

CAMBERWELL QUARTERLY

The magazine of the Camberwell Society
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www.camberwellsociety.org.uk



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THE CAMBERWELL SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP & EVENTS

Membership is open to anyone who lives, works or is interested in Camberwell.

The Executive Committee is elected annually at the Society's AGM. Meetings of the Executive Committee are usually held on the first Thursday of the month – please contact the Secretary for details. Members are welcome to attend as observers with prior notice to the Secretary, Robert Wainwright (see inside back cover for contact details).

Sub-Committees on planning, the public realm, traffic and transport, publications and local history form an important part of the Society's work and all members are welcome to involve themselves in areas which interest them.

Forthcoming Event

Christmas Party
Monday, 5 December

The views expressed in the *Camberwell Quarterly* are not necessarily those of the Society unless clearly stated as such. The Camberwell Society is a registered charity (No 264751).

LOCAL SOCIETIES, VENUES AND EVENTS

We recommend checking details

Brunswick Park Neighbourhood Tenants and Residents Association

Patricia Ladly 7703 7491
tandra.brunswickpark@yahoo.co.uk

Burgess Park, Friends of

www.friendsofburgesspark.org.uk
friendsofburgesspark@gmail.com

Butterfly Tennis Club

www.butterflytennis.com

Camberwell Arts

Promoting the arts in Camberwell
,and Camberwell in the Arts
camberwellartsfestival@gmail.com
www.camberwellarts.org.uk

Camberwell Gardens Guild

Membership enquiries to:
Pat Farrugia, 17 Kirkwood Road
SE15 3XT

Carnegie Library, Friends of

foclchair@gmail.com or
foclmembers@gmail.com (for
membership queries)

Concerts in St Giles' Church

Camberwell Church Street
www.music@stgiles.com

Cuming Museum

Old Walworth Town Hall,
151 Walworth Road, SE17 1RY
020 7525 2332
www.southwark.gov.uk/Discover-Southwark/Museums

Dulwich Picture Gallery

College Road, SE21 7AD
020 8693 5254
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

Herne Hill Society

Jeffrey Doorn 020 7274 7008
Membership: Herne Hill Society
PO Box 27845, SE24 9XA
www.hernehillsociety.org.uk

Lambethans' Society

See Brixton Society website
www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Maudsley Learning

ORTUS learning and events centre,
82-96 Grove Lane, SE5 8SN
www.maudsleylearning.com

Minet Conservation Association

020 7737 8210
www.minet.fsnet.co.uk

Nunhead Cemetery

Linden Grove, SE15. Friends of
Nunhead Cemetery (FONC)
020 8693 6191
www.fonc.org.uk

Peckham Society

Peter Frost 020 8613 6757
Wednesday 19 October, 7pm, *An
update on Central Peckham*, All
Saint's Church Hall, Blenheim Grove
www.peckhamsociety.org.uk

Ruskin Park, Friends of

Doug Gillies 020 7703 5018

SE5 Forum

SE5Forum.org.uk
comms@SE5forum.org.uk

South London Gallery

65 Peckham Road SE5. Open:
Tuesday to Sunday – 12pm-6pm,
closed on Monday
www.southlondongallery.org

Southwark Friends of the Earth

Stephanie & Jim Lodge
020 7701 3331. Emails:
foesouthwark@gmail.com
southwark.foe.newsletter@gmail.com

Wells Way Triangle Residents Association

Andrew Osborne
WWTRACamberwell@gmail.com



Cover: Visitors to the reopening of the Green are entertained by Capoeira (Brazilian dance inspired by marshall art). See page 13.
Photo: Marie Staunton

A few housekeeping matters to keep us running smoothly

Welcome to the *Camberwell Quarterly*. Now that we are producing a 20-page magazine on a regular basis, this issue is packed with interesting articles, including something about the Peabody Trust in Camberwell, the “delification” (a new word of our times?) of Coldharbour Lane, and the re-opening of the Green. There is also a letter about Elmington Green. We do enjoy receiving your letters and emails so do please keep them coming.

It is time to deal with a few housekeeping matters. First, that old topic of email addresses. We only have up-to-date and accurate email addresses for no more than one third of our membership. Email is by far the easiest and most cost effective way of communicating with our members, particularly in connection with forthcoming events and matters of local interest. I appreciate that email addresses often change and that the Camberwell Society is not high on the list of people to contact when they do. But if in one of those idle moments you could just send us a quick email to confirm your details then that would be much appreciated.



Nick Holt

We will not deluge you with emails, I promise, but it will make communicating easier.

One of our flagship events over the years has been Open Gardens Day. It is always a fantastic way of raising money for our designated charity, which this year is the Bike Project. Open Gardens Day has been a fixture in our calendar for many years and will continue to be so. I would like to take this opportunity to thank everyone who has either opened their garden to members or has helped in any other way, such as selling tickets, preparing route maps

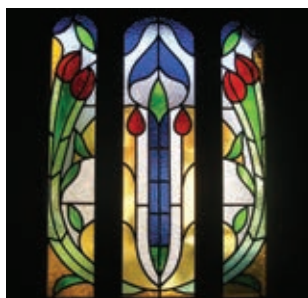
or making cakes. These events do not happen on their own and so we would really love to see some new members getting involved. For anyone who is new to Camberwell, this is a great way to “get involved” and become acquainted with some hidden jewels in Camberwell. Planning for next year’s Open Gardens Day is already underway and so if you are interested in helping then do please get in touch.

I mentioned in an earlier Chair’s Letter that we would be reviewing membership costs (we haven’t done this for many years) in the light of our running costs, and in order to ensure that the Society remains on an even keel in future. So with effect from 1 January 2017, the cost of membership of the Society will be £20 for a household, £15 for an individual and £10 for concessions. This still represents exceptionally good value and so I would encourage you to renew your membership when the time comes, and to spread the word around to your neighbours and any newcomers to Camberwell!

Nick Holt

nick.holt.camberwell.soc@gmail.com

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Reminder!

