

CAMBERWELL QUARTERLY

No. 210
Winter 2021

The magazine of the Camberwell Society

£1.50
(free to members)



Sandi Toksvig makes connections at Denmark Hill

Beer trail with 10% brewery discount

Camberwell Christmas party, panto, art, food

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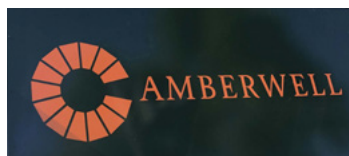
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Christmas in Camberwell 19
Xmas panto, Arts & farmers market, tree decorating, Camberwell Society party

Cover photo: Marc Schlossman

Opening of Windsor Walk entrance of Denmark Hill station: l to r Sandi Tosvig, Rail Minister Chris Heaton-Harris, Theatre Peckham's Daniella Arthur Kennedy

Local societies

Brunswick Park Neighbourhood tandra.
brunswickpark@yahoo.co.uk

Brixton Society
www.brixtonsociety.org.uk

Burgess Park, Friends of
www.friendsofburgesspark.org.uk
friendsofburgesspark@gmail.com

Butterfly Tennis Club
www.butterflytennis.com

Camberwell Arts
camberwellartsfestival@gmail.com
www.camberwellarts.org.uk

Camberwell Gardens Guild
Membership enquiries: Pat Farrugia
17 Kirkwood Road SE15 3XT

Camberwell Life
www.camberwell.life

Carnegie Library, Friends of
foclchair@gmail.com
foclmembers@gmail.com

Concerts in St Giles' Church
www.music@stgiles.com

Dulwich Picture Gallery
www.dulwichpicturegallery.org.uk

Herne Hill Society
www.hernehillsociety.org.uk

Maudsley Learning
www.maudsleylearning.com

Minet Conservation Association
www.minet.fsnet.co.uk

Nunhead Cemetery, Friends of
www.fonc.org.uk

Peckham Society
www.peckhamsociety.org.uk

Ruskin Park, Friends of
info@friendsofruskinpark.org.uk

SE5 Forum
www.SE5Forum.org.uk
admin@SE5 forum.org.uk

South London Gallery
www.southlondongallery.org

Southwark Nature Action Volunteers
southwarknature@gmail.com

St Giles', Friends of
robertcope@hotmail.com
www.stgilescambewell.org

St Giles' Churchyard, Friends of
StGilesChurchyardFriends@gmail.com

Wells Way Triangle Residents Association
WWTRACamberwell@gmail.com

See you at the party

You can't have missed the new station entrance, but did you see that on 10 October Google displayed Una Marson as their picture of the day? I hope you have seen – and worked out – the rebus poem (a sort of picture puzzle) on the back of the Una Marson optical illusion at the station.

I draw your attention to the revised Mapother House planning application and urge you to look at our Planning Committee's comments on our webpage and in this issue.

The Camberwell Society's litter picking and gardening volunteering work with the SE5 Forum is expanding, as the article in this issue highlights. More initiatives are being planned for next spring and summer.

I want to welcome all of you to the Camberwell Society Christmas party on Wednesday, 8 December, at St Giles Church. It will take place in the church proper, rather than the crypt, to ensure social distancing. No good Christmas party is without its raffle and challenge. In this case, the challenge is no less than the Great Camberwell Mince Pie Bake Off. Please create, bake and bring your creations. All food is welcome and finds a home on the day or the next.

Christmas is so much more than just the Camberwell Society party. It is a great opportunity to engage with the

many truly outstanding local charities and shops. Park the humbug and give or buy as much as you are able.

Finally, welcome to the talented designer Sue Hurst, who is making the Camberwell Quarterly even more attractive to read.



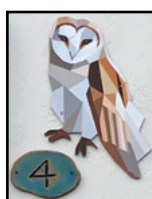
Photo Marc Schlossman

l to r Camberwell Society Chair Nick Mair, Dr Errol Francis CEO Culture&, Sophy Tayler, Chair SE5 Forum, Daniella Arthur Kennedy of Theatre Peckham.

But where in Camberwell was this photo taken? Answer page 19

The discreet charm of house numbers

John Hurst takes a delightful walk around our neighbourhood



Photos: John Hurst

House numbers are something that we all take for granted. We use them to address our mail, find where our friends live and tell companies where to deliver goods. But how much do we know about their history?

The most common house numbering system used in Britain is referred to as the European Scheme: one side of a road or street has odd numbers, the other even.

Some houses that are split into separate units can have these areas designated with letters such as A, B,

C. Very rarely a property is given a half number. One such place is the Old Police Station on Camberwell Church Street: its number is 20½.

The design of house numbers varies from country to country. It can be used as a form of individual or national expression, or to break up a plan that was originally intended to standardise the numbering system.

For example, in Venice you can see black charcoal numbers on whitewashed backgrounds. In France and some other European countries, blue and white enameled

plates are favoured. The handprinted azulejo tiles of Portugal are both colourful and decorative and growing in popularity in Britain.

You can find fanlights above front doors where a house number has been engraved into the glass. This style was introduced in Britain the 1720s.

Examples of these and other styles can be seen all over Camberwell and Peckham. Here is a selection that I discovered on my walks. They demonstrate the diversity in the style of our house numbers.

Welcome for new entrance and upgrades at Denmark Hill

Jonathan Hunt on the opening of our greatly improved railway station



l to r Councillors Catherine Rose, Ian Wingfield Helen Dennis and Jason Ochere in front of the adinkras

l to r Theatre Peckham actor Daniella Arthur Kennedy meets local resident Ann Curno and neighbours Sandi and Debbie Tosvig

Much-needed improvements to Denmark Hill rail station, where rush-hour queues once kept Camberwell commuters waiting for up to 10 minutes to reach a platform, were opened on 2 September. Punctual patients for King's and the Maudsley also benefit from ending access delays.

An impressive welcoming, multi-coloured entrance hall is the first thing to hit travellers as they enter the new entrance (and exit) from Windsor Walk and increasing numbers have been using it. Those who have a little time to spare can admire sculptures specially crafted by Godfried Donkor, a well-known local artist.

They may also become aware of a notable ecological first. This is the first station in Europe to use photovoltaic 'film' fitted to the new roof to produce more power than the new building consumes, allowing energy to be put back into the electricity grid.

Camberwell Society worthies - instrumental in persuading government to cough up the £7.5. million cost - joined rail industry and ministry suits for the ceremony (although the most colourful clothing was on chair Nick Mair). He said, "collaborative working with the project team has created a unique welcome reflecting Camberwell's history and culture."

CamSoc also worked with Camberwell Arts and SE5 Forum to produce a new public artwork which reflect Camberwell's unique, vibrant identity by the internationally celebrated British Ghanaian artist Godfried Donkor, using traditional adinkra symbolism of Ghana; a poem by Una Marson, the first black woman programme maker at the BBC and former Camberwell

resident; and walls tiled with the 'Camberwell Brick', in a palette of colours drawn from local greenery, architecture, water and the sky.

Young actress Daniella Arthur Kennedy from Theatre Peckham read a poem by Una Marson.

A platform for speeches was offered to King's and the Maudsley charities, Network Rail and railway contractors. Rail minister "call me Chris" Heaton-Harris said the "upgrade transforms a Victorian station into a modern experience for passengers -- cutting crowding, improving access, and introducing new space for cyclists and artwork and the first 'carbon positive' upgrade -- demonstrating our ambition to ensure our rail network is greener for passengers and better for our environment."

