ways to continue.

We are also now hosting the Wednesday Crafts Group via e-mail and post. We aim to be in regular contact with all the previous participants, to pursue a new craft work, a Local Heroes banner, with the help of a Cultural Seeds grant from the GLA. Unfortunately the Spring Bazaar had to be cancelled, and three planned talks are on hold until the library is fully re-opened. We hope to put on another **Local Heroes** event on Thursday 17 September as part of the Lambeth Heritage Festival, and to have a presence outside on Windrush Square as part of the Brixton Neighbourhood Forum event on Saturday 27 September.

Marilyn Rogers.

Re-opening Lambeth Libraries

We understand from the wider network of Friends of Lambeth Libraries that libraries staff are working to get the borough’s libraries back in full use, but there are many obstacles, not least waiting on Central Government to agree on guidance. We expect a “soft launch” with individual libraries opening once they are ready, and maybe 6 open by the end of July.

Myatt’s Fields Park

The café and tennis courts re-opened during May. The adult toilets are also back in use now – they should be open by noon each day and close an hour before the park. The playground remains closed for now, but the Lambeth Tigers are using the football pitch again. Bearing in mind that this is a small park in a densely populated area, the Myatt’s Fields Park Project are asking people to limit their visits to the park to one hour maximum per day, to make way for others.

Windmill Gardens

Throughout the lockdown, the team of volunteer millers has maintained flour production at the windmill. The usual mill openings and events remain on hold, but the volunteer communications team have produced a new project resource pack for the windmill. This downloadable pack contains 10 creative projects to entertain young people and families, minimum donation £3 each.

More details on the Friends website at www.brixtonwindmill.org

Toilets on Windrush Square?

We were notified a couple of months ago that Lambeth will once again invite proposals for the underground toilets. We reminded them that any plans must include the provision of public toilets, which are desperately lacking from the Town Centre.

Brockwell Park - Hall renovation:

We have commented on the draft conservation plan for the Hall and stables, in readiness for a Lottery funding bid later this year.

Discover New Parks nearby

We have had some favourable feedback from members discovering open spaces in the wider Brixton area or just beyond, like Ruskin Park or Holmewood Gardens. A good website to check out and discover more greenspaces is <https://www.goparks.london/>

There is scope for Friends groups to register their details and add more information to each listing.

Longfield Hall events on-line

Although the Hall, opposite Minet Library, is still closed, they have been busy with on-line events and classes. Work will also start soon on access improvements.

The next event is **Movers and Shakers** on Thursday 16 July, highlighting dance groups based at the hall. The summer season closes with **(Un)Scene** on Thursday 30 July, based on the drama methods of Shakespeare’s actors. More details of these events on their website, www.longfieldhall.org.uk

Planning and Transport News



Ferndale Road (January 2019, IMG8974.jpg)

The work goes on...

Despite actual meetings being suspended, we continued to respond to Council consultations and local planning applications. It helps that our Planning sub-committee has been used to operating on a virtual basis for several years now. Here are some recent highlights:

Brixton Liveable Neighbourhoods:

Our February meeting had a presentation of the traffic reduction plans, and we sent in comments about the 3 initial areas. A further consultation about Brixton Hill and the Town Centre was due in May but the Coronavirus crisis shifted priorities. Traffic restraint has already been introduced around Railton Road, with numerous temporary measures across the wider Brixton area to give pedestrians more space and to encourage cycling.

Zara Thorn, Lambeth Transport Planner, adds: "The measures put in place to create the Low Traffic Neighbourhood will still allow all streets to be accessible by vehicle, from one direction or the other. No vehicles will be stopped from accessing any section of any street. Some trips will be a bit more circuitous as you will not be able to drive through the closure points. Combined with quieter, safer-feeling streets, this enables residents to switch to more healthy ways of getting around, particularly for short journeys. The bus gates and modal filters will not affect cyclists as they are exempt from the restrictions.