The Camberwell Society’s cards are on sale from the SE5 Forum stand at the Farmers Market (Saturdays 10am to 2pm) and Camberwell Market (Sundays (10am to 4pm) on Camberwell Green.

A business self-raising and falling

Admiring a collection of beautiful old embossing stamps in a house in north London a few years ago, I picked one at random, inserted a piece of paper, depressed the handle and obtained an imprint. I was surprised and delighted when a local name and address appeared.

It was W. Melhuish Limited, 2 Camberwell Green, SE. I knew that name from the corner of a demolition site on Camberwell New Road. This tall brick remnant of a large old building appeared to shelter an electricity supply – hence its survival. The name was inset in darker brick (I think), and announced Melhuish Flour Mills.

At that time the site was partly occupied by an equipment hire firm in a modern hangar. Subsequently, planning permission was granted for flats, and the surviving brick corner disappeared. This large site has faces on Camberwell New Rd and on Camberwell Green to the northwest of Camberwell Passage.

It seemed that the Melhuish Flour Mills occupied this same site, with the office entrance at No 2 Camberwell Green.

After much delay I visited the Southwark Local History Library to seek further evidence. Begin with



maps is the golden rule, and an Ordinance Survey sheet for 1863-73 showed dwellings and gardens on the same site, ie no industrial development. The next indicative map was of 1916, with Corn Mill written on the site. Both maps showed four terraced houses on the Green flank.

It was time to go to Trade Directories and photographic evidence. The Post Office Directory of 1905 listed William Melhuish,

flour factor, 2 Camberwell Green. This tied in with photographs from the 1970s and later showing a large derelict building from its New Rd frontage. Indeed the crest of the façade was boldly dated 1904, below which was W Melhuish Flour Factor. On the earliest photo a large promotional board across the front stated: Melhuish Self Raising Flour.

Now there is a difference between a corn/flour mill noted earlier, and a flour factor. The former

At home in Camberwell



East Dulwich 020 8299 3021
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Roy Brooks

is an industrial process – milling – while the latter is an agent or dealer in a commodity. The 1904 building (which reflects the style of that period in its façade) has the appearance of a warehouse or packaging centre – which is how a flour factor might operate.

A Directory of 1930 shows W Melhuish Ltd registered at 9 New Corn Exchange, EC3. In 1946 they are still listed at 2 Camberwell Green. Readers may be interested to note that other occupants of the terrace at that time are: 3 Rodney Opticians Ltd; 4 Achille Serre Ltd Dyers and Cleaners; and 5 Edwin B Snell Confectioner.

Without proof it seems that the flour warehouse was not functioning as such in the post-war decades. Certainly it was derelict by the 1970s, and in a 1980 photo the roof trusses are no longer covered.

I can provide no information about the earlier corn mill, as evidenced by the 19th century map and the relic brick corner. Indeed I'm not clear how that remaining brick feature related to the 1904 building – it's not evident in the photographs.

Unexpected anecdote

An online trawl of key words brought an unexpected anecdote, and a delightful Edwardian poster for Melhuish Flour (offered for sale as a postcard).

The anecdote relates to a youth living in Lambeth and employed at the Melhuish flour factory (*sic*), Camberwell Green. His life-span was short (1898-1914) because one Monday morning he set off for work and failed to return home that evening. Three days later the police informed his family that he had enlisted with the army that day. The anecdote ends with his death in France in 1914.

Like so many businesses that struggled through two world wars, there are clearly tragic aspects to this microcosm of local life. The future, however, is bright (at least green) as the new flats are being marketed as Camberwell On The Green.

John Turpin

Camberwell's long-time resident and borough's first black mayor, dies



Sam King, MBE, community activist and politician, 1926-2016

Sam King, who died in June aged 90, was the first black mayor of the London Borough of Southwark and a long-time resident of Camberwell. He is credited with helping to set up the Notting Hill Carnival.

He travelled to Britain on the *Empire Windrush* in 1948 but it was not his first visit: he had served with the RAF in World War II and been stationed throughout the country.

Sam was born in Priestman's River, Jamaica and as a boy worked on his father's banana farm. He did well at school and after seeing an advert for volunteers for the British Army he applied. After passing all

the tests he underwent training for the RAF in Kingston and in 1944 set sail for the UK.

After the war, Sam returned to Jamaica. Once again he responded to an advert, this time calling for help to rebuild the UK, hence his passage on the *Windrush*.

Sam settled in Camberwell and worked for the Royal Mail for 34 years, starting as a postman and ending up as a manager.

He became involved with migrant welfare issues and joined the Labour party. In 1982 he was elected the Labour member of Southwark Council for Bellenden ward, Peckham, and a year later, was nominated to become mayor.

He went on to become the first black mayor of the London Borough of Southwark in 1983 and helped pave the way for the Notting Hill Carnival.

In 1998 Sam received an MBE and in 2000 the people of Southwark voted for a blue plaque to be installed on his former home. In May this year he was awarded the freedom of the London Borough of Southwark.

Joshua Thelwell

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Promoting gardening at home and in allotments

The 90th birthday year of the Queen has been shared by a modest organisation in Camberwell: the Gardens Guild.

The Camberwell Gardens Guild was founded in 1926 to encourage an interest in growing and arranging flowers. By 1939 it had about 400 members. When World War II started, its members were, like everyone else, encouraged to grow vegetables to help feed the nation and this addition to its concerns is still promoted by the Guild.

Its annual shows, in spring and autumn, include competitions for the best entry in many different classes of vegetable as well as flowers. Other entries of preserves, cakes and various handicrafts have been added over time and photography is another

more recent competitive class. The numbers of members may have fallen but the shows continue.

During the near-century of its existence, the Guild has added other activities to its original ones: the allotments in Grove Park are the responsibility of the Gardens Guild who share its management with a council of tenants. It gives an annual trophy for the best allotment. The continuation of all these activities is assured by the hard work of members of its committee and the dynamism of Jean Finlay, its Chair.