After he cut a large ribbon by the open barriers, local resident Sandi Togsvig said "This is the only cut by a Minister that I have ever been able to agree with"

Finally, Tony Coleman, the Society's in-house transport guru, who has been involved in the whole project since its inception, said: "I am delighted to see the new entrance finally open and to see passengers stopping to take in the artwork and entrance hall designs.

"Thanks to Network Rail for the level of local engagement and openness to incorporating ideas. And to GTR, INVU and Bam Nuttall for their inputs and support throughout.

"A special thanks to Godfried Donkor and his team who delivered the sculptures that are so eye catching. If you want to read more about them there is a plaque with details on the back wall at the bottom of the ramp way."

Sandi makes Denmark Hill connections

Sandi Tosvig gave a speech at the opening of the Windsor Walk station entrance



*Sandi Tosvig
Photos Marc Schlossman*

I think it only appropriate that a Danish person says something at any opening related to Denmark Hill. You may well wonder how the Danes came to claim the Hill in the first place. So, Prince George of Denmark married Queen Anne of England in 1683, even though they had never met and as far as I know did not even speak the same language. And if you recall Queen Anne she looked exactly like Olivia Coleman, who also lives locally. One of those strange things. But she was probably busy today.

So, George and Anne had an arranged marriage with a view to developing an Anglo Danish alliance to stop the Dutch navy. (Very much the reason I gave to my own father-in-law when I proposed to his daughter.) Despite their lack of courtship or even a common language, it was a love match. Because as we all know from the dreaded COVID sometimes conversation in marriage is overrated.

George was widely held to be kind but boring, carrying in himself a heady combination of laziness and incompetence. The sort of skill set which in no way prevents a rise to the top in power.

He was put in charge of the Admiralty. Why not? He knew nothing about boats whatsoever. Nevertheless, he was given the Admiralty and decided to come here hunting. That is how he spent his time, hunting up and down Denmark Hill. Indeed, he hunted here so often that is why the hill is remembered for him. I wish Denmark had contributed something more exciting. Nevertheless thank you George.

Camberwell of course was named in the Domesday book. It probably referred to a settlement which developed when people were expelled from the City of London because they had leprosy. I am just putting it out there. It is all behind us now. I have not seen any for ages. That is the history.

What I have seen in the years that I have lived here is a wonderful sense of community. Indeed, it was community campaigning which stopped the Victorian

station building being knocked down and led to this lovely (and indeed quite Scandi) new entrance. And I love the tiles and all the art that really reflect the wonderful strong cultural mix and rich history of the area.

Thank you to Rosey and Jim of Studio Sutherland who provided the artwork for this tiling pro bono. There were once healing waters in this area, which is why the people with leprosy came here. Each tile is the shape of a Camberwell brick inspired by the keystones of the very well which you can see featured in Camberwell's name and history and in the coat of arms. I think a well is a really splendid metaphor for Camberwell's diverse and vibrant community. Each brick symbolises different characteristics and they come together to make us a whole.

The new sculpture uses adinkra symbols from Ghana. I spent much wonderful time in Ghana. They represent general truths about wisdom, about life, about the environment. They reflect the importance of physical and mental wellbeing in Camberwell. They stress our links to the rest of the world.

And that brings me to one of my heroes whom I have long campaigned to be more widely known. Not far from here in Brunswick Place. At number 16, you can see a blue plaque dedicated to Una Marson. She was born in Jamaica in 1905. She was a feminist, an activist, and a writer. She was a remarkable woman, and I am so delighted that people are getting to know more about her. During World War 2 she became the first black woman programme maker to be employed by the BBC. This event represents the gathering of many voices who have lent their support. Local groups and individual donors. But it is Una's voice that will ring out for us now as Daniella Arthur Kennedy from Theatre Peckham performs one of my favourites *The Test* by Camberwell resident the late, great Una Marson.

The rat catcher's daughters

Theresa Giffard continues the story of the Jarvis rat catcher family

Rat catching children circa 1916
courtesy themongrelhoard.com



Dead rat (1812) by Jean Bernard (1775-1883). Original from The Rijksmuseum.
Digitally enhanced by rawpixel

Joey the pet monkey ran riot on the rooftops of Camberwell in October 1924 (see CQ 209). After thirteen days he was captured by John Jarvis. Jarvis was an established rat catcher, and it seems it ran in the family.

He and his wife Nellie had six children, four of whom were to follow in his footsteps by becoming rat catchers. This would have been unremarkable in itself but for the fact that two of them were daughters. Kitty and Nellie became famous, along with their mother Nellie, as the only professional

female rat catchers in the country.

In *London Labour and the London Poor*, journalist Henry Mayhew commented, "Unlike many school leavers neither Nell nor Kitty Jarvis of Camberwell in London had to worry about what to do next. For they were destined to join their father in the noble art of rat catching".

Kitty and Nellie were brought up in an environment that eradicated any fear of rodents, and as little girls, baby rats took the place of dolls as their playthings. They would dress

the rats up in tiny bonnets and ribbons and would take them out for walks around Camberwell in an old perambulator.

The life of a rat catcher was a busy one and it wasn't uncommon to catch over five hundred rats in a week. To carry out their business the girls would don dark coloured clothes and felt-soled shoes (so as to be as unobtrusive as possible to their victims). They would lay down traps baited with the famous secret potion and would stand motionless until the rats came out and would then catch them in nets.

Live rats were often sold to scientists for experiments. On one occasion the Jarvis family were paid handsomely by a film crew who were making a film of the *Pied Piper of Hamlyn*. The Jarvis family continued their flourishing business for years and John remained in Camberwell for the rest of his life.

Jake Absolon

A life lived well in Camberwell

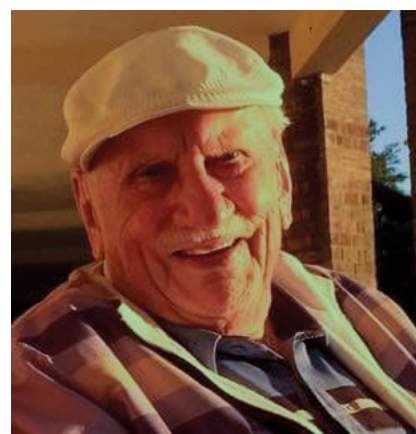
Jake Absolon (officially named Henry!), who died aged 91, was born in Camberwell in 1930. He lived half his life in Barent Road, moving shortly before he retired to a house in Herne Hill that backed on to the Temple Bowling Club. During the War, he was evacuated to Cornwall and lived on the edge of Bodmin Moor.

His early working life was spent as a painter and decorator with his father, working in and around Camberwell, Peckham and Brixton – skills he continued to use his whole life. He then moved on to become a

hospital porter (and eventually head porter) at King's College Hospital.

Jake's passions in life were Sheila and his family closely followed by cricket and jazz. As a young man he played locally for Clarendon Cricket Club, playing home matches in Ruskin Park. He also enjoyed tennis, using the courts in Myatt's Fields.

For many years Jake was a member of Surrey CCC. Despite his south London roots, for some reason he supported West Ham FC! When bowling a cricket ball got too much, he turned his attention to Temple



Bowls where he was involved in all areas, playing for Surrey Patrons and acting as match secretary and president, a post he was very proud of.

