

CAMBERWELL QUARTERLY

No. 212
Summer 2022

The magazine of the Camberwell Society

£1.50
(free to members)







**Feast, feel good, create a right royal
rumpus on the Green**

Whizz under London at 90mph

Get to know northwest Camberwell

Find new views over Ruskin

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From the chair



Summer planting and planning

I am writing this in light drizzle and hope you are reading it in bright sunshine.

There is so much happening in Camberwell as summer approaches, beginning with the cake and flowers of Open Gardens Day on 29 May. I also look forward to meeting you on the Green on 25 June for the Society's guided tree walk and at Denmark Hill Station on 2 July for our Art Trail in English, French and Spanish. Both events are part of the Camberwell Feel Good Festival. In between these events there is also the Ruskin Walk, described on page 5.

Speaking of Denmark Hill, Govia Thameslink has given us permission to garden the south-facing slope on the north side of the station. We will be planting vines and hope one day to produce bottles of Chateau Denmark Hill Station.

I should also highlight the North-West focus in this issue which is the beginning of a campaign by the Quarterly team to bring attention to the many wonderful parts of Camberwell.

There is another issue I should mention. For all its strengths, the Quarterly cannot reflect current planning situations. Instead, the published articles are personal opinions and features. If you are interested in how the Society scrutinises planning applications then refer to our website - camberwellsociety.org.uk - which covers in detail the advice we give to Southwark and Lambeth councils, including links to the relevant applications.

Hearty congratulations to those involved in Camberwell Life and the Love Local campaign. Do support our Camberwell Champion independent businesses, listed opposite. I have changed my habits, much to Amazon's disappointment.



Where are Nick and Camilla? See page 23

From the editor



Fancy creating a Camberwell corgi trail for the Jubilee, singing a song at St Giles' organoke or feasting for a fiver at a local café? Or would you rather help campaign to list and protect our Second World War bunker? There are so many ways to enjoy our vibrant, historic, and quirky area. The Quarterly is here to help you, the reader, get the most out of living in Camberwell and being part of shaping its future.

Camberwell is always changing; from a settlement of 29 households recorded in in the Domesday Book of 1086, to a market garden known for the healing waters of its wells, our Regency villas, Victorian gardens and post-war Blitz estates. The signs of our past are all around as Rosemary Hill points out on page14. We bring you oral history like Kitty Baxter's account of the Blitz on page16 and John Frankland's photo of the 1952 Coronation party page 7.

In the past fifty years the Society has fought off plans to destroy swathes of Camberwell for a ring road, rail link and then a traffic scheme. Planning remains a key issue and the Quarterly's role is to alert you to major new developments and to opportunities to keep beloved buildings (see Jason Leech page 21). We will continue to reflect the personal opinions of many Camberwellians, who are too often frustrated at not being heard as Peter Cooke explains on page 19.

The future is as important as the past, of course, which is why we are beginning a new focus section to highlight each of the six areas of Camberwell that fan out from the Green, in a bid to better understand our community. The first feature is on the North-West, which begins on page 10 where we talk to locals about their colourful past, present concerns and future hopes.

We will interview people who are working to make our lives better, like Professor Mike Edmonds who has transformed diabetes treatment as well as volunteers planning an amazing summer on the Green with the Platinum party and Feel Good Festival page 6. Our new What's On page 23 section will make sure you won't miss out on Camberwell's fun and inspiring events.

Our editorial team of journalists and designers is keen to welcome new volunteers. If you have ideas, skills, illustrations please email us. We would love to hear from you.

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Views of Ruskin

Ben Moxham & Sophy Tayler launch the third Camberwell tree walk

Sixty walkers gathered in Ruskin Park on a chilly Sunday afternoon in March to hear about John Ruskin. First stop was under blossoming almond trees, one of his favourite sights.

Six carefully selected places in Ruskin Park - four remarkable trees and two interesting views - were bathed in a new light. The stops were inspired by different aspects of John Ruskin's ever-relevant thoughts on nature.

Six presenters sourced from across the local community read excerpts of specially commissioned essays written by world experts in Ruskin's writing and thinking, each essay tied to a stop on the walk. Local poet John Turpin was guide and narrator and local artist Charlotte Mann led a tree drawing workshop at the end. One of the stops involved the mulching of a newly planted Austrian Black Pine tree, celebrating Ruskin's love of the Alps.

The event was organised by the Camberwell Trees and Green Spaces Group, a joint initiative of the Camberwell Society and the SE5 Forum for Camberwell.

The park is adjacent to the site of a house on Denmark Hill where Ruskin lived for nearly thirty years. Event goers enjoyed the trees and thought-provoking views. Dramatic bursts of sunshine at opportune moments added to the theatricality of the occasion.

There are plenty of opportunities for those who missed.



John Ruskin's portrait, from Great Authors by W. Dalglish, 1891. Ruskin, art critic and polymath, lived at 163 Denmark Hill from 1843 to 1872 next to Ruskin Park which was opened in 1907.

John Ruethe

the event to experience the Ruskin Tree Walk for themselves. The essays, some illustrated by local artists and others by John Ruskin himself, and a map of the walk's route through Ruskin Park - are available on the Camberwell Society's website under the Events & Activities section.

Free copies of a short film version of the project by leading independent filmmaker Lisa Thomson is available. It was premiered on 21 May at the Cambria Arms. Many thanks to the film's supporters: the Friends of Ruskin Park, the Herne Hill Society, the Campaign to Protect Rural England (London branch), the Guild of St George and the Camberwell Society.

Our hope is to re-run the event in Ruskin Park with a new cast of presenters in March 2023, when the almond trees will blossom again.



Speakers at the Society's AGM (l to r Cllr Dora Dixon-Fyle, Kitty Baxter, Natasha Godfrey, Russell Occamore) represented 200 years of Camberwell history. They proposed new local campaigns: reopening WW2 bunkers, a sculpture park, banning bland new flats and supporting local artists and businesses.



Camberwell Station gets a facelift

Tony Coleman reports on a new mural for the old station

Southwark Council was awarded over £1m by the Mayor of London for the refurbishment of Camberwell Station Road. This work has now entered the detailed design phase working toward installation being complete by May 2023.

We are excited that Southwark has appointed the Camberwell Identity group to steer the process to select an artist and artwork to brighten up the old Camberwell station building itself. Southwark is planning to carry out a facelift of the building, part of which will be to fit art panels to the window reveals. The panels would be printed onto a tough vandal and tag resistant material that Southwark uses elsewhere.

The Society worked hard, as part of the Camberwell Identity group to commission the artwork at the new entrance to Denmark Hill station. The group, which includes Camberwell Arts, SE5 Forum and Southwark Youth Parliament commissioned murals on Camberwell New Road, opposite the Phoenix and by the piano factory. We are again carefully consulting with the community on what people want to see on Camberwell station.

Preliminary themes have been suggested through work done by the identity group and architects JA projects

with local young people, including the pupils of Sacred Heart School. These four potential themes are Transport, Inclusivity, Greening, and Mechanics. To help inform the final selection, Camberwell Identity will be carrying out an engagement exercise with local residents and those working in the area.

Then a formal call for artists will be sent out through Camberwell Arts and the council's own lists. If you wish to be considered then please make sure you are registered as a local artist with Camberwell Arts or email the author, Tony Coleman, at transport@camberwellsociety.org.uk



Sacred Heart pupils explain the station history to locals. Photo: Southwark Council

Whizz under London at 90mph

All change at Farringdon for the Elizabeth Line advises *Tony Coleman*



Queen Elizabeth launching the Elizabeth Line in 2016.
Photo: Getty Images

In preparation, from mid-May, Govia Thameslink Railways is increasing the number of peak time through trains between Denmark Hill and Farringdon from 1 to 4 per hour each way. Sadly though, outside of peak times, you will still have to change at Blackfriars. Hopefully, as passenger numbers build, we can persuade them to add through trains during the off-peak too.

The line will be opened in phases with the first phase (Abbey Wood to Paddington) opening before the end of June. The next phase in autumn 2022 will integrate the high-speed lines to Heathrow, Reading and Shenfield.

This will mean high speed services from Farringdon all the way to Heathrow in zone 6. For the retired folks among us this holds out the promise of a fast holiday getaway, free of charge off-peak on our Freedom Passes.