We are monitoring the effect on traffic and air quality, including in the surrounding area. We are also encouraging local people to comment on the scheme through our Commonplace site, which provides more details of the changes: <https://rtstreets.commonplace.is/>

Lambeth Local Plan:

After we sent in comments on revisions to the borough-wide set of planning policies, the Council quickly followed up with some more detailed supplementary planning documents (SPDs). We responded to the **Design Code** SPD, focussing on guidance for tall buildings and alterations to existing buildings. We raised no objections to the SPD on **affordable workspace**, or to the latest charging schedule for **CIL** (Community Infrastructure Levy).

Planning Applications and Appeals:

There was only a brief dip in the number of local planning applications before business seemed to return to normal, though appeals may be slower due to lockdown.

Developers' enthusiasm for squeezing bigger buildings into restricted sites means that neighbours' access to **daylight and sunlight** was a factor in several recent cases.

Remember, if you hear about something objectionable, do share your concerns with us – and quickly, because timescales are tight.

Towers at Loughborough Junction:

We sent detailed objections to proposals for two towers east of the station, with 29 and 20 storeys respectively (still to be decided).

Popes Road plans by Hondo

We criticised the proposals from Hondo Enterprises, owners of the Brixton Village arcade, to expand onto the site now occupied by Sports Direct. Again the height was a major concern.

Shakespeare waste site plans:

Our comments on a proposed housing scheme resulted in the new block being reduced in height, but a formal application is still awaited.

Brixton Hill hoardings:

Over the past few years we have challenged a series of applications to replace the hoardings flanking the print works at 116-120 by intrusive digital displays. Decaux are now obliged to remove the southern hoarding, with the life of the northern unit limited to 5 years.

Alan Piper.

Annual General Meeting

Chair's Address

Dear Members,

In a normal year, we would have held our AGM in June as an open meeting, free for all members to attend.

This is anything but a normal year. I do hope you have all been able to keep well. I am pleased to say that the members of your Committee all seem to have done so.

Thanks

It is always my pleasure at the AGM to thank all the people who do so much to keep our society functioning. This is not just the officers and committee members but many others, not least those who distribute our newsletter, who contribute so much. Thanks to all.

Newsletter

It will not have escaped your notice that we did not produce the normal April newsletter, but we have done this one and hope now to continue with our regular schedule.

Subscriptions

You will find enclosed a memo about this year's subscriptions. Your Committee decided to roll over this year's subscription to 2021. We have, sadly, saved a good deal of money because we did not produce the last newsletter and we are not incurring meeting and other costs.

Committee

Your committee has not been able to meet physically, but we are now "meeting" via Zoom to keep the Society going.

AGM

We come to the difficulty with the AGM. We were not able to hold a meeting as we normally do and it doesn't seem likely that we will be able to do so in the near future.

There's room for more...

One factor in the Brixton Society still being around after 40-plus years is that we have been able to share the workload among a dozen or so committee members, in order to cover the range of topics and meetings that we find ourselves involved in. Normally we expect to enlist one or two fresh faces at an AGM to keep up our strength. This year we feel the need more because, once you deduct vulnerable members like ethnic minorities or pensioners, there would be very few of us left standing if

We considered the possibility of holding an AGM via Zoom. The problem with that is that it is important that all members should be able to participate in an AGM if they wish to do so. We know that a number of our members do not use computers and would thus be excluded.

Therefore, we have decided to, in effect, have a paper AGM. Following my notes, you will find the Secretary's Report and the Annual Accounts which the Treasurer has had properly, independently examined. These normally appear in this quarter's newsletter, but after they have been adopted by the AGM. The other key function of the AGM is to elect officers and committee for the forthcoming year. The current people are:

Chair: Bill Linskey

Vice Chair: Nicholas Weedon

Secretary: Alan Piper

Treasurer: David Warner

Membership Secretary: Vivienne Lewis

Committee Members: Annick Alet; Doye Akinlade; Barbara Davies; Tracey Gregory; Diana Linskey; Vivienne Lewis; Marilyn Rogers; and Eileen Walkin.

Rosemary Honey stood down during the year.

I hope, in these difficult circumstances, that you will be prepared to:

- adopt the Secretary's Report;
- adopt the Accounts;
- re-elect the current committee.