Jake was most definitely a Camberwell boy and proud of his local links. He is survived by his wife Sheila, three children, seven grandchildren and a great granddaughter.

Arts open studios and market

Kelly O'Reilly urges us to support local artists this Christmas

By pass empty shelves, petrol shortages and lockdown uncertainties this winter by doing all your Christmas shopping in Camberwell. It has never been easier, with our art market and open studios offering a one-stop shop from 27 November to 5 December.

This annual celebration of the SE5 art scene never fails to radiate colour, creativity, and joy. Join us for a week of curated collections, winter workshops and studio tours. The art market will be open on Camberwell Green on Saturday 27 November, from 11am to 4pm. Open Studios will be open on both weekends.

This year's event will be bigger and better than ever, thanks to a grant from Southwark Council's Cultural Celebration Fund. With their support, we'll be serving up a seasonal mix of markets, music, outdoor installations and open studios, with delicious offerings

from our great local cafes, restaurants and pubs to create a uniquely Camberwell experience.

Independent traders need your support, so let us ditch Amazon, and shop directly from local artists and businesses. Whether you're looking for traditional decorations, cutting-edge art or just shopping for presents, take a festive frolic through Camberwell to find some warming winter inspiration.

While you're at it, why not decorate a tree on Camberwell Green? Following this summer's yarn-storming celebrations, we're inviting local schools, community groups and tenants' associations to help light up Camberwell this winter.

Visit www.camberwellarts.org.uk to find out more or look out for our brochures at shops, pubs and cafes around Camberwell.

A new landmark for Camberwell

Tony Coleman reports on recent installations

Camberwell Church Street has a new landmark. Fr Nicholas George (affectionately known as Nick the Vic) kindly agreed for his garden wall to be used to make a statement about Camberwell's creativity. The author designed the display with the help of Jim Sutherland and his team at Studio Sutherland, the originators of the Camberwell branding. We quickly came up with the concept of what we wanted to show, but with the panels weighing nearly 100kg each, a method of support and lifting was needed. A structure was attached to the back of the wall to hold the weight and a temporary block and pulley system was added.

Duncan Coleman and Nick the Vic provided the heft to do the hoisting while Kim Blackwell and the author guided it into position for levelling. Success! The second panel with the Camberwell map was also quickly in place. Almost immediately a group of passers-by stopped to take it in. Two satisfying days' work (and the three weeks' preparation) was rounded off by the entire team carousing at the Grove Tavern.

A mix-up by the printers of the panels meant that we had an extra set of displays. The Salvation Army kindly offered their hoarding opposite Denmark Hill station and their contractors, McLaren, obliged with its installation.

These two installations are the latest in the Camberwell Mural Programme. They follow installations on Camberwell New Road, Windsor Walk, Butterfly Walk and the Piano Factory on Peckham Road. A mural on the



Passers by discover the new hoarding at Benhill Road/Church Street

bridge at Wyndham Road is currently being designed with the help of local children, worshippers and residents.

One of the objectives of the programme, apart from adding colour and interest, is to signpost visitors to Camberwell's centre and shops and eventually to mark the entrances to Camberwell. Not all mural ideas come to fruition. A proposed scheme for Chadwick Road was supported by many, but a small minority came forward with strongly held objections and the bridge remains unadorned.

In the fullness of time, we have location ideas for Walworth Rd, Coldharbour Lane and Denmark Hill. So watch these spaces!

Volunteers unite to improve our environment

Ben Moxham, Sophy Tayler and Elaine Clarke describe the work of the Camberwell Trees & Green Spaces Group



Members of the 23rd Camberwell Scout Group primed for action picking litter on Camberwell Green



Lambeth Friends of the Earth lending a helping hand to 'glam up the Green'



Fruits of hard labour: bramble bashing at Thorlands

The Camberwell Trees & Green Spaces Group was formed earlier this year to focus on practical green initiatives in the area. It reports both to the Camberwell Society and SE5 Forum for Camberwell.

One of our first projects was to map the green spaces in the area. We discovered there are around 40 parks, council estate open spaces, pocket spaces, open spaces and other green spaces across Camberwell – a truly impressive number.

We next surveyed around 20 representatives of different Friends groups and Tenants & Residents Associations to help shape the priorities of our group. This exercise led us to three clear priorities:

- improve communication with Southwark Council and large companies in the area on trees and green spaces issues;
- ensure trees and green spaces are properly considered in the planning process of major development projects in the area;
- implement a new volunteering programme for ad hoc litter picking and gardening projects brought forward by groups such as the friends.

We also want to highlight the remarkable trees that we have in SE5 and are working on a series of tree walks. These are featured on the Camberwell Society's website.

Our new volunteering programme has made a good start. We have been running events every six to eight weeks, supported by Idverde, one of Southwark Council's contractors. So far, we have organised two

litter picking campaigns on Camberwell Green. The second, in June, included the local 23rd Camberwell Scout Group – and an enthusiastic group of litter pickers organised by Lambeth Friends of the Earth – alongside Friends of Camberwell Green and a large number of local volunteers. Throughout the summer, we have been handing out sunflower seeds to schools and to local residents via the SE5 Forum stand on Camberwell Green every Saturday morning.

We also organised a 'bramble, buddleia and bindweed bashing' event at Thorlands (off Denmark Road), with 10 volunteers clearing a patch of derelict garden in order to help the Thorlands friends team achieve their goal of creating a new relaxation area for local residents.

The scouts will be at work again shortly with a weeding and clearing event in St Giles Churchyard in October. We are also trying a more street-focused event, with a planting campaign on Camberwell Grove and its surroundings.

We think we are ready to move on from this year's trial phase to a regular programme of events running between March and October 2022. We are looking for a volunteer to help us plan and coordinate this. Could this be you? For anyone interested, please contact us at: greenspaces@camberwellsociety.org.uk

For more information about the Camberwell Trees and Green Spaces Group, including seeing results of our survey of local green spaces and friends groups, please visit the Environment section of the Camberwell Society website.

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A short walk for our daily bread

Covid has not deterred bakers, inspired by all the world, opening shop in Camberwell.

Robert Wainwright samples half a dozen



Sophocles Bakery

It's mid-morning on Camberwell Church Street. Autumn is calling, brief sprays of sunshine lighting the pavement between the rolling, gathering grey. Inside **Sophocles Bakery** at No.24 there is another gathering as a group of men avoid the rain, take their seats and order coffee and pastries, already nattering amongst themselves about this and that.

It will happen throughout the day, the comings and goings like the clouds above, conversations ebbing and flowing against a backdrop of a busy bakery filled with delicious smells. It is one of the delights of a place like Sophocles, which opened almost 25 years ago, that it is not just a business but a meeting place and focal point of the high street.

The one constant is George, the co-owner who wanders between his chatting regulars and lending a hand behind the counter when the lunchtime crowd lines up. It is a no-nonsense affair, with customers ordering from giant blackboards scrawled with a range of rolls and sandwiches, samosas, tortillas, ciabatta, focaccia, Jamaican patties and even Cornish pasties.

Shelves of bread of all shapes and sizes line the walls and beneath is a brightly-lit counter filled with cakes and pies including sweet Greek pastries like Kataifi, the vermicelli-like almond and walnut pastry, and a custard pie called Galaktoboureko. Both champion the business's cultural heritage.