Mind and body festival on the Green

Make this the summer to heal from the injuries of the past two years *Marie Staunton* reports

When lockdown hit, Shazna Choudhury felt the effects on her and her loved ones: the loneliness felt by many of her elderly neighbours, the absence of social life for her two children, the inaccessibility of health services for her.

Camberwell hosts two world-leading hospitals and a host of independent health professionals and businesses. But Shazna, who grew up in Brixton and moved to Camberwell recently, knew how hard it was, even in normal times, for people to get the care they need.

She had the idea of a Feel Good Festival on the Green. It would help people to find physical and mental help. She joined the Board of SE5 Forum. It supported the idea. King's College Hospital offered volunteers and the Maudsley a creative workshop run by the Bethlem Gallery.

The festival starts on 25 June, and will run each Saturday for six weeks to 30 July, from 10am to 1pm on Camberwell Green as part of the market. Each week has one of six themes: body, art, mind, music, food and exercise.

Mary Paterson and Blinky Bellas, both local to Camberwell, are running immersive art experiences. Margaret's Music and Dr Jen Wills Lamacq are providing music workshops. There will be performances by Camberwell Choir.

The Southeast London Clinical Commissioning Group is offering free health checks. Local charities are joining in. MIND has a session. The Camberwell Society is running tree walks and an art walk with commentary in English, French and Spanish.

Landshark Skating and Nikcarl McKenzie, both part of Burgess Park Skate Group, are offering beginner's roller-skating lessons. There is cycling from Joyriders.

Local business Support and Sustain is running a workshop on posture and giving a free massage on the day. Pure Gym and Easy Gym are giving fitness advice and several local fitness experts are running workshops, from Tai Chi to SOCA dance sessions. For the full programme go to SE5 Forum website.

Face painters and children's specialists have also offered their services. Laura Helen Brown, who is running *My Emotions* activity workshop for children, has just published the book in Ukrainian.

Local dad Pete Lewis, who runs a creative design agency called Curious Ways, is lending a hand, designing all the marketing for the event.

Shazna says, "It is so special to have all these experts provide their skills and services for free to

the community for the Feel Good Festival".

Southwark Council is supporting a community kitchen for people struggling with high fuel bills and the increasing cost of food. Workshops on low-cook and no-cook food, eating healthily on a budget, West African dishes from Spring Community Hub food bank and a pop-up pantry stall from Healthy Living Platform aim to help us manage stretched budgets.

"Post COVID, it is wonderful to see the community coming together through the Feel Good Festival," says Shazna.

BODY	25 JUNE	Face & Henna painting Mini health checks with SE London CCG Posture workshop with Support & Sustain Guided tree walk with Camberwell Society Tai Chi with Wu Style
ART	2 JULY	Face & Henna painting Creative workshop with Izzy Parker and Bethlem Gallery Dessert making with Blinky Bellas Ward building with Mary Paterson Yoga with Oshala Livly Art stall at Denmark Hill station (in English, Spanish & French)
MIND	9 JULY	Face & Henna painting Healthcheck and fitness advice with PureGym MIND charity My Emotions activity book workshop with Laura H Brown Music by Camberwell Choir
MUSIC	16 JULY	Face & Henna painting EasyGym fitness class and free gym passes Music, Child Development and Psychology with Dr Jen Wills Lamacq Margaret's Music - Kids singing workshop with South London Songsters Skating for beginners with Landshark
FOOD	23 JULY	Nutrition & Caribbean fermentation workshop with Jasmine Carbon Eating healthily on a budget, including demo and tastings with Amy Cottrell Nutrition Pop up Pantry and food workshop with Healthy Living Platform Fitness with Buzzyzy Cycling tour for women with Joyriders Nikcarl McKenzie's comic drawing workshop West African feast with Spring Bank
EXERCISE	30 JULY	Mini health checks with SE London CCG Yoga with Matercollie Self-defence with Vegan Special Forces Whole body workout with Alex Naylor Nikcarl McKenzie's kids' skate workshop



Right royal rumpus

Camberwell celebrates the Platinum Jubilee with a communal feast, food workshops, an art market, dog show, music, and corgi trail



Platinum Photo Archive: Children from Mercia House Thorlands estate celebrating Coronation Day 2 June 1953. John Frankland (far left in the cap) was ten years old, a pupil at Caldicott primary school - and very excited. His father had taken him to Hyde Park to see the troops camped out for the parade - Sikhs, Canadian Mounties, the Guards regiments. Mercia House was built in 1949 to house families like John's who had been bombed out in the war. Every balcony of the 31 flats was decorated, everyone wore their best clothes and special paper hats. It was a drizzly day, so the children squeezed into the caretaker's flat for a party. After years of rationing (which did not finally end until 1954) there was jelly and custard and sandwiches and games. Camberwell Arts is creating an online photographic archive of Camberwell over the last 70 years. From street parties to school sports teams, local shops to local legends they would love to share your memories see www.camberwellarts.org.uk.

Platinum Party Camberwell Green Saturday 4 June from 11am to 5pm

Big Feast: enjoy free food donated by local businesses and get to know your neighbours at communal tables.

Community kitchen: learn how to make cheap treats for children and low cook and no cook recipes. Pick up recipe cards and test your knowledge in a fun food quiz. Meet Spring community hub, our local food bank and holiday club and find out how you can help reduce food poverty.

Camberwell Arts Market: 70 stalls will showcase work by local artists, designers and makers.

Camberwell Open Studios: Running since 1994, Camberwell Open Studios gives visitors an insight into the creative practice of Camberwell artists, including ceramics, jewellery-making, illustration, photography, sculpture, and textiles. A chance to become immersed in the world of the artist as Camberwell's creatives open their doors. Studios will be open over the weekends of 4/5 and 11/12 June 2022.



Big Feast



Open Studios



Arts Market



Camberwell Corgi Trail: Garudio Studiage is producing 70 flatpack corgis which will be customised by local residents, schools and community groups to create a Camberwell Corgi trail. Pick up and return your corgi kits at the SE5 Forum community stall Camberwell Green on Saturday 21 or 28 May 10am to 2pm.

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People of the triangle

Robert Wainwright listens to some prominent voices in North West Camberwell

The streets of north-west Camberwell are quiet in early Spring, the pollarded plane trees still bare before the green blaze of summer that will frame the array of Victorian terraces, elegant 1930s estates, brutalist tower blocks and streamlined modern apartment buildings. It is a part of Camberwell that went through tough times, even before German bombs in the World War Two razed hundreds of houses, forcing the evacuation of families while the area fell into disrepair. In the years since there have been enormous challenges presented by social housing and immigration.

Although all seems calm in the morning sunshine, the trains whizzing past overhead are a constant reminder that this is actually a busy place, hidden within the triangle formed by Camberwell New Road, John Ruskin Street and Camberwell Road. The railway arches accommodate many businesses and store houses, the Sir Anish Kapoor art studio is in Farmers Road; the well-established Blue Elephant Theatre flourishes in the area; there are many local shops and restaurants, such as Zeret Ethiopian Kitchen, Mozah Anx wine bar and New Dewaniam Indian.

St Michaels and All Angels Church in Wyndham Road is a buzz of activity. Mid-morning prayers have just finished, the knot of regulars clearing the room to make way for a mums group meeting. The **Reverend Jonathan Roberts** is busy fielding questions from parishioners, but has a few minutes to talk about the area and its challenges.

Diversity, he says, is both its delight and its challenge,

pointing to the huge array of African and West Indian cultures and the arrival in recent times of thousands of Latin Americans. Spanish has become the second language at the Ark All Saints Academy, attached to the church and where he is also chaplain: "Someone worked out that 40 per cent of the Year 7 students are Muslim. It's why I work closely with the mosque and Imam Hakeem Adeniyi Omotoso. We do a lot of stuff together. This week, for example, the school reflections are about Ramadan which I wrote after taking a tutorial with the Imam to make sure what I was going to do and say was right."

What are the main issues for the area? "Where do I start?" he ponders. Eventually he says housing is the most critical issue. He laments the problems caused by the sell-off of public housing to private landlords. Maintenance is a complex issue and it is not uncommon to find several families living in two-bedroom units. The reliability of the huge heating system built in the 1960s to cater for more than one thousand homes is a constant problem: "People go cold during the winter."

When Covid struck, young families were jammed into small apartments for months. When the school, which has 600 pupils, was forced to do online lessons, teachers realised that most households did not have access to computers: "We had to hand out 440 laptops; that was how prevalent digital poverty was amongst our kids." Drugs remain a problem. The school is making inroads with a "tenacious" safeguarding team that has Tavistock-trained counsellors and support from social services and the police.