If anyone has any questions or objections to this, please email me:

chair@brixtonsociety.org.uk

or write to me at:

32 Stockwell Green, London SW9 9HZ
by 7 August 2020.

Bill Linskey, Chair

there is a new peak of Coronavirus.

Fortunately, in the absence of the usual elections, we have the facility for the executive committee to co-opt a couple of members to serve until the next year. We would love to have some new volunteers or nominations, ideally a little younger than the present team, but more important is an interest in Brixton or some part of it, and a willingness to help make things happen. Offers should be sent to the Chair, as above, preferably by the same date.

ADP.

The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future

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

Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Annual Report 2019-20

AIMS & ORGANISATION

AIMS & AFFILIATIONS: We aim to encourage awareness and understanding of our surroundings, and to give local people a say in Brixton's future. Our area extends well beyond the Town Centre as far as Stockwell Tube Station, as well as north-east to Myatt's Fields Park, and up Brixton Hill to the South Circular Road. The Society is registered with the London Forum of Amenity Societies, the British Association for Local History and Archives for London.

STRUCTURE & MANAGEMENT: The Society is a registered charity and an unincorporated association. The society's constitution was last revised at the 2013 AGM.

The Executive Committee met 9 times in the financial year 2019/20, consisting of Bill Linskey (Chair), Annick Alet, Doye Akinlade, Barbara Davies, Tracey Gregory, Diana Linskey, Vivienne Lewis, Alan Piper, Marilyn Rogers, Eileen Walkin, David Warner and Nicholas Weedon. John Cunningham sadly died in May 2019, while Rosemary Honey and Jo Spilman stood down at the AGM a month later.

PROGRAMME & ACTIVITIES

PLANNING & REGENERATION: We share oversight of a high volume of local planning applications amongst our "virtual" planning sub-committee.

We also commented on wider planning policy changes in the course of the year. To keep in touch with London-wide and national policies, we have benefitted from involvement with the London Forum. Our comments on policy issues and planning cases are regularly posted on our website.

NETWORKING: We support the Friends of Tate Library and the Friends of Windrush Square, which operate as sub-committees of the Society (see brief reports below). We also keep in touch with a wide range of local groups. We participated in the Brixton Neighbourhood Forum, Brockwell Park Community Partners (the park's Management Advisory Committee), Lambeth Local History Forum,

Friends of Lambeth Libraries, and Lambeth Parks Forum.

We also try to respond to frequent e-mail enquiries from students, media and family historians.

EVENTS: During 2019 we put on displays at the Lambeth Country Show, Lambeth Local History Fair and a Family History event at the Migration Museum. We also kept up a regular presence in Brixton Market in support of our Brixton Market walks on the second Saturday of each month through the year. We provided additional routes for the Lambeth Local History Forum's summer series, and a few "special" walks for other organisations.

It's many years since we attempted a regular programme of talks, but we have a local history evening each September to coincide with the Lambeth Heritage Festival. For 2019, we had a full house when Nicholas Weedon took us back 50 years to the original Town Centre rebuilding plans.



Civic Centre and St. Matthew's Church, from 1971 Town Centre plan. Scan 025.

PUBLICATIONS: We were able to reprint 8 Edwardian postcards, including several new views. The current financial position enables us to plan for at least one new book title in the next year or two. A list of titles sold follows the main accounts.

We continue to publish our quarterly Newsletter, normally of 12 pages. To save on postage we are encouraging members who are further afield, or hard to reach, to receive this digitally.

FRIENDS OF TATE LIBRARY BRIXTON: The Friends had an active year until Covid-19 reduced activities. The Saturday

The Brixton Society

Understanding the Past, Looking to the Future

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

Website: www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Annual Report 2019-20

morning Tai Chi sessions were well-attended, with great thanks to the tutor, Anna-Marie Franklin, assisted by Andreas Demetriou and Nigel Gilderson.

Thanks also to Annick Alet for liaising with funders, and to Janet Kolke for helping people to continue taking part on-line after lockdown.