In addition to its promotion of gardening, both at home and in allotments, the Guild offers excursions to view well-known, particularly interesting, gardens, organised during the summer for small groups of members. This year the Guild will be visiting two places

in Kent: Scotney Castle in Lamberhurst and Chartwell. Talks, social evenings and a plant sale add additional touches of variety to the entertainment of the Guild's members. This many-sided contribution to the well-being of residents of Camberwell was rightly rewarded in 2009 by a Southwark Council Civic Award.

On the 11th June 2016, the Guild celebrated its 90 years of existence with a tea party that included not merely a splendid tea but a quiz and the traditional party game of Pass the Parcel! Two Birthday cakes were also provided and the splendid efforts of the Guild's officers resulted in a very happy occasion.

The *Quarterly* will look forward to reporting its centenary celebration in 10 years' time.

Jean Sackur

Members get together to celebrate the Gardens Guild's 90th anniversary with a splendid tea, quiz and Pass the Parcel



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The “delification” of Coldharbour Lane

Grunge and gentrification cohabit comfortably in Coldharbour Lane¹. This ancient right of way demonstrates a social stratification that Charles Dickens would still recognise. The stretch of road from Camberwell to the Farm is a microcosm of London’s cosmopolitan, post-industrial creative mix. (Yes, there is a farm just off the Lane with a market garden ... and horses. The Queen’s been. Keep reading.)

In Dickens’s time Coldharbour Lane was notorious for crimes of passion – local grocer and bigamist Samuel Greenacre was convicted of murder when the dismembered legs of his latest fiancée turned up in Coldharbour Lane. Nowadays villains have given way to artists and artisans.

Famous graffiti artist the Artful Dodger drew his mural of Muhammad Ali on the side of GX Gallery opposite the entrance to Coldharbour Lane within days of the boxer’s death. Ali’s portrait with his slogan “dance like a butterfly, sting like a bee” is next to a painting of Prince, who also died this year.

Pass Rock Steady Eddie’s on the corner, Howards Bros the ironmonger (their DIY advice is as solid as their spades) and arrive at Tula Rose and the Vape café, the latest ventures of the Styros family, who arrived in Camberwell from Cyprus some 40 years ago. Paterfamilias Spyrou Styros was inspired by the Roman wine god Bacchus to turn the family Cyprus deli, a Cruson lookalike, into the off-licence Temple of Bacchus. On his retirement granddaughter Sarah took inspiration from Mexico and transformed the space into Tula Rose beauty salon, motto “In every woman is a queen”, while her fiancé George turned her mother’s shop next door into Caffè Vape. From 8am to 8pm the desperate trying to give up smoking join youngsters sampling fruit flavoured infusions for £3 at the wooden bar.

A long queue forms a couple of doors down when Spice and Nice starts serving its superb West Indian take-aways. Brown stewed chicken is



Grffiti artist Artful Dodger’s mural of Muhammad Ali on the side of GX Gallery



George enjoys a “smoke” outside Caffè Vape

succulent, fried plantain juicy, there is cake and salt fish to die for – and rum cake so solid you will need a doze after lunch. If it is breakfast

time Brunchies on the next corner is unbeatable for price and quality.

Continued on next page

¹ Originally called Camberwell Lane, the reason for the change of name is unclear – the most popular theory is that when Camberwell was still country the Lane contained a “cold harbour”, a basic shelter for travellers, a roof, door and possibly a simple hearth.

The “delification” of Coldharbour Lane continued from previous page

It is in the next terrace after Valmar Road that “delification” begins. The Art Deli sandwiched between Target Nails and Crown and Glory (the braiding specialists) brings French/Brazilian sophistication to Camberwell. Marie Laure is a French restaurateur and her co-owner Lia imported brother Frankie from the family’s Italian restaurant in Brasilia to become head chef at this deli, posh café and art exhibition space. Art Deli has a universally successful recipe – nice food, good wine, friendly people. Croissants from 7am are home baked, lunch is light dishes and salads and dinner gets serious with lamb shank, risotto and a changing menu of main courses selling for £7 to £15. As befits a deli, it has good but expensive oil, smoked meats, bottles of wine and magnificent meringues to take away. A recent exhibition by local photographer Judith Piper sold well and graphic print maker Genskiart was the next to benefit from Art Deli’s no-commission policy.

Look across the road to Camberwell Passage and the enormous mural showing the Great Wave of Kanagawa, Katsushika Hokusai’s 1831 wood block print. The mural first appeared in 1998 for the Camberwell Arts Festival, was almost lost permanently due to a fire in the garages below in 2012 but was rescued and repainted some three years ago. Two sets of artists’ studios on Coldharbour Lane are stalwarts of the festival’s annual Open Studios – the purpose-built Empress Mews live/work spaces on the north side and the atmospheric and very cold Denmark Place on the south, next to the Baptist Church.

On the corner of Camberwell Passage is accommodation for King’s key workers, named after the Nobel Prize-winning pharmacologist Sir James Black who saved lives by inventing beta blockers. On the same side of the road, looking as if it has been there since Dickens’s time, is Hobby’s first-class professional cleaners. Despite the vintage sewing machines, owner Aric Aziz and his tailor father only opened 10 years ago when they arrived from Cyprus.



Lia makes you welcome at the Art Deli



The Great Wave of Kanagawa was almost lost in a fire in 2012



Volunteer Anthea waters the oil drum plants at Loughborough Farm

If you have a load of ordinary washing, one of the only two remaining laundrettes in Camberwell is across the road – Kings, “*Your washing no fuss, just leave it with us*”

Reg and John Norris started Norris Bedding at 86 Coldharbour Lane in 1945 and Antony Norris carries on the family business of handmade top quality mattresses to this day. A touch of class between Indian’s Unisex hair salon and a sandwich shop.