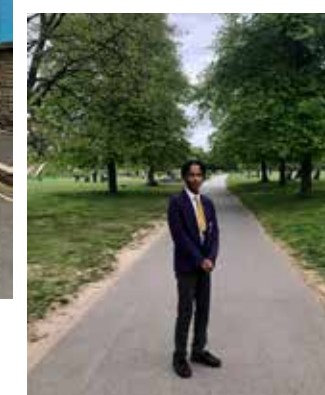
Amie Koneh



Will Reeves



Dreaon McDonald Simms



Imam Omotoso



The Reverend
Jonathan Roberts
and some of his
parishioners



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Despite its problems, there is an undoubted community spirit here: “There is a strong community base with some very vibrant and robust initiatives. I’m very proud of our school which is doing a great job. At the church our mums group goes from strength to strength which is absolutely what’s needed given we have such a young population here.”

At the other end of Wyndham Road, which neatly cuts through the heart of this area, the Camberwell Islamic Centre is in the midst of prayers. It is Ramadan and dozens of men mill around the entrance to the mosque, waiting for a place inside while women chat and set up stalls selling brightly coloured clothes and cloth to raise money for the centre.

Imam Omotoso cuts a spectacular figure in his white robes when he emerges to talk about his future plans. He has been here nine years during which there has been a big growth in numbers. There is an urgent need to expand and improve: “We would like to raise the building by another two or three levels because we don’t have the space, particularly at Ramadan when we have to have two prayer sessions to fit everyone inside.”

And what of his partnership with Rev Roberts? “You make me smile when you talk of my best friend,” he says. “We enjoy a mutual understanding and do a lot of interfaith things together, which is important in a place like Camberwell. He has even been to the mosque with his wife. We sometimes joke that he is the mayor of Camberwell and I am his deputy.”

Amie Konteh has lived in Camberwell most of her life, raising two children and working mainly in the health sector. She has chaired the Goschen Estate TRA in Wyndham Road, helps organise community roller skating events and has recently joined the SE5 Forum “because we need a voice from our area.”

This part of Camberwell has grown and changed in recent years, bringing negatives as well as positives. Amie fears that, as the area becomes more appealing and valuable, working-class residents who have lived in the area for a long time will be forced out: “Camberwell would be poorer for it if the original people who helped make Camberwell such a great place can no longer afford to live here. Change is not necessarily a bad thing, as long as it is achieved with understanding and respect.

Ark Academy and the rear of St Michael and All Angels



Camberwell would be a boring place if everyone here was the same. Its diversity is one of things that makes the area so vibrant.”

There are already great challenges, particularly in the estates where damp and broken pipes are a feature of many older buildings and residents for whom English is a second language or have physical and mental health issues struggle to find help: “It feels as if you are always fighting to get things done. Social housing tenants were promised safer, warmer and dryer homes in the form of new bathrooms and kitchens and yet only kitchens were delivered.

“There is a gap between the desires of councils and developers to build here and the consultation and involvement that needs to happen with the local community. Where is the discussion about the impact on GPs, schools, parking and everything else that goes with living in a community? There isn’t enough social housing to meet demand and yet we have developments sitting around, unfinished for years. They become eyesores and encourage anti-social behaviour.”

This is an important year for 16-year-old **Dreaon McDonald Simms**. Covid has wreaked havoc on young lives. This June he will be sitting his GCSE’s at Ark All Saints Academy and the results are critical to his future. Yet Dreaon has found time to dip his toe into local politics by becoming involved in the Southwark Youth Parliament. He is one of 40 representatives elected by young people through schools and neighbourhoods to help the council develop and implement youth policies.

St Michael and All Angels Church



Dreaon is the deputy leader of the group. It meets weekly, either for training or agenda items, concentrating on issues such as mental health, disability inclusion, Black Lives Matter and knife crime. Other groups are looking at issues such as climate change and justice.

He is personally lobbying for extra lighting to be installed in and around Burgess Park where young people gather frequently: “The issue has been raised a lot with me since I was elected, particularly for females who feel the area is not well-enough lit and feel unsafe. Burgess Park is a terrific place for young people, so proper lighting seems to be an investment worth making.”

He says that from a youth perspective Camberwell also suffers in comparison with neighbouring Brixton and Peckham which have stronger identities. Young people would welcome festival events to showcase the area: “There are clubs and activities here, particularly around the Burgess Park area, but there is room for events where the community gets together as a group. We have facilities, like the new library, but it should be more than just a place to borrow books; it should also have events to draw people together. Public art is another area that could be improved. We are not a bland place.”

Clarendon Terrace lies along Camberwell New Road between Wyndham Road and Councillor Road, a cluster of about a dozen shops which make up what used to be known as the Regency Shopping Parade, built in 1820 with the opening of Camberwell New Road. The strip, which includes the Clarendon Arms hotel, a couple of restaurants, a hairdresser, fashion designer, off-licence, funeral home and a solicitor’s office, looks a touch down-at-heel nowadays, but that could all change in a matter of months, according to resident **Mark Mihajlovic**. He has long been championing the idea of creating commercial satellite areas as part of town centre planning.

But his call for being included in the Local Area Plan, which Southwark Council is currently updating, has fallen on deaf ears: “Camberwell New Road and Farmers Road used to be designated as an Employment Zone, but this designation was withdrawn around the year 2000. It is unclear why, but the designation removal happened. We feel isolated and ignored from the rest of Camberwell

Tafeswork, Zeret Kitchen



and yet it could be such a positive move to promote it as a satellite area, similar to Peckham’s connection to Peckham Rye and Nunhead. It’s a frustrating situation because I believe official recognition could quickly change and improve the area, perhaps in as little as few months.”

Mark says the area has missed out on getting Santander bicycles and commercial parking needs to be addressed to encourage trade: “The current area plan doesn’t include anything west down Camberwell New Road and yet we could provide a natural steppingstone between Camberwell and a place like Vauxhall, with signposted walking trails that would ultimately be of benefit to Camberwell Green.”

Greening is another issue being addressed. Resident **Will Reeves** is heading a push by locals to create a healthy, green walking corridor through the neighbourhood, linking Burgess Park to Myatt’s Field by adding vegetation to the street curb along Wyndham Road. Will, a member of the SE5 Forum, lives on Wyndham Road and says the idea, which he hopes to fund through Southwark Council green grants, will not only add visual improvement to the streetscape but has the capacity to reduce pollution levels at a local level.

“There are a lot of bare flower beds along the street and we’d look at using those planters and trying to encourage residents to do some greening themselves with things like flower boxes. There is also the possibility at some stage for the removal of concrete paving and replacing it with flower beds which would make a huge improvement to the area.

“Wyndham Road, with its Georgian architecture at one end, the mosque and new apartments at the other, with estates and tower blocks in the middle, really symbolises the mix and the way Camberwell is changing.”

Places to go in North West Camberwell

Blue Elephant Theatre is an award winning 50-seat fringe theatre at 59a Bethwin Road. It celebrated its 21st birthday this year. It is known for nurturing new artists, new writing and physical and dance theatre.

Zeret Kitchen at 319 Camberwell Road is well known for its Ethiopian food, and chef Tafeswork’s cookery book.

New Dewanian Camberwell’s Indian restaurant at 225a Camberwell New Road does great lunches for a fiver.

Amie also recommends

Big Town Restaurant 302 Walworth Road grilled seafood meat and vegetarian

Canaan Restaurant 163 Camberwell Road Nigerian specialities served until late

Kaspas King of Deserts 321 Walworth Road

Out and about in north west Camberwell

Look at public art works and interesting buildings on this hour-long walk by *Richard Barton*

Start at the railway bridge on Camberwell New Road. On your left, you will see a painted sign about twelve metres long announcing that you are in Camberwell. It was painted in 2020 by the mural artist Lionel Stanhope, who has painted a dozen or so similar signs on Network Rail property in South East London. For this one, the choice of colours was made by pupils from the Sacred Heart school nearby. Their teachers liked the colours of the Camberwell Beauty, so Lionel beautifully rendered the butterfly on the other side of the bridge. More recently, Lionel has completed a mural on Peckham Road opposite the University of the Arts.