The Friends also wish to thank Lamonte Johnson, Martin Hynes and Malin Brown for help with the Christmas Bazaar, and Caroline Graham, Brixton Library Manager, for her support. It is hoped to resume library-based talks, signposting sessions and the Crafts group in the near future.



Crafts session in Brixton Tate Library.
IMG0591.jpg

FRIENDS OF WINDRUSH SQUARE: The Friends have assisted with maintaining planting within the Square and also the planters within the Library railings. Annick Alet has watered the grass during dry spells, while other volunteer gardeners included Jeanne Nguyen, Miriam Lewison, Rachel Heyward, Meredith MacArdle, Maureen Thomas and Sophie Lawrence.

RESOURCES

MEMBERSHIP: Paid-up membership has hovered around 150 for several years, excluding council contacts and kindred local groups with whom we exchange information. At the end of June 2020, numbers were slightly up at 157.

Like many other charities, we reviewed our database and privacy policy in May 2018.

We are grateful for “in kind” support from individual members including delivering most of our newsletters, staffing stalls, reporting back from a variety of meetings,

and other tasks which all help maintain the Society’s level of activity.

FINANCE: The annual accounts cover the year ended 31 March 2020: overall we showed a surplus again despite further printing costs. Partly this reflects funds held on behalf of Friends of Tate Library while their activities are limited. (*Figures appear on the following page.*)

Subscriptions were last reviewed after the 2016 AGM. In the absence of the 2020 Lambeth Country Show and other public events, the executive committee agreed to roll over existing memberships until 2021, but if members are willing to pay this summer anyway, that will be welcome.

IMPACT OF LOCKDOWN: So far the financial effect has been slight compared to the impact on many other local groups. Publications sales have held up, but guided walks and committee meetings have been curtailed since April. We have held a few virtual meetings via Zoom and are trying to remain active across our range of interests. We are seeking to resume activities and contacts as and when restrictions are eased.



Windrush Square, March 2020. IMG9469.jpg

How to contact us

If you have internet access, you can contact us at info@brixtonsociety.org.uk or for town planning issues, you can reach all our planning panel at planning@brixtonsociety.org.uk

Otherwise, write to the Secretary, Alan Piper, at 82 Mayall Road, SE24 0PJ or phone him on (020) 7207 0347 – answerphone usually available but there is no longer any fax facility.

BRIXTON SOCIETY STATEMENT OF ACCOUNT 1st APRIL 2019 - 31st MARCH 2020

	2019/2020	2018/2019
INCOME		
Friends of Windrush Square income	£133.04	£538.14
Members' Subscriptions	£1,103.00	£981.00
Sale of Publications, etc	£1,597.97	£1,368.59
Donations	£367.36	£1,522.88
Postage	£60.09	£61.10
Bank Interest	£26.81	£0.56
Miscellaneous	£63.00	£9.00
Tai Chi classes income/grant	£5,016.30	£0.00
Friends of Tate Library income	£473.23	£664.13
Sub-Total	£8,840.80	£5,145.40
Refunds	£0.00	£0.00
Discounts	£0.00	-£9.66
Ebay/Paypal fees	-£111.06	-£80.46
Receipts less discounts/refunds	£8,729.74	£5,055.28
EXPENDITURE		
Friends of Tate Library	£543.68	£559.24
Friends of Windrush Square	£264.00	£154.98
Donations	£100.00	£0.00
Newsletter Prod	£373.75	£469.13
Postage	£185.48	£188.50
Stationery	£63.01	£25.01
Publications - purchase	£111.00	£83.50
Publications - printing	£865.00	£421.00
Posters/Leaflets/Banner	£12.32	£8.35
Insurance Cost (general)	£0.00	£75.00
Subscriptions	£193.00	£68.00
Cost of Meetings	£480.00	£370.00
Website support	£200.00	£539.99
Equipment/Stall	£75.60	£4.29
Events	£100.00	£154.96
Catering/Refreshments	£98.14	£23.02
Website hosting	£242.32	£115.26
Tai Chi project	£4,402.83	£0.00
TOTAL	£8,210.13	£3,260.23
SURPLUS	£519.61	£1,795.05

