



NEWSLETTER ■ WINTER 2022

SOCIETY LEADS PROTESTS ABOUT CHARING CROSS TRAINS

The Blackheath Society is leading widespread protests against Southeastern Railway's decision to cut its direct trains from Blackheath to Charing Cross during off-peak periods and weekends in the new December timetable.

We will be distributing 30,000 leaflets urging people to complain to Southeastern and will lead a campaign to distribute them at stations all down the line. Every local resident we have heard from was totally opposed to the proposed changes.

The new winter timetable from 11 December is set in stone, so we are now aiming to restore these Waterloo East and Charing Cross direct services in the next timetable from May 2023.

Our campaign will encourage as many people as possible to contact Steve White, Managing Director of Southeastern, asking him to reverse his decision. His email is steve.white_MD@southeasternrailway.co.uk, and to send a copy to their local MP.

We plan to leaflet 11 stations on the Bexleyheath and North Kent lines and would appreciate as much help as we can get. There is no immediate deadline, but Southeastern says it will welcome feedback before mid-January when it will start preparing the May timetable.

This gives us less than two months to mobilise opposition to the changes. If you are willing and able to help us, please contact the Blackheath Society

office. We are immensely grateful to all our members presently volunteering.

Southeastern argued that the changes will reduce considerably the number of train crossovers at the busy junction outside Lewisham station (*see below*) and thus increase the reliability and punctuality of journey times.



This may be true, but it will be at the cost of massively increased journey times for Blackheath and Kidbrooke travelers, typically by 10 to 15 minutes per journey, plus the considerable inconvenience of having to change trains and platforms at London Bridge.

Southeastern acknowledged the changes will mean an additional journey time of around 10 minutes but many will take longer, given the additional stops.

Sidcup and Hayes lines will also lose their off peak and weekend Cannon Street services, with fewer Monday to Friday peak time services to Cannon Street.

Direct services to Waterloo East and Charing Cross will be reduced during Monday to Friday peak hours.

Existing off peak and weekend Waterloo East and Charing Cross services will terminate at Cannon Street, requiring a train and platform change at London Bridge. Many revised services will stop at St Johns and New Cross, adding more minutes to the journey.

The really bizarre aspect of the proposed changes is that Southeastern can operate Charing Cross services for the Bexleyheath line, and Cannon Street services for the Sidcup and Hayes line, during peak periods when train frequencies are higher. But it chooses not to do so during the off peak and weekend periods, when train frequencies are lower.

The Bexleyheath, and the Blackheath to Charlton and Woolwich lines are particularly disadvantaged by this change, as the preferred off peak and weekend destination is Charing Cross, not Cannon Street.

Southeastern say the new timetable is demand led. Not for Blackheath, where demand is for Charing Cross but the supply is Cannon Street. We think the purpose of a railway operator is to provide services the public wants, not to run a railway to suit its operational preferences.

For travelers with mobility difficulties the inconvenience of changing trains at London Bridge will also be much more severe and, in some cases, will effectively prevent travel by train into west central London with its theatres, galleries and other entertainment venues.

We have had train services to Charing Cross/Waterloo East since 1869, when Blackheath station opened. This is the biggest cut in service choice ever experienced.

The photograph of Blackheath station in the snow on the first page is by Jenny Arrowsmith and the one of the junction outside Lewisham by Stephen Colebourne.

ADVENT CALENDAR SUPPORTED BY LOCAL SHOPS



Blackheath Creatives pop-up shop in the Village has launched a Blackheath Advent Calendar with the support of 12 other local shops.

Each shop is displaying one day of Christmas from the *12 Days of Christmas* song, and is displaying bunting in their window. Customers can collect a card from any participating shop and get it stamped.

When the card is full, they should take it to Blackheath Creatives to post in a prize draw box, and 16 winners will be drawn at 5pm on 5 January. The prize is an invitation to a gathering at Blackheath Creatives at 4pm on Saturday 12 January, which will include fancy dress, hot chocolate, snacks, music and a raffle.

The shops are The Fabric Shop, Neals Yard, Heath Estates, The Everest Inn, AIKO Hair, Chandler Wright, The Clarendon Hotel, John Charles Butchers, Hortus, Sparkly Smile, Montpeliers Café and Blackheath Pantry.

BLACKHEATH BUBBLES BOOKS LIBRARY ON THE POND

This Blackheath Books and Bubbles library (*right*), set up next to the Prince of Wales pond, was established by a local book group to offer free books to people in need.

Organiser Grace Waring, an assistant manager at Cancer Research UK in the Village, told the *Newsletter* they have so many boxes of donated books that she wanted to use some excess for a good cause. "We are a free book library and all welcome to use it."

She said her book group, set up during the Covid pandemic, came up with the idea of a free library. "We like a glass of bubbly while we're discussing our books and that is where the name came from."

The group is planning to set up another free library at the Forster Park primary school in Lewisham. The library at the pond is made of up-cycled timber from New Life Wood, an Essex charity that works to change lives by helping to relieve unemployment and poverty. For more information you can view the group on Instagram, Facebook and Twitter. Grace's phone number is 020 8852 0686.



SOCIETY ORGANIZES MANY FASCINATING NEW YEAR EVENTS

TUESDAY 10 JANUARY AT 6PM: Morden College origins and development. A talk on Zoom by Elizabeth Wiggins, the retired College librarian. *The college is seen below.*



TUESDAY 17 JANUARY AT 7 FOR 7.30PM: The Architectural Group Talk: Bell Architects at St Michael's Church, Pond Road, Blackheath. This talk by Tim Bell was postponed in November due to a rail strike. Tickets £10 from Eventbrite include a drink. *One example of their public housing in Greenwich is shown below.*

WEDNESDAY 18 JANUARY AT 12:30PM: Meet & Eat at the Princess of Wales pub in Blackheath. Join friends and members for a friendly chat over a drink and lunch.