Continue walking towards the Oval for about a quarter of a mile. On both sides of Camberwell New Road you will pass fine terraces built in the twenty or so years after the road was established as a turnpike in 1818. Turnpike trusts were authorised to build, operate and maintain roads for which they charged a toll. The houses were probably built to designs from a pattern book, so look out for small differences in fanlights, doors and windows.

Take the second right and walk along Councillor Street past the Calvary Temple, then turn left onto Redcar Street and proceed to the end. You will see a simple elegant near-white brick church with a separate tower, St Michael and All Angels. The plain brick façade is completed by a simple cross in relief forming the focal point. The church creates an effective contrast with All Saints Academy (to the left) in terms of form and materials. The whole composition was

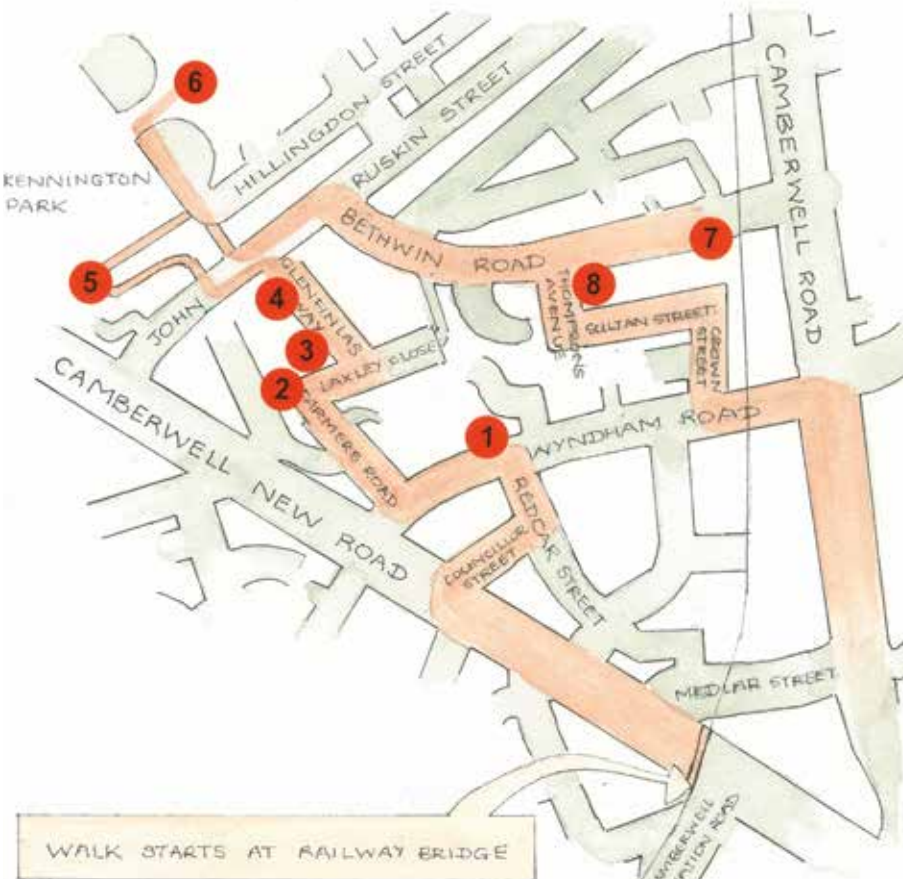
designed by Allford Hall Monaghan Morris and received a RIBA National Award in 2016 (see article by Rosemary Hill and Alison Rae in this issue). The same architects were also responsible for Sunshine House on the north side of Camberwell Church Street.

Turn left and walk along Wyndham Road, then take the next right onto Farmers Road. Opposite Highshore School are the studios of the artist Sir Anish Kapoor. A Turner Prize winner in 1991, he is probably best known in the UK for the Orbit Tower in the Olympic Park. Originally an old dairy, the buildings were transformed in 2015 by Caseyferro Architects. The artist did not want to lose the memory of the original buildings, so the architects have skilfully formed a collage of old and new materials in a very pleasing composition.

Just beyond the studios on the left is a delightful plinth which has been painted with animals, insects and birds by London Mural Company and Accent London. Carry on to the corner and you will see ahead a carved wooden sculpture entitled Dawn Chorus which has been skilfully decorated with examples of local wildlife by the Lambeth-based artist Morganico (see appreciation by Binh Tam and Binh An Penrose-Do in this issue)). He has also carved sculptures in Brockwell and Ruskin parks.

Follow the road around the corner and in a few metres turn left down Glenfinlas Way. At the end of the road continue straight on the footpath. On your left is a long mural. It was painted in 2012 by Positive Arts with involvement from the local community to reflect local wildlife and vegetable growing. For more information go to positivearts.co.uk.

All drawing by Jane Moxham
www.spinmakerart.co.uk



1 St Michael's and All Angel Church



2 Farmers Road Plinth



The children's playground beyond contains a vibrant mural at the back illustrating different sports.

Turn left on John Ruskin Street and in fifty metres you will see on the path down to the garage area, two large bees beautifully painted directly on to concrete. They advertise the presence of Bee Urban. It has been working with the local community on a number of projects including bee keeping in the subterranean area. In 2015, it commissioned Louis Masai to paint the bees. His projects include The Art of Beeing -- a series of murals in the US illustrating endangered species. There is more information at louismasai.com.

Cross over John Ruskin Street and follow the path with railings on your left. Ahead in the distance there is a children's playground in front of a large housing block. Make your way to it either by path or across the grass. The wall at the rear of the playground is painted with murals illustrating local birds and animals, and people doing exercises by unknown artists. With the playground behind you, turn left and walk to the end. On your left, running along the side of Hanworth House, is one of the longest murals in London. It was commissioned in 2019 by Bee Urban. It is arranged around 16 hexagons, presumably representing a bee hive; they have been used to illustrate local history and culture by local community groups. They

3 Dawn Chorus Sculpture



4 Brandon Playground Building



5 Kennington Park Mural



were organised by artists Jack Fawdy-Tatham and Tom Scotcher. For more information see tomscotcher.com and Instagram @jackfawdrytatham.

Turn around and walk across the park towards the tower blocks. You are now in the iconic Brandon Estate built in 1958 designed by the LCC architects Edward Hollamby and Roger Westman. On reaching the road, turn left and take the diagonal path to the right after Cruden House. Almost ahead and up a slight grass mound is a 1961 bronze sculpture by Henry Moore, *Two Piece Reclining Figure No.3*. Moore had a wish to see his sculpture integrated with modern architecture.

Walk back across to the other side of John Ruskin Street, turn left and then right onto Bethwin Road. Continue until you reach Bethwin Adventure Playground. It has some delightfully painted gates and hoardings around it. Double back and turn onto Thompson's Avenue past the Blue Elephant Theatre. Look at the top of the lamp posts. Follow the road around to the left and walk past another painted hoarding advertising the Mini Treasures Nursery. At the end, turn right and then left onto Wyndham Road. Just past the railway bridge on your right is the Camberwell Mosque. Notice in the windows three examples of decorative Arabic script. Turn right onto Camberwell Road to walk back to your starting point.

6 Henry Moore Sculpture



7 Bethwin Adventure Playground



8 Blue Elephant Theatre Lamp Post



The Ark, the Church and the Temple

Rosemary Hill and Alison Rae discuss two architectural wonders, Victorian and modern

Camberwell today is a dense patchwork of development. The strata of its history since the 18th century are visible at ground level and more distinctly from the top of a bus. By the end of Victoria's reign London was spreading. The big Regency villas were swamped and Camberwell became what Henry Dyos calls a 'garden suburb of an unusual kind': it was a suburb built in former gardens.

The process still goes on. In Wyndham Road the church of St Michael was consecrated in 2014, on a site where a school, an Anglican mission and a church have existed in various configurations since the 19th century. In 1983 Bridget Cherry noted in the *Buildings of England* that the 1970s school was remarkable 'only for the fact that it includes the rebuilt parish church'. Since then both have been swept away. The Reverend Jonathan Roberts, vicar of the new church and chaplain to the new school, has no doubt that it is an improvement, creating an environment which is both secure and outward looking.