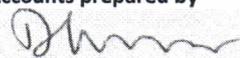
Details of Publications Sold	2019/2020	2018/2019
Town Trails	£31.50	£39.00
Memories	£25.99	£34.93
Windrush Square	£9.00	£16.00
Brixton - Story of a name	£4.00	£10.00
Effra - Lambeth's Underground River	£13.50	£18.00
Greeting cards	£9.00	£9.50
Maps	£33.00	£55.50
Brixton Abridged	£0.00	£0.00
Postcards	£215.50	£143.00
History of Brixton	£209.79	£189.81
Brixton Market LT poster	£21.00	£5.00
Brixton Boy WWII	£12.45	£19.92
Black British Celebration	£247.00	£198.00
Lambeth Edwardian	£0.00	£0.00
Synagogue	£14.94	£17.43
Market Walk Tickets	£195.00	£221.50
Market Walk Books	£424.00	£220.00
Brixton & Stockwell in The Mirror	£4.80	£6.00
Henry Tate book	£115.00	£145.00
Brixton MPs	£12.50	£20.00
	<u>£1,597.97</u>	<u>£1,368.59</u>
Less Discount	£0.00	-£9.66
	<u>£1,597.97</u>	<u>£1,358.93</u>

Balance sheet	2020	2019
Opening Balance	£7,146.74	£5,351.69
Surplus for year	£519.61	£1,795.05
Closing balance	£7,666.35	£7,146.74
Represented by:		
Closing balances		
Current a/c	£554.82	£1,534.58
Dep A/C	£7,018.37	£5,000.00
Paypal	£93.16	£612.16
	£7,666.35	£7,146.74

Notes to the accounts:

- The society received a grant of £5,000 from the London Community Trust on 17th May 2019. This was to fund a programme of Tai Chi classes to be run by the Friends of Tate Library over a period of one year. Activities were run in the library ground floor function room for which Lambeth Council were paid £2,760 for room hire. There was a paid instructor and some other costs. As of 31st March 2020 £597.17 was available to pay for the final sessions.
- Coronavirus events: we received two bookings for guided walks in March. A booking from Lancaster University for £100 was cancelled shortly after it was made, and the booking fee refunded. This is not shown in these accounts. A second booking for £30 from a locally based consultancy was not cancelled until June 2020. Therefore the figure for walks in these accounts is overstated by £30 and will be understated by £30 next year due to the refund.

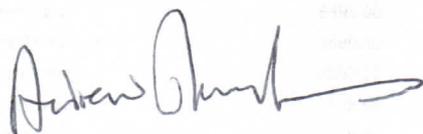
Accounts prepared by



David Warner
Hon Treasurer

Statement by External Examiner

I have reviewed the cash book and the totals of the receipts and payments stated above are in accordance therewith and correspond to the balances shown in the society's bank statements.



Andrew Thurnburn FCA
Examiner

Music Hall in Brixton

Brixton in the Good Old days – That Was the Entertainment that Was

This new project will be exploring Brixton's music hall past. Tracey Gregory, who has been leading the Loughborough Road history project and Christine Beddoe, who has music hall ancestors (www.legmania.co.uk), recently received a grant from the Society For Theatre Research to get the project started. The support of Brixton Society, British Music Hall Society and the Institute of Historical Research's 'Layers of London' platform, no doubt aided the success of the application.

Tracey and Christine aim to bring Brixton's rich music hall history to a new generation. They will be re-visiting entertainer Paul Gray's self-published 1960s Brixton music hall memoir utilising research tools now available (census returns online, digitised newspapers and directories) to build on Gray's research of people and places. The project will map the places where music hall performers, lived, worked and organised. The original intention was to launch the findings of the project at the Lambeth Heritage Festival in 2021.

However, there has already been such enthusiasm that the project is launching at the Lambeth Heritage Festival in 2020, with music hall Wednesday, a series of evening events. These will all be online due to the expected ongoing challenges with meeting in groups due to coronavirus. Details will be given in the

Lambeth Heritage Festival brochure which will be available online from August. The music hall events will include former Lambeth archivist Sue McKenzie's introduction to music hall in Brixton, Charlie Holland's illustrated talk on three pre-eminent jugglers – the Mongadors, Cinquevalli, Hanvar and Lee, and Bill Linskey using his incredible collection of Brixton Empress programmes and more to showcase the history of Brixton's main music hall venue.