Nearby Kenbury Street hit the headlines when Kids Company, at No 1, closed down. Kenbury Mansions next door has roofs and windows straight from Amsterdam. Artists were commissioned by Notting Hill Housing Trust to enrich the frontage of Embassy apartments, next on Coldharbour Lane. They created a metal fence painted with words about home – “warm”, “toys”, etcetera – but on close examination these words are made up of quotes about the objects that make a home a home: “record player in the living room, it is really old and has been with us since before I was born”, “My teddy because she is pretty”, “My bedroom, no one comes in if they don’t knock on the door”, “My afghan rug I haven’t had it long. I often stand and look at it and think I love that rug”, “A letter my Mum wrote to me in the drawer. I only read it once or twice a year but to me home is where that letter is”.

You will probably already know the bright yellow Sun, formerly the Sun and Doves, the gastropub with a great garden out the back, patronised by King’s workers, but might not yet have noticed that the Junction pub at 171 Coldharbour Lane is now a live music bar and café. Set up by local musicians Cris, Luke and Paul, it is both comfy and cool with live acts – jazz, blues, Latin and quality pop/rock mainly, but the odd night of comedy. Most popular is the Tuesday Jazz Jam, “No egos, just people who love to play,” they say. The Junction takes local seriously, selling Coldharbour *Hell Yeah* beer brewed a few steps away at the Beerhive Cooperative brewery (Arch 283 Belinda Road, taproom open 12 to



(Clockwise from top): Aric at Hobby's the cleaners; Nia at the Junction serves local Hell Yeah beer; Volunteers at Loughborough Farm

6pm Saturdays) as well as fairly priced wines and home cooked food – gourmet burgers and hand cut chips from about £7.

Finally, under the railway bridge and round to your right on Loughborough Road, you will find Loughborough Farm. Just past the early morning drinkers, who cluster round the wheelie bins on the corner, are tall handmade wooden seats and plant holders along the farm wall. Oil drums repurposed as flower beds line the street, and turning into the farm, it is difficult to believe this was a car park on top of contaminated land. Food is grown in 100 builders' bags, donated by Barratts. Some 30 volunteers help to grow salads and carrots, broccoli, courgettes, beans, asparagus and more every Saturday, Sunday and Tuesday afternoon, taking home what they need. The surplus is sold at the gate every fortnight.

Anthea, a volunteer who is on the Board of the Farm, a community business, says there are "big plans afoot". The Mayor of London's Regeneration fund is paying for affordable workspace for local people, and an experimental café that opened for two weeks last September was such a success that the aim is to make



it permanent with a pop-up restaurant in the evening. The main impression of the Farm is the sheer friendliness and sociability of the range of volunteers who all sit down for tea together.

Across the road they have planted an orchard. Just beyond is the Ebony horse club, founded in 1996 with the Duchess of Cornwall as Patron. She brought the Queen along. It enables local children to "benefit from the powerful, life-changing influence that contact with horses can bring". Ebony offers "much more than riding lessons," they "mentor children who experience significant challenges at school and at home –

challenges that can profoundly affect their ability to achieve later in life." Much of the squalor that marked Coldharbour Lane in Dickens's time has gone, but the vibrancy and vitality remain. It is a short stroll along the Lane from the million pound houses in parts of Camberwell to the corner of Shakespeare Road, which is one of the most deprived areas in the country. As Dickens put it, "Draw but a little circle above the clustering house-tops, and you shall have within its space, everything with its opposite extreme and contradiction, close beside."

Marie Staunton

Where the action is

Are you retired and at a loose end, looking for something to do? Look no further than 305-307 Camberwell Road, just past the Green. Here, in an inconspicuous building, you will find Southwark Pensioners Centre which promises “action for older people”.

Activities offered by the Centre include a local history group, a book club, art classes, a computer club and jewellery making classes. A podiatrist is available once a month and there are film shows and outings.

The origins of the Southwark Pensioners Centre came about following slum clearance in the late 1960s and early 1970s when the Home Office initiated a project to find ways of responding to the needs of local people. With involvement from local authorities, universities and polytechnics, 12 projects were set up, one in the London Borough of Southwark. This was known as the Southwark Community Development Project.

Walworth had a large number of housing estates, some of which were newly built. These included the Heygate, Aylesbury, Newington and Brandon estates where new tenants were experiencing the usual housing construction problems as well the loss of community. The older estates had problems too. These included disrepair, dampness and darkness that led to health and security concerns.

Research also showed that people's health, particularly men's, deteriorated on retirement, owing to the loss of income, status, motivation and social connections. So groups and activities for older people were set up, leading in 1978 to the Walworth Project. This was run from



Southwark Pensioners Centre at 305-307, Camberwell Road, as it is today



The derelict pawnbroker's at 305-207 was in a bit of a state when it became the new home of the Southwark Pensioners Centre

two portacabins in a car park opposite St Alban's Hall in Penton Place. One of its services was an employment bureau for the over-60s.

In 1981, funded by the GLC, Walworth Pensioners Project was born and in 1983 moved to an empty space above St Alban's Hall. Walworth Pensions Project in turn helped set up the Southwark Pensioners Centre, which then had to

find premises. In 1989, after a two-year search, they found a derelict pawnbroker's at 305-307

Camberwell Road. It was in a bit of a state, flooded at basement level and blighted by plans to widen the road, extend the Tube and reopen the station. The Centre opened at last in 1991.

Drop in some time and see how much is on offer.



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It's never too late to create

Edwina Epstein dropped in to the Pensioners Centre to enquire about a course on offer and was completely waylaid. Below is her report.

I so loved the paintings on the wall by members of the Monday Art Group at the Camberwell Pensioners Centre that I contacted the tutor, Jenny Adams, who allowed me to join the group for a session to find out more.

Each artist is making her own version of an aquarium in paint and collage, using anything to hand: silver foil, string, paper and netting bags that had contained apples or oranges. It will take three Monday sessions to complete, or as many as it takes before starting a new project.

Jenny is a Central School of Art graduate in graphic design, typography and illustration, a teacher and practising artist. She inspires the members of the group, some of whom had never taken up a pencil or paint brush before, to extend their knowledge of art with new ideas and techniques and has given them the confidence to have a go themselves.