Like Camberwell itself, a tour of our bakeries is a multi-cultural experience, judging by the backgrounds of the owners. There are at least half a dozen, old and new, as well as locally-made goods from companies such as Blackbird and Little Bread Pedlar sold at a string of cafes lining the main streets.

When Maria and Andrey opened **Irenes** at 31-33a Denmark Hill toward the end of July, a lot of locals would have breathed a sigh of relief. Not only was there a new, bright independent business in the high street but



Sanchez

a replacement had been found to fill the former site of Camberwell's beloved flower shop, Pesh.

In fact, it was the vibe of the premises that initially attracted the wife and husband team who had been looking for the right building as much as the right community to start their first business, which combines baking with wine and hospitality, since arriving in the UK seven years ago from Kazakhstan and Russia respectively.

Since then they have begun to get a feel for Camberwell, a place they feel is coming alive with a blend of great history and architecture and a growth in population and refreshed commerce.

"It seems that something new is opening almost every week," says Maria above the sound of the coffee machine whirring into action. It's a weekday afternoon and trade is solid if not brisk, the shelves of bread and countertop of pastries disappearing quickly.

"Things are changing but it's not too busy yet. We feel we have found a niche here and opened at the right time and the right place."

The baking is done onsite each day, fillings included, with three bakers currently employed. There are French and Danish pastries and Pugliese focaccias as well as an array of sourdough breads from walnut loaves to spelt and tartine. "We don't have a cuisine theme as such," Maria says. "The recipes come from all over. My aim is simply to concentrate on high quality, as I see it."

Their opening was delayed by Covid, taking six months, but it's already clear that the bakery is popular; perhaps even more-so when Maria and Andrey begin opening in the evenings as a wine bar. The shelves at the back of the bakery are lined with a variety of wines - French, Italian and Spanish in the main - old world wines, as Maria says, with an accent on the biodynamic and natural produce.

In 1995 when Nilan and Vicki Bennett took the financial plunge and decided to open a bakery in Camberwell they wondered what to name the business. Nilan had worked in several bakeries across London, including one that made “English” bread and another that made Caribbean loaves so he decided to combine the two cultures.

Mixed Blessings, he decided, would make both kinds of bread and celebrate the unity of food in a diverse neighbourhood: “Everybody can be united in food. There are no recriminations,” recalled daughter Natalie who was a teenager when the bakery opened its doors at 12-14 Camberwell Road and now manages the family business.

“There were very few shops along this stretch of Camberwell Road because everyone did their food shopping at the markets,” Natalie said about the early days. But that soon changed and customers began flocking to the shop to get fresh baked bread each day.

A bakery in Tooting followed soon afterwards and a quarter of a century later the base of loyal customers remains at both shops, many happy to express their approval in online reviews: “Best bakery in the south hands down,” writes one long-standing customer. “Been going there since I was a boy,” writes another. Others are new converts: “First time going to this bakery. The bread was delicious! Fresh and warm. The patties were flavoursome with flaky pastry.”

Natalie laughs when I ask about the menu: “The English bread doesn’t sell that well so we concentrate mainly doing Caribbean baking now, like corn bread and Caribbean hard dough which is sweet like a brioche but dense and moist, like eating a deep-fried dumpling.”

Then there are the traditional patties filled with beef, lamb or jerk chicken, as well as saltfish or mackerel. There is a range of spiced buns and bulla cake, rich with molasses, ginger and nutmeg, as well as cakes – coconut, carrot and ginger among them – washed down with a Caribbean juice or creamy Guinness Punch, maybe fish tea or even something called Jamaican Cow Foot soup.

The Bread of Life, an unmissable mustard yellow building at 19 Coldharbour Lane, is another well-established West Indian bakery that delights its customers with Jamaican Coco Bread as well as traditional patties filled with lamb and beef and a range of cakes that sit alongside favourites like plantain, jerk chicken, curried goat, salt fish and okra. It is a local favourite for many of the bus drivers from the nearby depot eating ahead of their shifts, particularly servings of freshly baked dumpling served with oat or cornmeal porridge.

Tucked away on Daneville Road opposite the old GX



Mixed Blessings Bakery

Art Gallery you might spot a large yellow, blue and red striped flag hanging from a shopfront. **Sanchez** is a Colombian bakery which bravely opened in January in the dark days of the second Covid lockdown.

Thankfully, the decision was a good one. If you can squeeze inside, past the line of customers, you will be confronted by a brightly lit glass front counter filled with variously shaped patties alongside cling-wrapped loaves and shelves of colourful sweet pastries.

Behind the counter, pumping out coffee when he is not explaining the range of baked goods to customers is Christian Sanchez. He owns the shop with his wife, Joanna, who explained the decision-making: “Christian had worked in a bakery at Elephant and Castle for the past eight years and became very well known. He was told that Camberwell had a large Latin American community and thought it might be an opportunity. The pandemic made the choice difficult but we thought if we don’t do it now, then when?”

The couple have not looked back with their range of Colombian favourites like Hawaiian bread and Almojabana (cheese bread) and patties like empanades, filled with beef or chicken and an onion mix then deep fried which, excuse the pun, are going like hotcakes: “We were doing 200 a day; now we’re selling 700 a day,” said Joanna. Another favourite are saltenas, a Bolivian pattie filled with meat and a sweet, spicy juice containing olives and raisins.

“We came here for the Latin community but the nice thing is that most of our customers are English, Indian, Jamaicans and Filipinos,” said Joanna. “It’s been a very welcoming beginning.”

Danielle Moylan led an exciting life in the years before she arrived in London. Work stints in Iran and Afghanistan and Lebanon where she wrote for the New York Times, Newsweek among other publications also

(continued on page 12)



Irene's

(continued from page 11)

led to working for a time in Beirut's only sour dough bakery where she fell in love with the ancient spices and traditions of bread-making.

Australian-born Danielle hopes to bring some of these ideas to what she has tentatively called the **Grove Lane Deli and Bakehouse** which was still being renovated when we spoke because supply chain problems caused by Brexit has delayed her opening.

In the meantime, she has been happily fielding questions

from eager residents knocking at her window, eager to know her plans for the site of the former Hill Bakery which closed earlier this year.

"I'd been looking for the right place since we arrived in London because I want to do something community-driven, and I get that feel from Camberwell. I'm listening to all the local feedback which is very welcome because my aim is to produce things that are simple and honest. After all, there is nothing like the joy of a really good sandwich."

Camberwell's Colomba wins Paralympic medal

Jonathan Hunt on the Camberwell sports star



Columba Blango Jnr, winner of the bronze medal in the 400 metres T20 race for the GB team in the recent Paralympics, overcame severe handicaps to collect his medal. He was just a tenth of a second behind the winners. In June, prior to Japan, he broke the European record to win gold in the European Para athletics championship in Poland. He is the current European record holder and European champion in the 400 metres T20.

His performance, a personal best after winning the European championships in June, was a thrilling finish to the event near the end of the Tokyo games. It was impossible to separate the final four runners by eye and required a photo finish to decide his record finish of 47.81 seconds.

"I was so pleased to win a medal," he says. "It was very different to

anything I had done before and a great start. But I look forward to getting better and even taking the gold in three years' time," says the 28-year-old.

At home in Grove Lane, Camberwell, his family was excited at his achievement. His father, also called Columba and also once also an international athlete says: "Given that was only his second international competition, he was fantastic."