Sue, Charlie and Bill have joined Tracey and Christine using the online platform Layers of London (www.layersoflondon.org) to map Brixton music hall through a new Collection on the site Music Hall Brixton and Beyond. This plots where the main performance venues were in and around Brixton, where performers lived and lodged in the area, where they met up and rehearsed and where the wide network of associated music halls trades, from agents to photographers, were based. It is hoped that this project will lead to a comprehensive picture of Brixton's place and significance in late 19th and early 20th century entertainment history.

If anyone has family music hall roots in Brixton, then Christine and Tracey would love to hear from you. Please email:

Brixtonmusic hall@gmail.com



Left: The Empress as it looked when it opened on Boxing Day evening in 1898. Above: the site today, on the corner of Brighton Terrace and Bernay's Grove.

In 1930 the theatre was reconstructed in Art Deco style; in 1957 it was converted to a Grenada Cinema; perhaps inevitably, morphed into a Bingo Hall; until finally being demolished in 1992 after which the flats were built. For a fuller version of its story, join the talk in the Heritage Festival.

Local History Focus

Remembering the Cat's Meat Man

In our January issue we reported the death of Doreen Heath, who was born in 1923 and grew up around Dalyell Road SW9 between the two world wars. She wrote this piece in 2013 after revelations of horsemeat being used in beefburgers sold by some of the major supermarkets.

A disembodied voice manifests itself around the busy supermarket inviting customers to visit a specified aisle where there are tempting reductions in prices. In the store, the distinctive calls and, in earlier days, distinctive clothing of the various trades, has given way to the appropriate uniform bearing the store's name.

The rows of shelves will certainly include a generous provision of items for the care and sustenance of pets. Packets and tins of dry and wet foods, pellets and biscuits, chews, straps, toys and "treats" packaged to resemble sweets and chocolates. The tins of food include a variety of packs containing individually pork, beef, chicken and tuna – but no apparent sign of horse-meat!

In former days, a pet often had the same food as its family, with the addition of cat and dog meat (which would be horse-meat). This was still remembered by someone whose family lived in Clapham. They would travel on the No. 34 tram to buy the cat's meat from a shop in Coldharbour Lane, Brixton.

Not far off their route, another provider, Mr. Moakes, the cat's meat man, traded from a small old shop in Lingham Street, Stockwell, the road leading from Clapham Road to Stockwell Green (Landor Road), between St. Andrew's Church and the site of the once thriving Hammerton's Brewery. In the vicinity there were small cottages, dating back to the early 19th Century, some of which belonged to the Brewery. There was a small private road whose gate was closed once a year to retain its private status. Something of a village life had been retained.

The shop sold horse-meat, large lumps of which could be seen through the window. Mr. Moakes hawked his meat around the streets, with small pieces threaded onto wooden skewers and carried in a basket. He made his presence known with a loud cry of "Meat." This alerted not only his customers, but also the local cats, so that as he walked, he had quite a following! Some of his regular customers paid weekly. If they were out when he called, he would make his deliveries through the letter box. If the cat was inside, its owner would return to find empty skewers on the doormat!

Mr. Moakes and his shop are still remembered, although someone with childhood memories of the "cat and dog meat" shop has stronger memories of the shop next door, where toffee apples were sold!

Mr. Moakes and a small group of men played pub games in a nearby small public house. Among them a

"conventional," butcher, Ed, and John, whose father had been a "letter carrier" before becoming a postman. John followed his father's occupation, sometimes travelling on the mail train to Scotland.

Trades and occupations were often followed by families and this was the case in the Moakes family. Some ventured into other occupations, but several were active in the cat's meat trade.

By the middle of the 19th Century, there was a ready market for the sale of horse meat to help feed the large number of cats in London. It was calculated that there were in excess of 300,000 counting those from households and stray cats. The horse meat was purchased from the slaughterer's yards. There were about twenty of these in and around London.