Original expression

She suggests visits to galleries and museums between sessions, providing information and explanation from her own knowledge and passion for art. Her informal method does not include telling anyone what to do. She never indicates a right or wrong way of doing things, but encourages original expression.

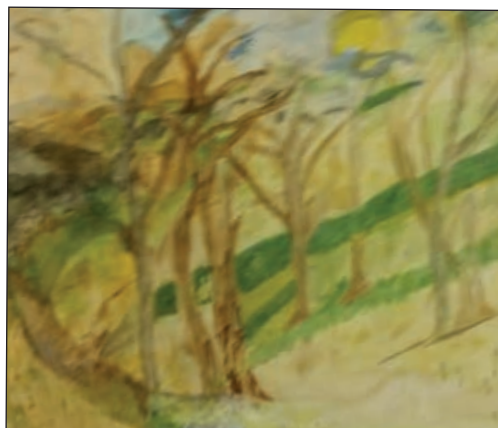
Although a start can be made by copying an image, it is not a copy that is produced, but a very personal version of the original or sometimes something completely new.

Recent projects have produced weird and wonderful surreal trees, paintings of boats in the most convincingly wet water, imaginary landscapes and a faithful "Matisse" through an open window. Only rarely does anyone drop out of the group. There is only room for 12 people so there is always a waiting list.

Now all together on the wall, the completed fish are a stunningly colourful display – until displaced by the next exhibition of new work.



A small selection of pensioners' artwork, Clockwise from top: *Boats*; "Matisse"; *Fishes*; and *Chinese Trees*



CQ is always looking for contributions. If you have suggestions for articles, or want to write something yourself, please contact the editor.

mpowleybaker@gmail.com

Tel: 020 7701 4417

Peabody in Camberwell

The mellow, red-brick Peabody estate has long occupied the east side of Camberwell Green. Now another Peabody building, grey and turquoise, is rising on the west. Unlike the tenanted walk-up on the east side, it will be largely owner-occupied, illustrating the changing face of social housing over the last century.

The Camberwell Green Estate was built in 1911, when there was still a music hall at the Father Redcap and the Medical Officer of Health for Southwark was expressing alarm that infant mortality – the death rate of children in their first year of life – was increasing. (It rose to 109 children in 1,000. By comparison, the country with the worst infant mortality rate in the world in 2015 was Mali, at 94 in 1,000; the UK figure was 4.)

The construction of the building was funded by the bequest of George Peabody, an American, who made his money in dry goods and multiplied it through merchant banking. He sold bonds in Britain for US railroads and other infrastructure ventures. The business was eventually run by his partner, Junius Spencer Morgan, who changed the bank's name to JP Morgan & Co.

Although notoriously stingy to his own employees, Peabody is now

honoured as “the father of modern philanthropy”, the Bill Gates of his era. Surrounded by British social reformers such as Dickens, Angela Burdett Coutts of the banking family and Passmore Edwards (founder of North Camberwell Library, the Baths in Wells Way and South London Gallery), he invested £2.5m (£231m in today's figures) in creating the Peabody Trust to provide housing of a decent quality for “artisans and the labouring poor of London”.

And that was the purpose of the Camberwell Green Estate. The large houses on the east side of the Green which housed a remand home, boarding schools, a home for deaf and dumb children and a Turkish Bath House were demolished in 1909. Victor Wilkins won an architectural competition for the nine-block building. It was built at a cost of £30,000 and opened in 1911. It was Peabody's first set of homes with entirely self-contained plumbing, meaning no shared sinks and lavatories. In 1920 a further six blocks were added, in which only two rather than four flats opened onto each landing.

Peabody focused on the “deserving poor”, the “respectable” working class, rather than the destitute. Tenants were in work – as

labourers, porters, coachmen, printers, bookbinders, messengers and police constables. But still poor, according to local historian Bob Reeves: “The average Peabody house-holder's wage was about 22s per week and no tenant earned more than 30s. You really can't make much sense of that in today's money; you have to see it in the context of the time. A few years earlier, Charles Booth's monumental London study had pioneered the now standard idea of a ‘poverty line’, an income below which anything like a decent life could not be maintained. This was set between 18s and 21s per week. So Peabody tenants were working people struggling not to fall below that line.”

The estate had a resident superintendent and several porters. The superintendent dealt with applications for rooms, collected the rents, and enforced Peabody's rules. The residents were required to sweep the passages and steps every morning before 10 o'clock, and took turns to clean the laundry windows. In a paternalistic but effective public health initiative, every resident had to be vaccinated against smallpox, and the superintendents kept records of all cases of infectious disease. And it worked. Infant mortality in Peabody buildings was half that of London as a whole.

Peabody's paternalism extended to passing onto their tenants the 15% rebate they got from the Local Authority for collecting the rates – a practice known as compounding the rent with the rates. This became a major local controversy. Camberwell councillors believed that as a democratic principle all residents should pay rates directly. They issued summonses against some 180 tenants just before Christmas 1911, demanding one quarter's rent. As this amounted to 12s for a two-room flat and 17s for a three-room flat, many families had a worrying Christmas. Luckily for the tenants, the Chair of the Bench threw out the Council's case.

During World War II firebombs gutted the top flats of blocks D and E – the same raid that killed



Peabody's Camberwell Green Estate, behind scaffolding, is undergoing repairs

21-year-old bridegroom Sidney Wright, his new wife Patricia of the same age, and their wedding party of 13 as they left the Father Redcap. That tragedy is marked by a plaque above the air raid shelter on the Green.

Fast forward to 2016. Peabody is building a new set of flats in line with their strategy to provide quality affordable homes. But wait – of the 66 units due for completion in February 2018, only five are “social” rented homes – which means at the customary low rent levels in the council housing and housing association sector, usually about 50% of private rents. Six are “affordable” rented homes, a new type of housing association rent which is (confusingly) much less affordable than the old social housing rent, and up to 80% of private rent levels – but still less than market rates. There are also 13 shared ownership homes and 42 private homes. So what about today’s labourers, head porters, taxi drivers, Deliveroo cycle messengers – will they be able to afford one of these homes? Unlikely. Peabody’s present day strategy is to provide affordable homes not just for the working poor but “across a range of incomes” – in the context of a London housing shortage that is “acute, widespread and diverse”.