This owes much to the siting of St Michael & All Angels & All Souls with Emmanuel (a name that is a compendium of its past incarnations), on a crossroads. Peter Mayhew of Allford Hall Monaghan Morris, the project architect for church and school, now the Ark Academy, gave it a bold frontage with cruciform windows. The design was inspired by Tadeo Ando's Church of Light in Osaka, which makes similar use of minimal resources and play of light. A freestanding tower makes the church's presence felt at street level and the interior is neatly planned, with meeting rooms, a connection to the school and the all-important kitchen and lavatories. Its greatest achievement, however, is the sense of expansive calm that the body of the church achieves within metres of the thundering Camberwell New Road. A single aisleless space with a minimally differentiated sanctuary, it evokes a spontaneous sigh of relief on entry. Suggestions from African members of the congregation were incorporated in the design, including a back wall that opens completely, allowing access to a small but tranquil garden and space for outdoor baptisms.

A two minute walk takes you back more than century and into a different theological realm. The Calvary Temple in Councillor Road also has an impressive street presence. Designed by George Baines as a Baptist Church and opened in 1891, it is now in the care of the United Pentecostal Church. The founders of the congregation, Catherine Mary and Stanley George Sappleton, acquired a building that was almost ruinous but, as plaques in their memory record, they and their congregation 'sacrificed their time, talents and finances' until in 1969 the Temple was restored and dedicated. It is now a smart and well-kept space in which a pool for baptism by total immersion takes its place among an impressive array of screens, microphones and sound decks which ensure that everyone can participate in worship.

The building is a slightly eccentric mixture of Lombardic and Classical. The interior galleries are supported on cast-iron columns with Corinthian capitals while the exterior boasts a fine array of turrets. The street front is not, as it appears, the main entrance, which is at the side. The impressive portico is for the use of the Pastor. This was no doubt a result of the awkward nature of the site, which in typical Camberwell fashion, was squashed between terraces and the main road. It is also no doubt the explanation for the notable coffin shape of the interior, an architectural solution rather than a deliberate memento mori.



The Cavalry Temple, exterior & interior



What's it all about?

The tough streets of north-west Camberwell were the training ground and inspiration for one of Britain's most loved actors, as Robert Wainwright discovers



Michael Caine at his former home in Urlwin Street

Caine the class warrior

"I'm a class warrior," he once said, revealing that he fell in love with acting around the corner from Urlwin Street where the Reverend Jimmy Butterworth ran Clubland, one of London's most influential youth groups and where he played his first public stage role.

Saturday mornings were spent lining up outside Kennedy's Butchers for a pound of sausages and the afternoons at the Odeon cinema at Camberwell Green where thruppence bought a matinee seat to watch movies like *The Lone Ranger* - "I didn't want to be the Lone Ranger; I wanted to be the actor who played the Lone Ranger."

Young Maurice was enrolled at John Ruskin Infants School where he was bullied because of his blond curly hair and bulging blue eyes, caused by the condition Blepharoptosis. When he followed his father's advice and fought back, the bullying stopped - "Bubbles", as he had been cruelly nicknamed, had become "Snake Eyes". It was a lesson he never forgot: "There's no shame in losing a fight," his father told him. "There is only shame in being a coward."

The war years

In 1940, as the bombs rained on Camberwell, Maurice and Stanley were evacuated to Norfolk. They came back to live in south-east London after the war but were "bombed out of Camberwell" so the family moved closer to the Elephant and Castle where he returned to the cinema to be inspired by Spencer Tracey and Humphrey Bogart: "Throwaway kind of guys who concealed acting rather than showed you it, which is what I try to do."

Caine was still connected to Camberwell, attending Wilson's Grammar School until the age of 16 when he was expected to follow his father to Billingsate Market. Instead, he chose acting. His father, a man he adored despite his flaws, disapproved when he saw his son in stage makeup: "He thought I was gay".

Away from the public eye Michael Caine, now 89, has remained Maurice Micklewhite - "my real name" - and for many years his registered private company was Urlwin Ltd.

"People say I've retained my Cockney accent. I can do any accent, but I wanted other working-class boys to know that they could become actors."

It's hard to believe that Michael Caine was once told that he'd never make it as an actor because he "didn't talk posh". It seems that almost everyone has attempted to mimic Caine's distinctive voice ever since.

And where did he get his famous cockney clip? Why, the streets of Camberwell, of course.

Take a stroll down Urlwin Street - turn left at the top of Burgess Park - and you'll find the childhood home of Caine, born Maurice Micklewhite in 1933. Stop outside No.14, a light-brick Victorian terrace, and look up. His family - mother Eileen, father Maurice senior and younger brother Stanley - all crowded into two rooms at the top of the house - one the only bedroom and the other for everything else. It was five flights of stairs down to the garden loo, a tough climb back for a boy born with rickets.

Eileen was a charlady and Maurice worked as a fish porter at Billingsgate Market. They were so poor, as he recalled in his 1992 autobiography, that his mother would hide behind the front door while he, aged just three, told the rent collector, "Mummy's out". Their situation was not helped by the fact that Maurice senior was a drinker and a compulsive gambler, spending most evenings in the front bar of the then Fountain Hotel on Camberwell Green.

It was a tough start to life but one that Caine has looked back on fondly over the years. He was photographed outside the house in 1969 as part of an ITV documentary and celebrated when a blue plaque was erected on the site of the now-demolished St Olave's Hospital in Rotherhithe where he was born.

War comes to Comber Grove

Pictures of bombed-out Ukrainian cities takes Kitty Baxter back to her ninth birthday. She talks to *Marie Staunton*



Kitty, aged 92, in her old classroom at Comber Grove Primary School

It is 1 September 1939 at Comber Grove Primary School. On Kitty's desk lies a pillowcase with sleeping clothes and a bottle of water. Miss Giblin the teacher is at the front, the boys play with gas masks at the back. A coach pulls up in the school yard. "I thought it was my birthday treat," said Kitty. But it was the evacuation: it had begun.

Kitty was evacuated thrice. First to Ipswich, where she and sister Hetty, 13, worked in a manor house. They had to get up at 5am to clean the silver before school. Then to Hastings to the home of a "very sweet lady" whose wooden leg propped up in the

corner terrified Kitty's five-year-old brother Billy. Finally, to a house in Blackpool full of "very kind" women. When Kitty was 13, she wrote to her parents that she wanted to leave school and start taking care of the American soldiers like the other ladies in the house. Her mother brought her home, berating the WRVS for placing her children in a brothel.

Home was a flat in Moffat House: two bedrooms, a kitchen and a front room used only for best. They were seven: Kitty, her parents, sisters Hetty and Mary, brothers Billy and Charlie. The kitchen table was the lid of the bath. A concrete copper was heated once a week to wash sheets, clothes and children. A trip to the washrooms at Camberwell Green was a treat. It felt "safe and happy".

Redcar Street had not yet been built. The land was a big play area for the children which included Eddie and Charlie Richardson, later the famous gangsters. Kitty remembers them as nice boys. Children also played on bombsites, where Kitty collected firewood. Her mother was a cleaner at the War Office.

When air raid sirens sounded,

everyone ran to the bomb shelter. There is a mound above the shelter in Comber Grove which she wants opened as a local history site. Kitty recalls the doodlebug during the blitz: "The engines would suddenly stop before they dropped. If you were underneath, you were safe because they exploded at the side."

There were other dangers. Children were not inoculated during the war and Charlie died of the whooping cough, known as shelter cough, when he was only eight months old. Her father, a road sweeper, was too old at 40 for the call-up. He was shamed by people at his pub into joining. He was killed in Italy in 1944. The family did not celebrate VE day.

"I feel now for the people being bombed in Ukraine," Kitty said.

Kitty Baxter's memoir *I'll take that one: an evacuee's childhood* is published on 23rd June. To get a special price of £9.99, go to allisonandbusby.com, and use code KITTY



Dawn chorus on the Brandon Estate

Binh Tam and Binh An Penrose-Do talk to the sculptor *Morganico*

Every morning on their way to school, Binh Tam and Binh An Penrose-Do saw a huge, mysterious wooden shape being carved near their home in Farmer's Road. One day they saw a lorry and a crane erect it at Laxley Close on the edge of the Brandon Estate. It was a beautiful wooden sculpture, nine feet tall. How had it got there?

They went along to interview the sculptor, Morganico, to find out. Morganico, who grew up in Brixton where his father was a carpenter, is well known for his inspiring public art, such as the Peckham Totem Pole, the Peace Candle near the Imperial

War Museum and the Hokusai Wave mural. The Brandon Tree Sculpture resulted from Southwark Council's consultation with residents as part of its Great Estate project on ways to brighten up neighbourhoods.