There was a regular supply of live and dead horses from businesses such as brewers and bus companies. Horses were also sent up from the country. The live horses were slaughtered by "knackers." Nothing was wasted. Whilst still alive, the horses valuable manes were clipped short and sold on. After slaughtering, hides were taken off to go to tanners. All meat, including offal and tongues, was used. Bones were boiled in order to extract fat, which was used for greasing harnesses and wheels of carts. The bones were afterwards sold for fertiliser. The flesh was boiled and sold on to the cat's meat men. The meat, cut into small pieces and put on skewers was taken around on these carriers' "walk."

The meat would have been graded by the knackers. Flesh from healthy horses which had met with accidents was sold to sausage makers and their tongues sold to butchers, who salted and pickled them. The cat's meat men usually sold flesh from horses reaching old age in more affluent neighbourhoods, but poorer places would be supplied with the lowest grade of meat, from horses which had died from illness.

The door-to-door service of the cat's meat man on his "walk" is now a distant memory. However, the supermarkets now have their own delivery service. The local cats are indifferent as the shiny vans arrive in the street. The metallic sound as the driver opens up to take out the goods ordered "on-line" by the local residents does not alert the animals to the proximity of their food delivery. However, on a topical note, horse-meat may well have been delivered door-to-door. It would have arrived in the form of burgers and other "beef-products," destined for unwitting human consumption, rather than by cats.

The 1922 edition of the Brixton & Clapham Directory confirmed that Mr Moakes had a shop at 52 Lingham Street, formerly Chapel Road. As part of a network of early 19th-century cottages, it did not survive war damage and post-war slum clearance.

ADP.

Beyond Brixton

Beyond the end of the line

With the lockdown easing, it's a good time to get out for a walk or two in Brixton and other parts of London. Back in February we were contacted by Jeff Lock who has published a new walking book "Beyond the End of the Line – 26 Walks from the Terminus Stations of the London Underground. Back then, it had sold more than 500 copies.

It is available for £7.99 at the London Transport Museum bookshop in Covent Garden and also at Beckenham Bookshop, 42 High Street, Beckenham BR3 1AY but Jeff is happy to sell it to Brixton Society Members and friends through his website for £6.00 + £1.40 p&p. It will be posted to you by first class post within a few days of the order being placed. To take advantage of this you can go to <http://beyondtheendoftheline.co.uk/new-club-link.html>

or send a cheque to Jeff at his home address of 15 Phineas Pett Road, London SE9 6RQ.

Personally, I am keen to try some of the more remote walks for myself, such as Upminster, taking in their windmill. However I felt that Jeff's route from Lambeth North (end of the Bakerloo Line) was a missed opportunity, since it only leads back to the familiar sights of Central London, rather than to forgotten corners off Lambeth Walk or The Cut.

Camberwell Tree Walk

Sadly the Tube has yet to reach Camberwell, though there is renewed interest in re-opening the railway station, which closed during the First World War. Meanwhile the Camberwell Society have compiled a self-guided tree walk through 5 local greenspaces, eastwards from Camberwell Green. You can find it at: www.camberwellsociety.org.uk/treewalk/

Open House London

Open City are determined to present a programme of openings and tours over the weekend **19/20 September**. Ongoing health concerns may limit numbers and rule out some of the more cramped properties, so more sites may need prior bookings. Happily, there are always architects and developers wanting to show off their shiny new buildings, but the organisers are also keen to feature community

buildings and open spaces that only locals may know about. There is still time to offer or propose a building for inclusion, see <https://participants.openhouselondon.open-city.org.uk/proposals/new> More details will emerge in mid-August on their website, www.openhouselondon.org.uk

Meanwhile, here's some sites that I can recommend from past years:

Walthamstow Pump House Museum

(Waltham Forest) marks its location near the other end of the Victoria Line by showing off a carriage in use when the line opened (below).



1967 vintage driver's cab Dpbx/CU/21.9.19/LOH.06.jpg

Hoxton Hall (Hackney) is a compact Victorian music hall which only survived because it was taken over by temperance campaigners.