He was born to mother Frances, a nurse, with blood clots on the brain, and was six before he could talk. But once at school, he made great progress. He went to Sacred Heart secondary school, Christ the King Sixth Form College in Lewisham, and later to Greenwich University where he obtained a degree in tourism management.

He works part time for Primark in its Peckham store. His brother

Christian is in the Navy, and his sister Martha, a final year student nurse, has just given birth to his first niece.

Columba Blango senior was an accomplished athlete in his native Sierra Leone, so much so that he represented his country in the decathlon at the 1980 Olympics in Moscow. For a first timer he finished well, although not among the medals in a competitive field. But he made a lifelong friend in Daley Thompson, a sporting legend. So much so Thompson had to lend him his pole vault pole as Columba did not have one.

He came to London to teach, where former UK high commissioner to Sierra Leone Derek Partridge encouraged Columba to join him on Southwark Council as a Liberal Democrat. In 2002, he became the first-ever African-born mayor of the London Borough of Southwark.

Nor trundle any hoop

Ray Wells discovers the origins of the Camberwell New Road

The New Road to Camberwell came into being as a result of an Act of Parliament of 1818. The documents refer to this in the laborious, archaic, official language of the time as the 76th Local Act of the 56th year of George III.

Anyway, I decided to check. It proved remarkably easy - I simply typed Camberwell New into the Parliamentary archives on-line search engine, and one of the 36 results was quite clearly, if not concisely, what I was looking for:

An "Act to continue the term, and to amend, alter and enlarge the powers of an Act" was passed six years later, in the 42nd year of George III's reign, repealing an Act of the 25th year of "his said present Majesty", for repairing roads from Stone's End in Blackman Street, Southwark, in the County of Surrey...and for making a New Road from Kennington Lane to Camberwell Green in the said County of Surrey. - 28 May 1818.

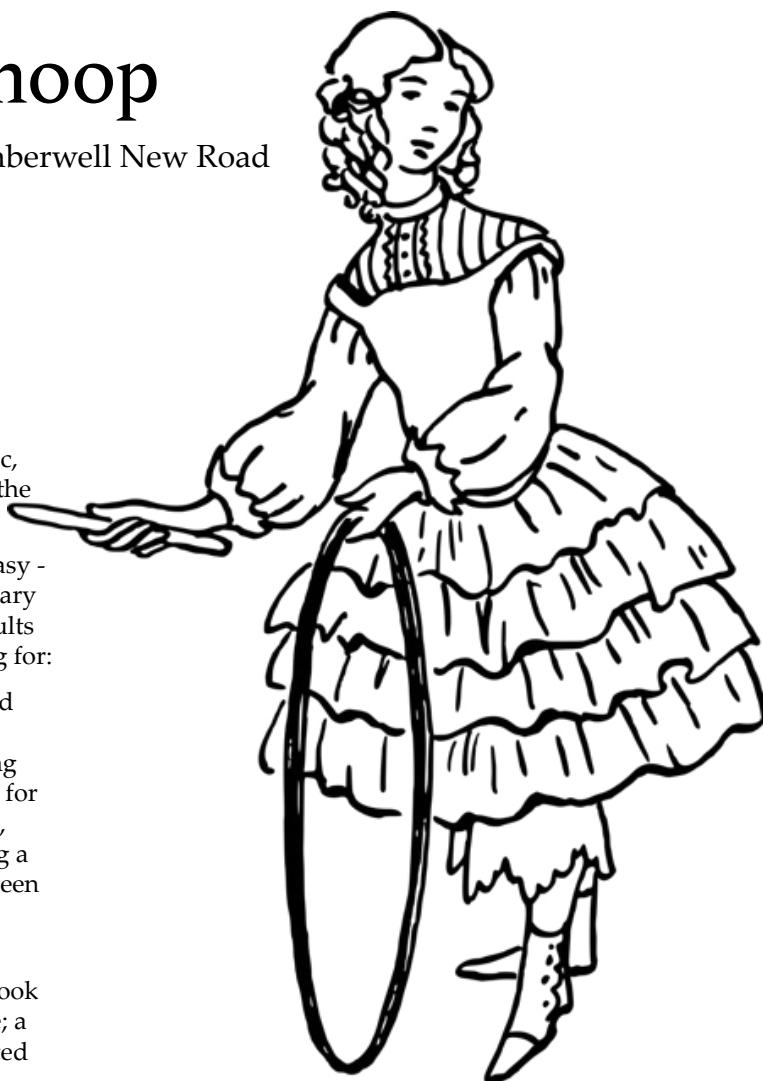
Having paid a modest fee to the House of Lords, I received a scanned copy of the Act and a reference book containing a hand-drawn plan of the proposed route; a tabulation of the owners and occupiers of each affected property and of which of these persons assented, dissented or were neutral to the proposal; and a cost estimate.

The map shows the proposed new road to commence at what is now the junction of Harleyford Road and the Vauxhall gyratory, follow the current course of Harleyford Road around what became the Oval cricket ground, and then run in a straight line to Camberwell Green.

The estimated cost was £12,000; £6,500 to purchase the land, houses, a further £4,500 for forming the road, £350 for arching over the aqueduct of the South London Water Works, making the necessary bridgeways and drains and £650 contingency. The plan and the list of affected properties make occasional reference to buildings, the waterworks and the Nursery Ground known as The Oval (not yet for playing cricket). But they mostly indicate how rural this area was at the time. And tell you something about the prevailing social conditions and mores.

For example, part of a grass field that was occupied by Jemima Watts was owned by HRH the Prince Regent, as Duke of Cornwall, and Lord of the Manor of Kennington.

Another part of a grass field occupied by Robert Martin was owned by His Grace the Archbishop of Canterbury; and a small part of an arable field, also occupied by Robert Martin, was owned by Sir William Smyth Bart. and the Revd. Edward Smyth, as "Committee for Thomas Smyth Esq. a Lunatic".



Every owner assented to the proposal, and therefore also assented to receiving their share of the £6,500. Most of the occupiers also agreed, although what pressures may have been applied, I cannot say.

And so, to the Act itself: On and on it runs, page after page, making the title itself appear a wondrous work of brevity. It is now online (<https://digitalarchive.parliament.uk/File/Index/93d7908f-c406-4ae7-8f53-c17762b1acc2>) so you can read about the system of tolls, how these may be collected, who is exempt (an eclectic set, including the royal family, soldiers on the march, and vagrants, but only if travelling in an official vagrant carriage).

Also covered are the penalties for being overweight, how toll disputes are to be settled, the keeping of records and accounts, and how the collected monies are to be used. And "the powers to take land for the purpose of the road, and about how the (never completed) Grand Surrey Canal would be bridged".

But what about the hoop? Like all legislation, as well as establishing what must be done, and what may be done, it also sets out what must not be done.

"No Person or Persons shall ... make or assist in making any Fire or shall set fire to or let off or throw any Squib, Rocket, Serpent, or Firework whatsoever, or wantonly fire any Gun or Pistol, or play at Football, or fly any kite, or trundle any Hoop..."

Camberwell New Road was, I therefore deduce, one of the very first LTNs - a Low Trundling Neighbourhood.

The Walworth Wobble

Get discombobulated without going near Bermondsey! A charming way to get to know your drinking buddies, at the end you will probably need their support! Drink responsibly, no-one left behind.