It is called the Dawn Chorus because the circular hole in it lines up with the rising sun in the east. A 300-year old oak tree that was felled about two years ago was just right for the sculpture. Using traditional woodcarving techniques, Morganico decorated the trunk of the tree with images of local wildlife. At the top we see The Camberwell Beauty, oak leaves

and acorns; climbing around the sides are insects, a cat and a splendid bird. Morganico brings out contrasting highlights with a flame-thrower. The sculpture will be oiled to give it a warm honey colour.



Dickensian Camberwell

Paola Totaro reviews *A Helping Hand: Improving the Lives of South London's Victorian and Edwardian Poor*



Fascinating, salutary - and at times, grim - this book is a reminder that many of the social care institutions created in the nineteenth century are still lending a helping hand today. It examines poverty in south London between 1850 and the outbreak of the Great War and looks at destitution through the lens of non-existent health care and education not just financial penury and housing deprivation.

Interspersed with a collection of starkly beautiful black and white photographs, the authors focus on Southwark and parts of Lambeth and the well-meaning individuals and organisations that devoted their time and resources to easing the lives of those less fortunate.

Victorian and Edwardian notions of 'poverty' were informed by Charles Dickens's campaigning fiction, the field research of Charles Booth and evocative writing of journalist, Henry Mayhew. Their focus on the piteous

conditions endured by thousands of south Londoners spurred on the work of generous benefactors such as Edward Guinness, George Peabody and Thomas Barnardo whose buildings continue to provide housing for thousands of local people.

The graceful Peabody estate at Camberwell Green, built in 1911, was the first to provide self-contained plumbing (no more shared bathrooms), glazed doors and small balconies for its residents. The Settlement movement saw the arrival of middle-class students, mostly from Oxford and Cambridge universities, who created a network of what we would now call 'community hubs', offering practical medical, educational and legal services to local residents.

Equally fascinating are the stories of the men and women born to great poverty, like Charlie Chaplin, or iconic figures such as Florence Nightingale and Dr Alfred Salter, known as the doctor on the bike, whose altruism saw them risk their lives to treat victims of the many contagious diseases that blighted London's poorest. State provision of a free education and health care are modern developments and the authors remind us that Southwark is London's biggest social landlord, with around 100,000 residents in council properties - and another 10,000 on the waiting list. For those interested in our local history, this is a wonderful addition to the bookshelves.

A Helping Hand: Improving the Lives of South London's Victorian and Edwardian Poor £7 from alanparkinson@yahoo.co.uk tel 01837880497



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A cut above the rest suits celebrities

Mark Baxter pays tribute to local tailor George Dyer - always second to none

The death of local bespoke tailor George Dyer produced an outpouring of love all over social media. It was all anyone needed to know about the man. He was simply loved by all walks of life, from every background.

In the best part of 30 years working at his shop in Walworth Road, he had all sorts walk through his door. Pop, film, radio stars, broadcasters plus hundreds and hundreds of normal, everyday people who he also treated like stars.

'All my customers are celebrities to me' he was known to say almost daily.

Born in Jamaica in 1955, he arrived in the UK aged four, with his mum and sister. Oscar, his dad, had arrived a year or so earlier aged 19. Once in London, he picked up on his trade as a trouser maker, which he had learned back home.

George also gradually developed a love of clothes and by 17, he too was working for a variety of High Street tailors all over London, honing his craft both in-store and at the London College of Fashion, where he studied on day-release for three years.

Once qualified, George worked as a bespoke tailor in Peckham for many years, before eventually taking on the



George Dyer (right) with Mark Baxter

lease of the old 'Ron Martin' shop at 187a Walworth Road in 1995. Previous tailors had been there for many years and George was keen to carry on the 'art of bespoke' at the premises, under his own shop name of 'The Threadneedle man.'

There, he made a multitude of styles for mods, city gents, bridegrooms, teddy boys, skinheads, best men, and suits and skirts for women, from every make of cloth known to man. No job was beyond George, he simply rose to every challenge, backing himself all the way, with his motto - which can be found on his shop window - 'Nulli Secundus' - second to none.

Slowly embracing new technology, though somewhat reluctantly, he found via his website, a new wave of young clothes lovers and despite some financial trouble here and there along the way, and of course the recent global pandemic, he somehow kept it all afloat.

Recently, he had never been so busy.

He was a very hard-working man, often working into the small hours of the night to finish a garment. He rarely took a day off and gradually, as he got older, it all that took its toll on his general health. He soldiered on, of course, as he was in love with what he did for a living. This wasn't work to

George, this was love. He seemed to be always there, a permanent fixture on the Walworth Road.

So, losing him, as we did on the 28 March, was a total shock to his close family and all who knew him.

Wife Colline, daughter Deniece, granddaughter Isla Rose, his mum now living back in Jamaica and his three sisters, along with the wide circle of extended family and his hundreds of friends and customers, old and new.

I met him 27 years ago, first as a customer at the shop, and then gradually helping him run his online operation and PR and marketing. We had become so close that I still think of him as a brother.

I'll leave you with this thought. I have met many, many people in my 60 years on this planet, but trust me, not many come as close to being as beautiful a human being as George Dyer.

I will miss him terribly.

All the charm of old Camberwell

Marie Staunton remembers Frank Watson who sometimes manned the stall at Denmark Hill station

"Here she is, my favourite, what can I get for you?" or "Hello, you lovely young couple", always accompanied with a warm smile: that's how Frank Watson greeted customers at Denmark Hill's fruit and vegetable stall. He manned it every Friday from 7am while his daughter Keely did the school run. Frank died on 6 March aged 72.

Presentation was important. He polished every apple while telling stories of his days as a market porter in Covent Garden in the 1960s. At 16 he started work with his father, a market porter, unloading boxes. The Watsons have worked at Covent Garden for generations. Some of his cousins still do. Frank and Keely gave a Camberwell talk in 2021. Frank told us of the hardships of market life, the long hours, the queuing up for the chance of a

casual job, but also of the camaraderie. By 18 he had won his badge as a regular market porter. But by then congestion was making the Covent Garden Market site unviable. He described vividly the exodus of jobs when the market moved to Nine Elms in 1974.

By then Frank had done the Knowledge and trained as a black cab driver. He enjoyed the chat with his fares in the back. After forty years he retired, just as his daughter Keely opened her stall. He relished being back in the fruit and flower business, and sharing memories of his boyhood in Camberwell.

When Frank's family moved from the Elephant and Castle to Cottage Green, off Wells Way, in 1961, Camberwell was like the country, he told *The Camberwell Quarterly* in 2021. He remembered playing Huckleberry Finn on rafts on

the Surrey Canal, building a swing from the balcony and playing knights in armour in the Tower of London. For pocket money, he and his pals stripped old bomb sites of copper and lead and sold it to scrap-metal dealers. Frank remained in Camberwell, moving from Cottage Green, where the three cellar rooms were flooded every winter, to a flat in Lomond Grove.

He was close to his family, always adding "love you" to "goodbye" when handing the stall back to his daughter or seeing his grandchildren off on the school train. Friday mornings at Denmark Hill station are a little duller without Frank's kindness, warmth and humour. He is much missed by wife Linda, son Frankie, daughter Keely and grandchildren Lillie, Teddy, Lailah and Charlotte.

Will new Charter get developers to listen to locals and change their plans?

Or will the community's voice on planning still largely be ignored asks Peter Cooke

In the last issue of the Quarterly No 211, Rupert Maas in his article *The Camberwell Caper* said that the planning application for the redevelopment of Mapother House "excluded the people who live there altogether". Southwark's Council's Statement of Community Involvement and Development Consultation Charter intends to address such criticisms.

In her foreword to the Charter on 7 December 2021 Councillor Helen Dennis, Cabinet Member for the Climate Emergency and Sustainable Development, said "Planning can feel like an incredibly complex and technical process, and yet it is everyone's business. How we use our land in Southwark can have a huge impact on our other goals - to promote jobs, provide new affordable homes, develop new parks, protect our historical assets, and to tackle climate change. So, in this updated Statement of Community Involvement (SCI), we have tried to clearly describe the different ways in which individuals and communities can play their part in shaping the built environment and the vision around their neighbourhoods, from the local plan process to commenting on individual applications."