The **House Mill** (on the Three Mills site in Newham) is the largest surviving tidal mill, built in 1776.

The Royal Pharmaceutical Society have grouped all the museum exhibits from their former Lambeth site on the ground floor of their new offices in Tower Hamlets.

South of the river, check out the **Granada Cinema** (now the Gala Bingo Hall, Tooting) a rare survival from the "super cinemas" of the early 1930s.

Closer to home, **Cressingham Gardens** on Tulse Hill is still under threat but is one of the better examples of estate design under Ted Hollamby.

And finally, there is always a good selection of Wren Churches and City Livery Halls to be seen in the **City of London**.

Alan Piper.

Notes and News

Lambeth Heritage Festival

Wednesday 14 September, 7 pm via Zoom, Ted Hollamby's architectural & planning legacy in Lambeth:

We have now confirmed details of our annual local history talk. Edmund Bird is heritage adviser to Transport for London. He was head of conservation and urban design at Lambeth for 7 years and has written a series of 5 books on architecture in Lambeth between 1837 and 2000. He will talk about the diverse range of buildings designed for Lambeth in 1964-81, under Director of Development Edward Hollamby.

This event will be streamed via Zoom but we may also have a live audience within the Tate Library, Brixton.

Changes around the Brixton Rec.

Lambeth Council has appointed MUF to lead on a package of improvements around the Recreation Centre, comprising workspace off Beehive Place, enhancing the approach to the Rec and Brixton Station Road, and upgrading shopfronts below the Rec. Thread have been investigating the building itself, while Authentic Futures have drafted a Heritage Report. We have been in touch with MUF and expect more details shortly, including timescales.

81 acts of exuberant defiance

Work continues among local groups to compile a programme of events for next summer to reflect the 40th anniversary of the original Brixton Riots in 1981. To encourage interest, a series of think-pieces will be appearing on the website each month until April 2021, when the "live" events should begin to happen. See www.81actsofexuberantdefiance.com or send your enquiries/ideas to connect@81actsofexuberantdefiance.com

Household Waste and Recycling

With so many people spending most of their lives at home in the past few months, they have been clearing out lots of junk, but the usual waste disposal sites were closed.

The Smugglers Way Household Waste and Recycling Centre in SW18 is shared between Lambeth, Wandsworth and a couple of other boroughs. It re-opened in late May, but due to pent-up demand and the need for social

distancing, access is still restricted. The day you can get in depends on whether your car registration number is odd or even. If you arrive by bike or on foot, there is a pedestrian one-way system in operation. If you come by van, you must register in advance and bring ID to show at the weighbridge office. More details at: <https://wrwa.gov.uk/reopening-of-the-smugglers-way-hwrc-faqs/>

You can even check their webcam to see how long the queues are, at www.wrwa.co.uk and if you are still not sure, call 020 8871 2788 or e-mail to info@wrwa.gov.uk

Incredible Edible Lambeth

Thursday 16 July at 5-30 pm by Zoom

Another food story – an expert panel discuss the threats to biodiversity, including the decline of insect pollinators, vital to 87% of our food supply. Hear about the roles of London's National Park City and Lambeth's own Biodiversity Action Plan. Please book a place via the IEL website (address below).

Have you been practising your gardening skills during lockdown? Incredible Edible Lambeth is also co-ordinating this year's Blooming Lambeth awards. More details are on their website, at: www.incredibleediblelambeth.org

Creative Ceramics in Stockwell

Art4Space are giving away a free 5-week mosaic course (worth £130) to someone you think deserves a creative treat. You can nominate someone (or yourself!) and give a brief description of what this person did to make a difference to the community during lockdown, by 27 July.

Mosaic classes resume on 8 September and this voucher can be used at any time to suit the winner. All nominations must be sent to Julie at jewels@art4space.co.uk and she will pull one lucky name out of the hat and let them know on 1st August.

During lockdown they have developed **Mosaic in a Box** and **Art in a Box** for those still isolating. Limited services will resume at the studio by mid-July, and for more details see their website, www.art4space.co.uk