This is a guide to the alternative beer mile (or two). You can Wobble Forwards (starting at Orbit, as

this guide is written) or Wobble Backwards, starting at Gipsy Hill, or simply Wobble in the Middle. All the breweries have been kind enough to offer a **10% discount on beers to readers of the Camberwell Quarterly**, valid till the end of March, 2022. So take the coupons printed below with you. If you are feeling bold, you can stand in middle of the taproom and announce you are Wobbling; if you are

feeling timid, simply offer the coupon when you order your drinks.

If you stay the course, you will have visited nine breweries. It might be sensible to get street food at Brixton on the way to soak up some alcohol. There's a good selection, as spicy as you like.

Please check the brewery websites for opening times before setting off.



Camberwell to Orbit, 12 / 68 / 148 / 171 / 176 or 468 bus to Stop M, Westmoreland Rd, walk approx. 100m north then left into Fielding St, the taproom is 100m on your left, under the railway arch, 233 Fielding St, London SE17 3HJ.

Orbit to Clarkshaws, walk back to Walworth Rd, cross and turn left, stop J, 35 or 45 bus to Loughborough Junction station, walk 150m south west, cross diagonally at the main lights, north up Loughborough Rd a short way and it's on your left under the railway arch, Arch 497 Ridgway Rd, London SW9 7AH.

Friendship Adventure to Brixton Brewery, 10-minute walk, continue west along Coldharbour Lane to the lights, cross and take the second right (Gresham Road) walk under the railway bridge and turn first left into Brixton Station Road, Arch 548, Brixton Station Road, London SW9 8PF.

Brixton Brewery to Dogs Grandad Brewery, a bottom shuffle along the benches! Arch 550, Brixton Station Road, London, England, SW9 8PF.

Dogs Grandad to London Beer Lab, approx. 10 min walk, continue west along Brixton Rd with the arches on your left toward Brixton Rd, good moment to take on sustenance at the street food market, when replete cross Brixton Rd and pass down Dorrell Place (left of M&S), at the end turn left into Nursery Rd, cross and then go right alongside the railway arches, Arch 41 Nursery Road, Brixton, SW9 8BP.

London Beer Lab to Canopy Brewery, walk back to Brixton Rd, cross and walk 50m down

Atlantic Rd to stop L at Brixton Station, #322 bus to Herne Hill, stop F - Brockwell Park, walk 20m south and left into the estate, left again at the end past the workshops, at the end, Arch 1127, Bath Factory Estate, London SE24 9AJ.

Canopy to Bullfinch, a short walk, walk back to the main road (Norwood Rd) and turn left toward Tulse Hill. Cross over Croxted Rd and continue to Rosendale Road. Turn left and it is on your left at the railway bridge, Rosendale Rd, Norwood, London SE24 9EH.

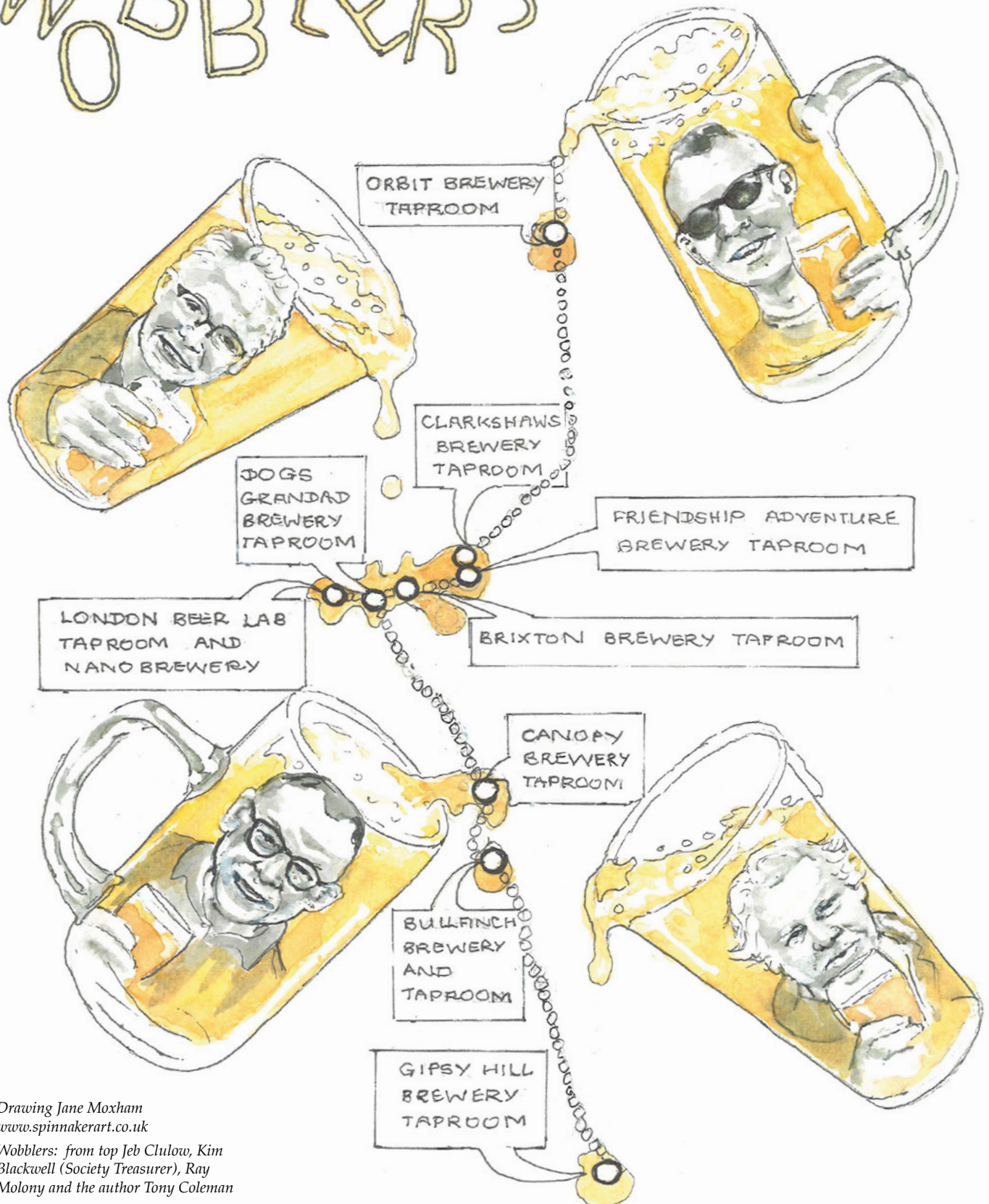
Bullfinch Brewery to Gipsy Hill Brewery, continue along Rosendale Rd and take first left, Guernsey Grove. Walk to the end, turn left and cross to bus stop K, #3 bus nine stops to Gipsy Hill (Stop D) then walk on south easterly to the roundabout and navigate the crossings so that you are standing in front of the Paxton pub (a good venue for another story), walk down Paxton Place to the left of the pub as you look at it, the road winds a bit then right at the end into Hamilton Road, then a further 70m and it's on the left. Unit 5, 160 Hamilton Rd, London SE27 9SF.

Congratulations! If you are still standing!!

You have reached the end of the Walworth Wobble and now all you have to do is to Wobble home. You may find that this makes you thirsty in which case there are some fine craft beer specialist pubs in Camberwell such as *The Stormbird* and *The Pigeon*. Perhaps in the fullness of time we will be able to add a Camberwell brewery to the Wobble and do it all over again!