The community seems to have been heard but then ignored in the planning application for the redevelopment of Butterfly Walk and Morrisons carpark site. (This planning application 19/AP/7057 featured in Quarterly No. 203 and 205.)

The Consultation charter proposes that "By inviting our communities to gather in ward-based groups, four times per year, to discuss the issues that affect them at a very local level, these smaller, more informal meetings are designed to allow greater depth of discussion and provide a safe space where people can feel free to speak up. ...where funding decisions can be announced, and wider community issues can also be addressed." This kind of consultation happened in 2017.

Councillors Mark Williams and Ian Wingfield met over 100 residents at the Grove Lane Area Residents Association to discuss the Council's vision that this was a potential redevelopment site which could provide new housing along with its existing uses. A feature of that vision, welcomed by the local community, was that the south and east areas of the site should be lower rise. As recently as 23 February 2022, after the planning application was approved by the Planning Committee, the new Southwark Plan for the period 2019-2036 was finally adopted by the Council, again incorporating the continuing policy statement that the "south and east sides should be lower-rise".

In the meantime, a draft scheme had been initiated by the landowners. Locals came to view the proposals at key stages. One later commented, "I continue to object to this development. I find it disappointing, if not also outrageous, that the developers completely ignored the local community in their re-submission. They made absolutely no changes based on the consultation with the public or the comments put here in the previous consultation."

The scheme proposed a stepping down of heights towards the east end of Daneville Road, but a much higher building lying between The Colonnades and Daneville Road, which

is on the southern edge of the site. Indeed, parts are higher than nearly every building in the Camberwell. It is therefore unsurprising that over half the public comments made on the application objected to height of the proposed development. I counted 109.

Other locals have pointed out that the developers have made some changes after the public consultation, including about incorporating aspects to reflect the identity of Camberwell, and that the second round of consultation in Butterfly Walk showed changes from the first consultation, and consider that the developers have addressed some of the concerns of the community.

When the application came before the planning subcommittee on 28 June 2021 the officers recommended approval. Councillor Dixon-Fyle of Camberwell Green Ward came to speak on behalf of all that ward's councillors, which significantly includes the Leader of the Council. She said that they had been viewing the application through key stages and supported the application. You can listen to her statement on YouTube: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=3GeDpNakJ0Y> at two 2 hours, 15 minutes and 14 seconds.

No councillor for St Giles Ward was allowed to speak; although the highest part of the development is on the boundary with their ward, and is the area likely to suffer most harm from this proposed building. Bureaucratic "protocol" was allowed to obstruct common-sense and appropriate representation.

The application was approved and is awaiting confirmation from the Greater London Authority. The question of height arose from the applicant including the hotel which had not been proposed by the Council in the site allocation. This led to flats on the fifth, sixth and seventh floors to be proposed in the blocks facing onto Daneville Road.

It is not the only example of locals being misled, as the ward councillor also contradicted the survey carried out by the arboriculturist on the health of the trees on the applicants' land. Only one tree near the supermarket, was badly damaged. It has now been removed.

Other contraventions involve this development's failure to comply with the Council's declared policy about the percentage of single aspect flats. Some flats are without private outside amenity space and there is a loss of light to neighbouring properties.

The principle outlined in the Statement of Community Involvement is that the process of engagement aims to create better relationships and greater trust and an equal exchange of viewpoints both peer to peer and between the council and other participants.

If in future Southwark Council's relationship with local communities is to be "built on trust" planning officers and Councillors must normally adhere to Council policies, which the Council has promulgated and on which the locals have been fully consulted. Developers should not be allowed to "stretch" policies let alone blatantly ignore them for the sake of profit.

Making a big noise about shopping around in SE5

Jim Tanner continues his recollections of life in Camberwell over six decades



Odeon Cinema, Denmark Hill/Coldharbour Lane, 1960



Denmark Hill SW corner with Camberwell New Road, 1979



Denmark Hill, west side, 1974

Medina Oil, an edible oil depot, stood down a lane off Camberwell Grove, running westerly close to the railway line. As Groveland's Close, it now contains some 60 private homes.

Much of the area had been demolished when we arrived in 1959, but a good pub in Lettsom Street survived. We frequented it for a traditional lunch of beer and rubbery cheddar sandwiches with white bread buttered generously.

On the other side of tracks, on waste land now the Lettsom Estate, was a joinery works which produced glazing bars faithfully made from my full-size shop drawings. Beyond our back wall a small printing works occasionally operated through the night, causing us to move to front rooms.

Few people owned cars and Camberwell Grove was no exception. Opposite us lived an ex-RAF mechanic, forever tinkering with an ancient banger. Our first car was a 1937 baby Austin.

One day I parked it several doors away, where an angry neighbour remonstrated that I had no right to park there as it belonged to him. Better than the United Dairies depot at Ribbon Dance Mews that sprang to life at 4am with a clanging of milk churns.

Dealing with nocturnal noise was not then a public service, as we discovered when neighbours would return from their West End nightclub and continue the party. With others in the terrace, we eventually managed to persuade them to desist.

Every Sunday the Salvation Army, both men and women soldiers, marched behind a brass band down the middle of Camberwell Grove, exercising their precedence over traffic. It was a magnificent spectacle, but not all residents enjoyed the interruption to their weekend lie-in.

Camberwellians have long enjoyed being able to make their purchases at independent shops. Where the new Camberwell Library now stands, there were once a few shops, plus a thriving street market.

When the time for demolition came, the shops were moved to new premises - but the stallholders had nowhere to go. I asked the council why they were being treated so badly. Its reply was that it wanted to end such markets.

Fortunately, retailing continues. But Howard Brothers, ironmongers, is the only independent shop still open that has been there throughout all my 62 years in Camberwell. On my first visit, in September 1959, it was a family business over which Mr Howard presided.

A small man with big sense of humour he often greeted a customer by saying: "Oh no, not you again." When he retired, his son, also small with a sense of humour, took over. When he in turn retired, he sold the business to new owners who appear to have continued the tradition of impeccable service, seasoned with good humour.

New way to preserve much-loved local buildings

There is excitement that this year will prove to be Southwark's year of heritage, writes Jason Leech



Nuclear bunker, Vestry Road

Southwark Council intends to create a 'Local List of non-designated heritage assets' and it wants local people to play a key role in this process. This concept will underpin Policy P26 in the newly adopted Southwark Plan 2022.

'Non-designated heritage assets' are historic buildings and structures which have been identified as making a positive contribution to the character or appearance of a local area, but whose special architectural or historic interest is substantially less than that of a statutorily designated building (commonly known as listed) or a scheduled monument (something of national importance).

Locally listed buildings do not enjoy the same level of protection as listed buildings (for example, making harmful alterations to a listed building is a criminal offence). But Local Planning Authorities will have to consider the heritage significance of a building on a Local List, among other considerations, when making their decisions.

The onus is on the public to make its nominations for the Local List clearly, carefully and thoroughly, so that they carry as much weight as possible in the planning process. There is no restriction on what can or cannot be included, so long as the building or structure holds some special architectural or historic interest which can be readily identified and articulated. The clearer this is, the likelier that the nomination will be successful. Some pre-emptive nominations include the nuclear bunker on Vestry Road, about which we wrote in our issue CQ 206. Most nominations are likely to be less dramatic, such as special townhouses that encapsulate the character or history of a road.

The framework for defining 'special interest' involves overlapping criteria from national planning policy and Historic England. One analytical convention is to read all the criteria as a compound, thereby identifying:

- archaeological interest or evidential value: the intrinsic heritage value in the fabric of a building or structure that makes it irreplaceably valuable.
- architectural or artistic interest or aesthetic value: the value in the design and general aesthetics of a building, arising from conscious design or fortuitously from the way it has evolved over time.
- historic interest including communal value: the ability of buildings or structures to illustrate past lives and events. Heritage assets with historic interest not only provide a material record of our nation's history but can also provide meaning for communities derived from their collective experience of a place and can symbolise wider values such as faith and cultural identity.

The Camberwell Society undertook three heritage walks in September-October 2021 with the aim of familiarising members with these assessment criteria and getting a head-start on the Council's formal nomination process. Some 50 members, with varying degrees of pre-existing local or specialist knowledge, both shared and made fascinating insights wandering through Camberwell Church Street, Camberwell New Road and the environs of Brunswick Park. The walks will recommence in June.