And that explains the difference between Peabody of 1911 and Peabody of 2016. Peabody in 1911 catered for a homogeneous working population whose expectation was to rent, and discriminated on moral grounds against those unable to work. In 2016, working patterns are often less reliable and home ownership is the tenure for two in three households. All affected by interventionist housing policy and government subsidy that have ebbed and flowed for a hundred years.

As a banker George Peabody would have understood the new challenge of housing finance. Like all other housing associations Peabody no longer gets cheap capital from philanthropists or government. It either borrows money on the international bond market at relatively good rates (for example, it issued a



On the left is the Peabody development, still under wraps, east of the Green

£200m bond in 2011) or cross subsidises low rent homes by building and selling high value private properties. Peabody, like other very large similar housing associations in London, works in the context of a detailed Mayor’s London Housing Plan. It has undertaken to provide 1,000 of the Plan’s 17,000 new affordable homes per year in London from multiple providers, of which 60% will be for social and affordable rent and 40% for intermediate rent or sale. So the private homes on Camberwell Road may well be subsidising the renovations of the estate across the Green or paying for social rented homes in Thamesmead or Hackney. It just won’t do much to cater for the housing needs of porters at King’s.

But there are advantages of having more Peabody in Camberwell. Their approach to design is recognised as enlightened and energy efficient. Other developments in the East End such as Mint Street and Derbishire Place have been praised for having balconies that are bigger than required, such that they can serve as outdoor rooms, ceilings of a decent height, broad corridors and well-proportioned windows – a considerable improvement on many

of the canyons of new flats springing up between the Green and Burgess Park.

And most importantly, there is ethos. Call it a Victorian overhang, but Peabody is committed to creating “a feeling of belonging, an active involvement in the neighbourhood and the spirit of togetherness and friendliness that goes with that”. And Camberwell could always do with more of that.

Elaine Clarke and Marie Staunton
with thanks to **Bob Reeves** and
Bert Provan

The Green re-opens

These pictures showing the Peabody buildings were taken at the re-opening of Camberwell Green after its lengthy refurbishment.

A party atmosphere prevailed, with balloons for the children and various forms of entertainment for everyone. What’s more, the sun shone so you could just sit on the grass and absorb it all.

Paddy's punts

Five-year-old Patrick (Paddy) Stallion was sheltering under the kitchen table of the family home in Camberwell when a firebomb set the back fence ablaze. Indomitable Mum ran out with buckets of water and stopped the flames reaching the house. Soon after another bomb landed on Bessemer House hotel across the road, the blast blew out all the windows in the Stallions' house at 174 Denmark Hill and the front door flew up the stairs and lodged in the bathroom. Luckily Paddy, Mum Mary, older sister Jane and baby Mark were in the iron cage of the Morrison shelter.

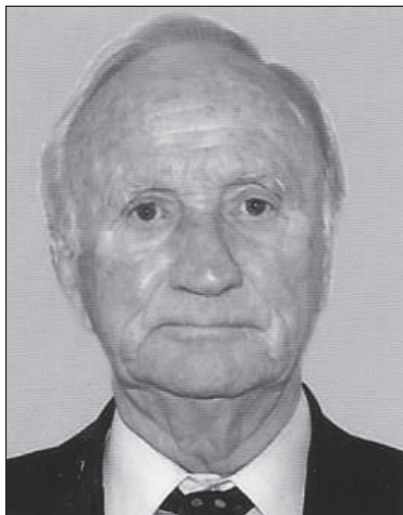
Surviving the Blitz was but the first of many narrow escapes in Paddy's long life. Now nearly 80 he survived World War II and dodged police as a street corner bookie before settling down to run a respectable chain of bookmakers – and then he fell foul of the Spanish Mafia...

But let's begin at the beginning with Grandma Flo. She was a local money lender who gave Paddy's dad Paddy the money to buy 174 Denmark Hill at the beginning of the World War II. What was then a modern house, built by Wates in 1937, provided a home for wife Mary, Jane, Mark and Paddy while father Paddy served in the Signal Corps in Italy and France.

Mary was determined to keep the family together and in London despite intensive bombing – police were stationed outside 174 to stop the barrage balloon tethered in Ruskin Park from crashing into the Stallions' house.

As a child Paddy's war experience was sometimes surreal; he remembers when apples and pears rained from the sky – they were from the orchard of a house in Sunray Avenue hit by a bomb. And occasionally embarrassing – as schools closed and other children were evacuated five-year-old Paddy was sent to Mary Datchelor Girls School on Grove Lane. "They made us go swimming in our underpants... with the girls! It was mortifying, I will never forget it," he says.

Paddy and his friend John Duffy



The three faces of Paddy, aged seven, 15 and 78

had remarkable freedom by today's standards. Just after the war they would cycle everywhere; a favourite route was up Denmark Hill, past the trams parked on Dog Kennel Hill and Champion Park. They had a wonderful, if dangerous time in the ruined Bessemer House – the destroyed luxury hotel became a playground for gangs of children. A

stark contrast to the supervised playground of today's Bessemer Grange Primary School.

Dad Paddy returned from the war and opened the only legal type of betting business – Starting Price (SP) betting. Off-course bookmakers took bets by telephone on credit at SP, only on course bookmakers at the dog and race tracks could compile a book and set odds – legally. The Stallions also started a street betting pitch off Old Kent Road. Patrick first acted as a child lookout and then as a bookie. He remembers Charlie Drake, then Springhill, placing bets, David Jones, who became David Bowie, coming over from Brixton to put bets on for his Gran, and Michael Caine, née Micklewhite, joining the queue to place a bet for his parents. No records were kept but on Sundays pay outs were punctiliously accurate. The business flourished on trust. But street betting was illegal so the police would regularly tip off the street bookies that there would be a raid. The groups of eight or so street corner bookies were prepared – seven took to their heels, one stayed behind to be arrested, spend a night in the cells and incur a fine of £10. He would receive 10 shillings compensation from Stallions for his trouble.