WALWORTH
WOBBLEERS



Drawing Jane Moxham
www.spinnakerart.co.uk

Wobblers: from top Jeb Clulow, Kim Blackwell (Society Treasurer), Ray Molony and the author Tony Coleman

Mapother landscaping

Elizabeth Borowiecka on proposed landscaping for the new development

The South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust (SLAM) and the F3 Construct Development Co have applied for permission to demolish Mapother House, the Michael Rutter Centre and the Professorial Building, built for medical purposes in the early 20th century, and replace them with three residential

blocks fronting De Crespigny Park. (Southwark council application Number 20/AP/2768) SLAM has now added further information on the landscaping for the De Crespigny Park development.

This is due to go to the Planning Committee shortly. The Camberwell Society had welcomed the

applicant's intention of creating a north-south pedestrian link from De Crespigny Park to Windsor Walk and the new Denmark Hill Station entrance. It would link up with an east-west link

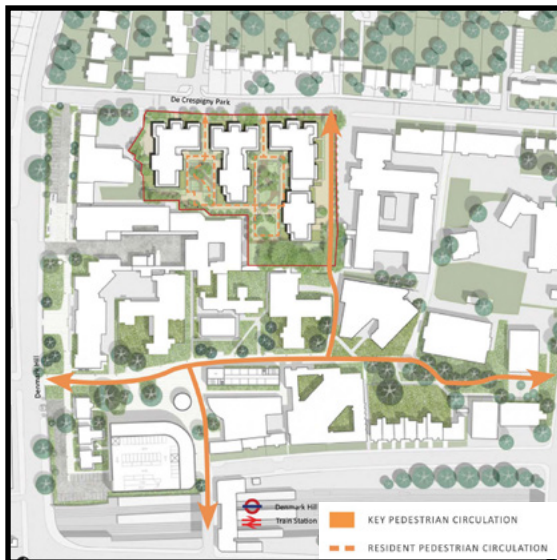
between Denmark Hill and Grove Lane.

The Society welcomes the importance that landscaping has been given in the development. The plans go above the minimum planning requirements for quantity and quality of green elements in a new development, the Greening Factor explained in the article below.

The overall layout plan (left) shows landscaping for areas dedicated to communal use for the residents, the woodland grove to the south and a private garden for the day nursery.

The woodland grove will have boardwalks to protect the roots of the existing trees. The communal gardens have trees, walkways and seating for the use of residents. And the garden nursery has planting and play equipment.

The Society has reservations about some aspects of the development as a whole, but commends the landscape planning.



How to comment on planning applications

Elizabeth Borowiecka offers a plain person's guide

All too often these days, we Camberwell residents find something new being planned for our street or neighbourhood. We may be aware that the right to comment is an important feature of civic life, but how do we go about it?

The basic requirement for a successful application is good quality design and respect for existing buildings and their occupants. More specific requirements are to be found in the following documents that will help frame the arguments:

The London Plan, which came into force in March 2021, will be supported by detailed planning guidance initiatives.

One of these is the Urban Greening Factor, issued as a draft for

consultation in September 2021.

This aims to bring an appreciation of green issues to proposed developments in London boroughs: green routes that promote active travel; sustainable drainage to combat flooding; biodiversity such as green roofs; publicly accessible open space; and tree planting.

Transport for London has devised the PTAL or Public Transport Accessibility Level, to assess the suitability of an area for new residential development in terms of the availability of public transport.

Each location is scored a rating from 0 - 6b where 0 represents the least accessible locations and 6b is a town centre location with excellent transport links.

Lambeth's Local Plan was adopted

on 22 September 2021 setting out the strategic policies and objectives for the development of Lambeth 2020 - 2035.

The New Southwark Plan dated January 2020 sets out policies and objectives for development in the Borough up to 2033 and is in the final stages of scrutiny before adoption.

In 2011 Southwark produced "Residential Design Standards", a document which contains detailed practical guidance for planning applicants and those who wish to comment on planning applications.

So, it's time to enter the fray...

The Society's planning sub committee meets regularly and reviews SE5 planning applications. Comments are available on www.camberwellsociety.org/planning.

Hard Times - with some fun times too

Jonathan Hunt draws on *Rare Doings in Camberwell* for this walk-through Camberwell history, looking at music halls and other entertaining venues

Camberwell became well-known for its music halls in the 19th century - and since. Many took place in the back hall of pubs, arising from the last of the old tavern 'free and easies', where people could get up and do turns, usually songs or comedy acts.

Our journey starts at the **People's Palace of Varieties**, or **Lovejoy's**, at the Rosemary Branch, Southampton Way, which today is close to the southern boundary of Burgess Park.

Entertainment was held in "a long, shabby room adjoining the tavern, furnished with chairs and tables, and illuminated with flaming gas brackets. At one end a stage with footlights was screened with blue painted glass. A Chairman sat in front of the stage facing the audience. He wore the most deplorable evening dress. Another gent sat at the piano on the stage".

"Everyone seemed to be drinking and talking while a man in shirt sleeves was dashing about with a tray loaded with glasses of beer. Each turn was announced by the Chair. He rapped with his hammer both to attract attention and to assist applause. A tall gent sang a song about his trouble and strife - as he called his wife."

The Rosemary Branch was demolished in 1971. The Castle on Camberwell Road bears the name of an earlier pub that housed the **Bijou Palace of Varieties** or **Godfrey's Castle Music Hall** from 1875 to 1889.

The Father Redcap pub, on the north side of Camberwell Green, originally held a music hall built in 1853. On 2 December 1867, the audience could enjoy "the great W J Collins, a banjoist from America; a Shakespearean sketch; Professor Davis in the renowned rope trick; and Mr Mucus Hellmore in his great delineation of Mephistopheles".

It was a gay bar in the 1970s until 1997, where cross-dressed male singers in glittering costumes and dresses paraded along the wonderful wooden Victorian bar. It later became Red Star, a party venue, holding many gigs including benefits for various worthy causes. And is now Planet Nollywood nightclub and bar.

We now cross the Green to the west side of Denmark Hill on the corner of Orpheus Street where in 1896, the Dan Leno company opened the **Oriental Palace of Varieties**, which was soon replaced with a new theatre, with a capacity of 1,553, in 1899, named the **Camberwell Palace**. Famous old timers who appeared here included Marie Lloyd, Harry Lauder, Nellie Wallace, and Harry Tate.

By 1912, the theatre was showing films as a part of the programme; it became an ABC cinema as The Palace Cinema in 1932. Later it reverted to a variety theatre in 1943 but closed on 28 April 1956 and was demolished. (The 1957 film *The Smallest Show on Earth*, the story of a family-run suburban cinema, was probably based on the Palace).

Nearby at the corner of Denmark Hill and Coldharbour Lane on the site of modern day Nando's was the **Metropole Theatre and Opera House**, opened in 1894, which held transfers of West End shows: "The theatre had a very ornate interior with private boxes, stalls, dress circle, balcony and gallery. Ladies who came in their fashionable hats were respectfully informed that hats and bonnets were not allowed in the stalls or first two rows of the dress circle."

No wonder Camberwell starred in a 1915 music hall song, *Chalk Farm to Camberwell Green* by Lionel Morrekton, about a young lady who went for a ride on the top of a bus with "a fellow, a regular swell", on what is still the No. 68 bus route.