The Council will soon be completing its initial sift through conservation area appraisals and submitting its draft Local List for public consultation. The consultation, aimed to begin after the local elections in May, seeks to augment this preliminary list with additional nominations from the public. It is anticipated that the consultation will run for six months (May-October), and the Local List adopted in 2023.

More details will follow in the next edition of CQ and on the Society's website.

Jason Leech is a member of the Camberwell Society's Planning Sub-Committee and of Southwark's Conservation Areas Advisory Group.

Act together to save those feet

Jonathan Hunt talks to Mike Edmonds of King's College Hospital



Drawing by Jane Moxham
www.spinnakerart.co.uk

Professor Mike Edmonds, physician extraordinaire, pinpoints the first Thursday in May, 1981, as the day when the new model treatment for diabetic feet began. Edmonds was seeing patients in the Diabetic Clinic and Mary Blundell, a podiatrist, was also treating patients. “Mary had a Eureka moment,” he recalls. “Why don’t we see patients together in the clinic and work as a team?”

Edmonds, a King’s diabetologist, then created the world’s first multidisciplinary team of specialists in podiatry, vascular and orthopaedic surgery, radiology, orthotics and other clinical services for people with diabetes. The teamwork model worked so well that within two years they had reduced the number of patients requiring major lower limb amputation by 50 per cent. As rates fell still further, the work of Edmonds and his King’s colleagues became recognised internationally as how foot care should be conducted.

An international gathering in Italy in 1988 led to a broad take-up of the King’s model, known as the St Vincent Declaration. Continued use of this has brought about even great success, as amputation rates fell to 0.9 per cent of 9,000 patients attending King’s each a year, compared to the national average of 1.6 per cent.

Edmonds retired from full-time work in the clinic and the wards in 2013. He now works three days a week in the clinic and writes and researches in the remainder. Earlier this year he received the unique honour of having his newly extended and refurbished clinic named after him, while he still works there. The Mike Edmonds Foot Unit Centre was opened earlier this year. Former patient, Spurs and England footballer Gary Mabbutt performed the honours for the man who saved his leg, saying: “Mike is one of the most unassuming, modest and caring

men I have ever met, given the endless list of awards he has received from around the world.”

Edmonds grew up in Wareham in rural Dorset, went to grammar school in Swanage on a steam train, before going on to study at King’s. After qualifying he took an interest in foot problems, and after work as a registrar, returned to King’s to undertake a research project into blood flow, which remains central to the integrity of the lower limb in controlling diabetes, as much of his later work proves.

With full-time consultants in both diabetes, orthotics and vascular surgery in his centre now, Edmonds views his role “more of a conductor than a captain or manager. It is important to know when to bring in which section of the orchestra.” He declined to identify which are strings or brass or percussion.

However, he never holds back about issues he really cares about: “I strongly believe that more than 80 per cent of the 9,800 amputations carried out in England annually in persons with diabetes are preventable.” While the number of people with Type 2 diabetes has rocketed, the percentage that has suffered amputations from 2012 to 2020 remains much the same in the country as a whole.

Ready access to clinics is important. “Far too many are fully staffed for only one day a week. I would like at least one podiatrist on duty for most days, able to call the appropriate specialist when required.” He adds, “Time is the issue. Taking a longer time to receive expert treatment always increases the risk.” And time is what Edmonds continues to expend his care and campaigning skills on, even into his seventies.

What's on



ART *Re:Surface*. Exhibition of ceramics and print works ORTUS 82 Grove Lane to 27 June. Sale 28 June. **Art trail** in English, Spanish and French meet Denmark Hill Station 11.15am 2 July. **Open studios** 4/5 & 11/12 June camberwellarts.org.uk. South London Gallery Fire Station Gallery to 5 June - *Shut The Club Down*, dance music and nightlife culture in 1990s Peckham and Camberwell. **After Work** Celine Condorelli to 5 June. *Deciphering a broken syntax* Ruddock to 12 June Main gallery to 5 June *Alice Theobald* *Il y aura course* Architecture and South London 7 - 9pm, 13 - 21 July The Bower Brunswick Park. **Spring exhibition** by Rosa-Johan Uddoh inspired by Una Marson www.thebower.org.uk. to 4 June - 12 June, to 5pm The cafe remains open daily. Blue Shop Cottage 113A Grove Lane, regular shows by local artists. **BOOKS** Carnegie library Weekly sessions; Chatterbox reading for children, art workshops, book club, friends ,tea and gardening, yoga, silver surfers http://friendsofcarnegielibrary.org.uk/events_activities. Wriggle and Rhyme children's session Wednesdays 10.30 -11am Check first at 02079266050 or email Carnegielibrary@lambeth.gov.uk Camberwell Library, Camberwell Green Bookclub, checktimes at the library **CABARET** *Love is Live* - the platinum edition LGBTQ cabaret Friday 24 June, 7pm Longfield Hall, 50 Knatchbull Road. www.longfieldhall.org.uk **CAMBERWELL TALKS** First Monday of the month 7 - 9pm, Crypt St Giles Church. *Pary Baban* founder of Nandine 6 June, *Rupert Maas* (Antiques Road show) Art & Money 7 July *Eventbrite Camberwell Talks* **CINEMA** Whirled cinema. *Summer of Soul* 2 June South London Screen dance 11 June. 60 seat cinema under railway arch off Coldharbour Lane in Hardest St. See *whirledcinema.com* **DOG SHOW** Platinum Jubilee party 4 June Camberwell Green. Scruffs Brunswick Park 12 - 3pm, 25 June. **EXERCISE** *Camberwell Feel Good Festival on the Green* 23 June - 30 July, see p6 this issue. Burgess Sports www.burgesssports.org Tennis, BMX, rugby, cricket, and sports camps. Burgess Park Skate welcoming roller-skating group, all levels from beginners. https://www.instagram.com/_bpsgroup. Butterfly Tennis Club Community tennis coaching

after school and Saturdays. 24a Camberwell Grove www.butterflytennis.com. Camberwell Leisure Centre www.everyoneactive.com/centre/. Swimming, gym, exercise classes, supervised gym sessions for 11 to 15 years. Longfield Hall Capoeira, choir, dance, drama, yoga, zumba. <https://longfieldhall.org.uk/events>. Soca Ruskin Park by bandstand Tuesdays and Thursdays 12 noon. Zen yoga. Yoga, acupuncture and sound healing *zenyoga.org.uk* Yoga Tuesdays Ruskin Park 7.30 - 8.15am @ mistercolleymanyoga.com **MUSIC** *Organoke Communal Karaoke* with church organ, live band and Edwardian music hall star Ida Barr. 25 & 26 June St Giles Church www.organoke.com. *Jazzlive at The Crypt*, at the heart of the community for the last 26 years. Live jazz every Friday in the Crypt of St Giles Church, Camberwell Church Street. Great food and reasonably priced drinks www.jazzlive.co.uk. **POLICING** Camberwell Green ward panel 11 July. Report back on survey on policing priorities. For venue check twitter and <https://www.met.police.uk/a/your-area/met/southwark/camberwell-green> **THEATRE** *Peckham Fringe*, an exciting new festival.27

visiting companies. Until 5 June. Theatre Peckham Academy has a range of classes each week for children aged 3 - 16. Theatre Peckham 221 Havil St, London, SE5 7SB visit theatrepeckham.co.uk or call 020 7708 5401. *Alice's Adventures in Aerialand* aerial circus, puppetry, verse and music in Myatts Field Park Quiet Garden 2pm & 7pm 12 June www.longfieldhall.org.uk. *Estella*, play inspired by Great Expectations 12th July 7pm Longfield Hall, 50 Knatchbull Road. www.longfieldhall.org.uk. Golden Goose Theatre 146 Camberwell New Road Mountview Ignite Festival, autobiographical, physical, satirical, musical, devised solo productions 7 - 11 June <https://www.goldengoosetheatre.co.uk/ignite>. Blue Elephant Theatre The Blue House 8pm 7 - 25 June www.blueelephanttheatre.co.uk/whatson. **WALKS** The Society's website has Camberwell tree walks and the black history walk. Meet Camberwell Green for a guided tree walk 11am 25 June. *The Great Hospital Hike* is 17 Sep 9.30-6.30, meet Ruskin Park bandstand. Find walks on www.southwark.gov.uk/transportandGoJauntly www.gojauntly.com

Where's Nick? In Brunswick Park delivering boards for the Love Local campaign.

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)

Join online at www.camberwellsociety.org.uk

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