Cinema was the main entertainment for Paddy and his friends who went as often as they could afford – three or four times a week. Some of the five Camberwell cinemas were real flea pits – Paddy remembers not only his seat but the whole row regularly collapsing under him in the Grand. (This was opposite Warner Road on Camberwell New Road, it became a snooker hall in the 1960s and was demolished to make way for flats in 2014). The Golden Dome (which you can still make out above the Co-op) was not much better. Nor was the Palace at what is now Costa. The Odeon, on the site of what is now Nando's, in Coldharbour Lane was much more classy and the splendid Art Deco Regal on Camberwell Road (which became the Gala Bingo Hall and is now the House of Praise) was "very posh" with a manager resplendent in

his uniform.

Paddy left school at 15 to work in the photography department of the *Daily Sketch*. He remembers taking the heavy photo plates of Lester Piggott winning the Derby on Never Say Die in 1954 and motor-biking them back to the office. But he made more money from running a book and taking bets from the *Evening News* and *Daily Sketch* staff – there were some hundreds in now defunct departments such as back numbers and cuttings. “I was a well-off young man then,” he says.

But this all came to a halt when Military Recruitment came knocking. Paddy was drafted to the Pay Corps, a “wasted three years”. The one

excitement was the Suez crisis. All the men were put on standby, there was a great polishing of rifles but then the crisis was “over before it started”.

On discharge Paddy joined the family business, becoming the manager of a chain of 30 Stallions betting shops across London. After the family business was sold to Corals in 1984 Paddy was able to retire to Spain on the proceeds. It should have been a calm end to colourful career – until the Spanish Mafia stepped in.

Paddy invested in a nightclub, acquired an unreliable partner and the attention of a group of criminals who systematically destroyed the

business. At the age of 59 he returned to the UK, having lost his savings. Undeterred he built up a business as a limousine driver, saw it decimated by the 2008 recession, contended with cancer and now lives in Worcester Park surrounded by three children and seven grandchildren.

Nowadays he can be found smoothly steering his limousine through south London, regaling passengers with stories of a poorer, more dangerous and livelier south London.

“It’s been a great life, a good family and lots of funny things to remember,” is his verdict

Marie Staunton

Has Camberwell lost out again on “brilliant British design”?

We would love to reignite our letters page, so please send the editor your comments on anything Camberwellian.

mpowleybaker@gmail.com

Tel: 020 7701 4417

Part of the old Elmington Estate is now nearly demolished and is to become “Elmington Green”. Watching it go has been fascinating, but will “Elmington Green” look any different to the other new housing developments in SE5 where architectural interest is all focused on different coloured bricks and occasional glass open drawers?

Sadly not, it seems. Twenty first century, British, brilliant and innovative design will not be displayed in Camberwell – again.

Penelope Gretton

CQ would like to know what readers think of this. Or any other subject? Please let us know.

The images below are of the northwest corner of the junction of Elmington Road and Benhill Road, on the south side of the Elmington estate. They show the same view before and during demolition. Now, there is nothing but space.



Memories are made of this

In the last issue (CQ 189) we printed memories collected by Joanna McCormick at the AGM. Here is a second lot gathered on her rounds. When dressed in her butterfly costume Joanna represents the Camberwell Beauty, the butterfly logo of the Camberwell Society. In another life she is an artist – visit her website at www.joart.info

Duck Man

A couple of years ago I was in the park and I saw a guy walking his ducks on leads. He had bought the eggs online. They wore special adapted nappies in his flat. He's called Duck Man.

Variety

We're visiting Camberwell, and I like the variety – lots of stalls and shops.

Good Place

I live in Camberwell. I was always passing through to get somewhere, and I really enjoy living here now – a good place to live.

Lights

Tadeem is closed, but at night the lights are on. I remember coming through and seeing the lights. Lots of change.

Garden Piano

I have lived here for about eight years, but in London for 25 years. I used to get the night bus to Camberwell and walk. Once I went to a party in Camberwell and they had a piano in the back garden and were playing it.

First Time

It's the first time I've been here. It's lovely!

Love

Meeting my wife-to-be in The Old Dispensary in Camberwell Green. I was quite drunk, so it was love at first sight!

Festivals

I've been living here for five years; we have some special festivals here, and art in the park.



Joanna McCormick, dressed as the Camberwell Beauty, can be seen at local events collecting people's memories of Camberwell

Stalls

[Frognall Farm fruit and veg.] We come here to work once a week, and we enjoy it.

Magical

King's College is an amazing place, really magical!

Best Place

Camberwell, it's the best place!

Paris

In summer of 2014, maybe July, when my son was two months old, I got chatting to another parent at a paddling pool. She moved to Paris,

and I've just met up with her and her new baby. My son first tried solid food in a pub in Camberwell; it was cucumber!

Choice

If forced to choose between Edinburgh and Camberwell I would choose Camberwell. I spend most of my time here.

Apples

When I was 13 years old and my brother was 10, we went scrumping in Mud Walk. I ate the apples, four at once! I got a stomach ache. We never got caught! We could run fast.

Art

I went to the Art School 20 years ago, and then many years later I moved here.

Friendly

I love it here. It's very friendly.

Different

I remember when the pavements weren't littered with great big red bins, there were no coffee shops, and everyone had to drive around the park.

Food

The bacon butty in The Pigeon Hole Café!

Birthday

Matilda's birthday – she was born in Denmark Hill.

Bells

When I was growing up I used to always hear the bells of St Giles Church.

Objection!

I live in East Dulwich and I object to it being called Camberwell! They suddenly changed it a few years ago, because they reduced the number of different wards.