“*Chalk Farm to Camberwell Green*
All on a summer's day
Up we climbed on the motor bus
And we started right away
When we got to the end of the ride
He asked me to go for a walk!
But I wasn't Camberwell Green
By a very long chalk!

The replacement of live theatre and music by cinema was also reflected locally: the Metropole was renamed the **Empire** in 1906. It was demolished to build an Odeon cinema in 1939; itself closed in 1975. It became Dickie Dirt's jeans emporium. Closing in the late 1970s, it was squatted in August 1984 (see CQ 209 p17) and demolished in 1993.

Besides these, on Denmark Hill, now occupied by the Co-op, stood the **Golden Domes**, (later called the Rex and then the Essoldo). Across the road, on the site of the Post Office, was the **Bijou**, known locally as the Bye Joe. **The Coronet**, a small cinema, was based in Wells Way.

Breaking out of the box

Marie Staunton talks to Suzann McLean, Theatre Peckham's Artistic Director and CEO about her life and work

"Don't box yourself in. Don't limit yourself," Suzann McLean tells her young performers. It is a lesson she learnt in her first year at the Italia Conti School. As the one black student in her year, she had put herself forward for the smallest role in the drama school's production of *Antigone*. She was shocked when the director chose her to play *Antigone*. "She said that being a black female was not a barrier to playing the lead in this Greek play. Acting is about the human condition. Can you connect with this human story of a woman fighting for her brother?" She could. She breathed new life into the role.

Suzann comes from Leytonstone, the only one in her family to go into the creative industry, (though her father had actor friends from his native Trinidad). She decided to try acting after seeing children perform in the local panto. She is enthusiastic about this year's Christmas Show at Theatre Peckham, *The Wonderful*, a modern day take on *The Wizard of Oz*, where the Scarecrow is a mannequin, the Tin Woodman is a Cyborg, and the Lion is the Mane Man. Members of the Theatre Peckham Academy (ages nine to 16) are the stars of the show alongside six professional actors and a puppeteer for Tik Tok the dog.

Suzann pivots between careers as actor, director, and acting coach. Acting highlights include playing Isabella in *Measure for Measure* at the National Theatre. A review said she was "touchingly anguished and refreshingly unpriggish". Her TV shows include *Casualty* and *Dr Who*. She won the British Arrows Award for best performance for the BUPA commercial "For owning the dancefloor". (Worth a watch <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=KcG0tyRetcc>)

In 2004, she founded Young and Talented, "a theatre school in Bethnal Green providing opportunities for young people from all socio-economic backgrounds, religions, and ethnicities". She juggled both careers. "I would be acting on tour in the regions and on Saturday morning, while the rest of the cast were sleeping, I would travel to London, run the Saturday School then get back in time for the evening performance."

In 2012 Suzann entered eight pupils for a CBBC talent show, *Sports Relief does Glee Club*, for 11- to 15-year-olds. The group, The Real Deal, saw themselves as representing the true spirit of East London; whilst other groups arrived in posh cars with costumes in suit bags, they allowed their pure talent and infectious enthusiasm to win the hearts of the judges. "I love the vocals; they've got buckets of attitude in the right way." They went on to perform for the Olympic Torch Relay, where Suzann was a torchbearer.



Drawing Jane Moxham www.spinnakerart.co.uk

When founder Teresa Early M.B.E. stood down as Artistic Director in 2018 after 33 years, the Theatre Peckham Board appointed Suzann as her successor. They were convinced by her passion for theatre as an "inclusive space that inspires creativity and raises ambition." Suzann says "Young people are still limiting themselves. But, in teaching them the power of their authentic self, we give some of the most disenfranchised and marginalized young people positive creative avenues for expression."

"At Theatre Peckham young people understand their cultural value and the benefits of collaborating as a group. They look out for each other. If one of the team is absent, if someone is having difficulties at school or home, they notice. This atmosphere of respect helps young people to be the champions of their own voice and to contribute to the skills they learn in their sessions. Many are now working in technical and performing roles in theatre and film. Every student will not become an actor, but every student develops the confidence to speak in front of others".

Not even the COVID-19 pandemic could limit the mission of Theatre Peckham. They operated throughout, delivering classes online, posting activity packs out to Academy children and supporting the young actors of the Rep Company with weekly check-ins for personal growth.

So now, is Suzann an executive or a creative? "My belief," she says, "Is that creativity is the single most important leadership skill in the world."

Tickets for *The Wonderful* and Theatre Peckham's Christmas raffle are available at <https://www.theatrepeckham.co.uk>. See the advertisement opposite.

Camberwell Christmas farmers and arts market 27 November

This year the Farmers Market will have a special pre-Christmas session on 27 November 10am to 4pm. With dozens of stalls from local artists and makers.

Pop up art fair

Bethlem Gallery's annual open exhibition showcases work by over 80 artists connected to South London and Maudsley NHS Foundation Trust. Every year offers a stunning variety of paintings, prints, drawings, ceramics, photographs, textiles, and sculpture for sale at affordable prices. Bethlem Art Fair will pop-up at ORTUS on the Maudsley Hospital site on 30 November and 1 December. Visit bethlemgallery.org for more details.

Book now for your Christmas panto *The Wonderful* at Theatre Peckham 221 Havil Street SE5 from 1st - 22 December 2021.

"A modern day take on *The Wizard of Oz* by Frank L Baum" according to the theatre's artistic director Suzann Mc Lean (see opposite) it will be performed by young people from Theatre Peckham Academy supported by six professional actors and a puppeteer. And full of the usual Theatre Peckham energy, fun and dance.

Book now 020 7708 5401
or email theatre@theatrepeckham.co.uk



Please join us for the 2021 Camberwell Society Xmas Party on Wednesday 8 December from 7.30.

Venue: St Giles' Church, Camberwell Church Street, SE5 8RB.

Entry £10, includes first drink, canapes and entertainment.

The Mince Pie Competition returns this year - please bring a small sample of your homemade favourite.

Members and their guests only, new members may join on the door.

As always, any contributions of food and/or raffle prizes are gratefully received.

All proceeds from the evening will go to The Friends of St Giles' Church Clock Restoration Fund.



*Mr Fezziwigs Christmas Party illustration by John Leech for
A Christmas Carol by Charles Dickens*

Illustration from John Leech, CC0, via Wikimedia Commons

Where's Nick?

The opening of the Windsor Walk entrance at Denmark Hill in September 2021.

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. Members are welcome to attend as observers with prior notice to the Secretary. Planning, the environment, traffic and transport, publications and local history form an important part of the Society's work. Members are welcome to involve themselves in areas of interest.

www.camberwellsociety.org.uk

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).

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Membership

Annual membership costs:

£20 (household)

£15 (individual)

£10 (concessionary)

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Email: stauntonmarie@gmail.com

To place an advert please email:
advertising@camberwellsociety.org.uk

[illegible]

A close-up photograph of the 'The Thinker' statue by Auguste Rodin. The image focuses on the upper portion of the sculpture, showing the figure's head and hand. The figure has a deeply furrowed brow, a long, curly beard, and is resting his chin on his hand in a pose of intense contemplation. The lighting is bright, casting strong shadows that emphasize the texture of the stone and the contours of the face and hand. The background is a plain, light-colored wall.

E: info@theprintguru.co.uk