Queen

When Elizabeth became Queen she visited southeast London, and the public toilets had a green trellis put up, with plastic roses all over it.

Family

Date night in Carravagios, in the window seat. I feel warm, surrounded by my family.

Pockets of Green

It feels quite urban, but there are pockets of green.

Mum

My Mum lives here and we grew up around the area. I can't wait for the park to be finished.

Good Things

I've lived here for about 30 years. I like the fair that takes place in June, the new library, Camberwell Green, my friends in the area, and the renewal and update of Camberwell. All good things.

Free

So many memories ... my best one is moving into halls of residence in 1978 – it felt like I

was free for the first time in my life. That's because I came from the war in Northern Ireland, and I got out. And I stayed in Camberwell.

New

I'm new to Camberwell, so memories are ready to be made!

First impression

My first impression of Camberwell is that my daughter would love to live here. It's a lot like the types of places I've lived where it's not already done – it's in transition.

Party

In the late 1980s, around 1986, going for a drink in The Grove, and seeing Tim Roth and Vic Reeves, and going to a party in an old scrapyard.

Surprise

Going down Coldharbour Lane and seeing a rag and bone man with a hand cart, which I think is quite surprising – almost like time travel. He had a look of the old Steptoe.

Joanna McCormick

Back home in Camberwell



Wallace Jaffray has just come home to roost. It's possible you've crossed paths if you've moved into or around SE5, Wallace worked and lived in the area for 18-years solid. A sales position in Blackheath had Wallace's attention for the past 2-years, but we've recently lured him back onto home turf. If you need property advice, whatever it is, Wallace is certainly your man. Call him now for a straight-talking valuation.

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Roy Brooks

The Society comments on recent planning applications

The Society looks at all planning applications within the SE5 area and occasionally at other applications which are significant to our area of interest. We advise the relevant planning authority that we object, support or have no objection to an application where we have decided to comment.

Owing to the limited space we are only able to print a selection of the applications.

You can also see our comments on the Society's website at www.camberwellsociety.org.uk

2 Brunswick Park, SE5

Rear single storey extension with raised ground floor balcony added in addition to planning application consent 16/AP/0896 and listed building consent 16/AP/0897. |

While this is not quite as we discussed with the applicant at our meeting the general points have been taken on board. The terrace is supported by what looks like a concrete beam rather than the metal beam suggested to give more of a balcony look. There is no proposal to alter the first-floor windows so the alterations are at upper ground floor and basement.

NO OBJECTION.

57 Camberwell Grove, SE5

Erection of first floor rear extension. A re-submission of the proposal to make an extension to the first floor to create a small toilet/wet room (for disabled use).

The application looks as bad as before: no changes are visible, except possibly a narrowing. It is difficult to see how it would work for disabled use and it seems to wreck the back of this Georgian cottage. It doesn't really affect 59 but it may affect 55.

OBJECTION.

100 Cobourg Road, SE5

Erection of rear L-shape dormer roof extension over main roof and outrigger slope, to provide additional accommodation to dwelling house. | This property adjoins the Coburg Community Primary School. The house is a leftover half of a pair, the school sitting to the north is on the

site of the other half and the terrace, presumably lost to World War II damage. The proposed rear dormer extension with a small extension over the outrigger would appear to be within the scope of permitted development and would not adversely affect any adjoining property.

NO OBJECTION.

79 Coldharbour Lane, SE5

Conversion of a single dwelling house into three self-contained flats, including the removal of the existing ground-floor rear conservatory and replacement of the rear window dormer with mansard roof extension, along with other external alterations. This is fairly straightforward conversion and seems to work as a plan, although there is little consideration for the opening up of the structure in terms of walls removed to achieve the layout.

The plans are lacking detail, but there is little change to the external of the existing property except for replacing the present timber rear and side infill "conservatory" with proper structure and changing the rear dormer into a more mansard type extension. There is an existing, seemingly original, front dormer.

NO OBJECTION.

Land adjacent to 126 Crofton Road, SE5

Demolition of existing garages and the construction of a three-bedroom house and related facilities.

The proposed house makes good use of the site, the planning is economical and well thought out, the house is appropriate in scale and materials to the adjacent residential properties.

NO OBJECTION.

36 Havil Street, SE5

Mansard roof extension and first floor rear dormer extension to outrigger to provide additional residential accommodation. |

This is a mid-terrace property with a strong front parapet mainly hiding a butterfly/London roof. The proposal to add a mansard, despite setting this back, would seem to damage the integrity of this terrace. Claims within the Design and Access

Statement that this would go unnoticed do not seem to add up. The gardens are small and the properties close to the small gardens/yards of properties in Ada Road and backing 169 Elmington Road.

OBJECTION.

42 Peckham Road, SE5

Construction of a single storey front extension in wood timber (already built).

This is a timber framed structure with corrugated plastic roof, of no architectural merit. We can see that it is a very useful add-on to the café, being opposite the College of Art with all its added accommodation and future large student numbers. However, this structure does nothing for the appearance of the shop/café and the parade of shops as a whole.

OBJECTION.

86 Shenley Road, SE5

Construction of an L-shaped dormer extension to the main rear roof slope and outrigger roof, to include the raising of a party wall; creation of a roof terrace to the outrigger roof at third floor level; installation of roof lights to the front roof slope.

This property sits on the corner on the south side of Oswyth Road. The Design and Access Statement claims the loft proposal falls within permitted development. The reason for applying for approval would seem to be the roof terrace and the use of different materials. The rear dormer is proposed to be clad in copper cladding and the roof terrace guarded in stainless steel wired balustrade. The proposal would seem to be aimed at high quality finishes and could lift the appearance of this street corner. Roof terraces are often not liked due to potential overlooking, but that would not be an issue in this case as this one is on a street corner.

NO OBJECTION.

Note: The Society objects on all counts to the proposal to use UPVC windows and doors. These are non-sustainable and will result in crude fenestration. We recommend timber or powdercoated aluminium.

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Articles, letters, photographs and other contributions are always welcome.

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