TUESDAY 24 JANUARY AT 6PM: Victorian Houses. A talk on Zoom by Kit Wedd, a trustee and education officer of the Victorian Society, who will show how domestic services we take for granted - clean water, mains sewerage, heating, lighting, kitchen appliances - were introduced into the Victorian home and how their development was driven by changes in technology, the law and wider society. Kit has campaigned to encourage conservation of Victorian and Edwardian houses and written books on 19thC houses. She is author of *The Victorian Society Book of the Victorian House* and *The Victorian Bathroom Catalogue*.

WEDNESDAY 1 MARCH AT 6PM: Blackheath in Literature. A talk on Zoom by Jonathan Causer on many connections between Blackheath and old and

new literature. Blackheath's position on the road from London to Dover has led to it being often featured in novels, poems and plays. He will touch on the big names such as Chaucer, Shakespeare, Byron and Dickens, but concentrate on less well-known people who are connected with Blackheath.

TUESDAY 7 MARCH: Meet & Eat at the Princess of Wales. Join friends and members for a friendly chat over a drink and lunch.

WEDNESDAY 15 MARCH AT 10.15AM: Walk & Talk - Let's go down the Strand. A walk with Jonathan Causer. Please book your place via Eventbrite..

THURSDAY 16 MARCH AT 7 FOR 7.30PM: The History and Collections of a Specialist Image Agency at Mary Evans Picture Library, Blackheath. A talk by Tom Gillmor at St Mary's Hall, Cresswell Park. Tickets £15 from Eventbrite. Tom is head of content at the library.

He will open the door to this unique Blackheath Village institution, born out of a large private archive, which has grown over 60 years into an internationally renowned archival resource specialising in imagery showing all aspects of the past. The talk will include the history of the library and the business, the physical archive, how the librarians work with images, their varied collections, how the picture library industry works and how Mary Evans fits into it.

The Architectural Group plans a visit to Battersea Power Station with an architect from Wilkinson Eyre. To be confirmed in February or March.

The Annual Architectural Group Lecture, on a date to be confirmed in May, will be about an illustrated biography of Walter Gropius, by Magnus Englund and Leyla Daybelge. Leyla and Magnus are self-confessed 'Bauhaus obsessives', with a specialist interest in Gropius. They are co-authors of the 2019 book *Isokon and the Bauhaus in Britain* which details the little-known story of his 1930s life and work in London. They delivered the 2019 annual lecture here on the Isokon building.

Please be sure that the office has your email for the weekly "News for Members". If we have to make changes or updates they are always listed there and on the Society website. This has the direct link for booking tickets for our events that are managed by Eventbrite.



PLANNING GROUP SEES SATISFACTORY RESULTS

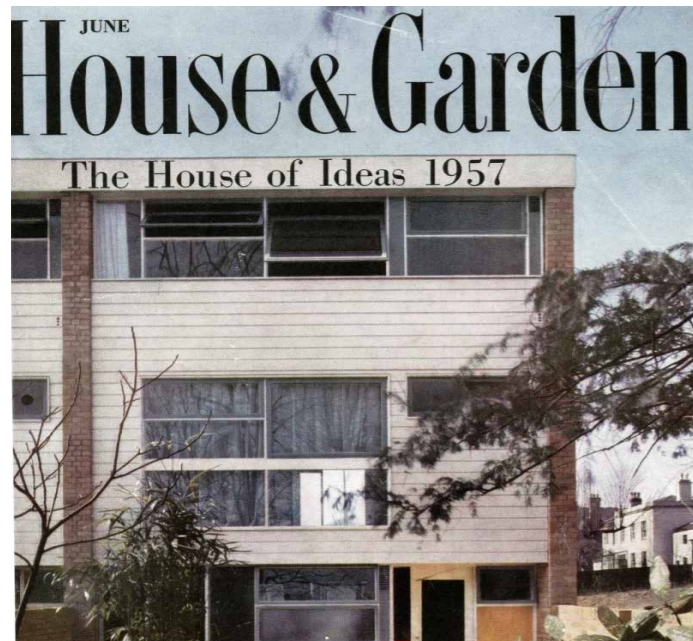
We continue to be mainly happy with the outcome of the efforts of our planning group, as we believe we have good relations with Lewisham and Greenwich Councils and achieve satisfactory outcomes overall, especially in developments in the Conservation Area.

An example of a mixed outcome was the approval by Lewisham of the application to replace the Tea Hut on the Heath. We did not object to the existence of the hut, but did query the legal basis for needing to approve this now, and we requested attention be paid to the issues of road safety, waste disposal and landscaping which had been inadequately dealt with.

The application was approved and conditions were applied in terms of road safety - bollards to be erected beside the A2 - and waste. But, surprisingly, conditions were not put on landscaping for this severely degraded part of the Heath.

We hope to be able to tackle this separately, with the support of Lewisham's ecology expertise.

We had a very satisfactory outcome on an application for 2 Foxes Dale. This house (*below*) is a well-known example of Span development, and celebrated as the "House of Ideas". We, and its neighbours, felt the application would have significantly altered its character, externally and internally, and it was rejected.



We try to work closely with the tree officers of both boroughs, and were pleased with the strong support by the Greenwich officer for our view that management, rather than removal, was the right approach on an insurance subsidence claim which sought to remove nine mature plane trees in the Plantation, as this would have changed the character of the tree cover there.

Still in Blackheath Park, Greenwich finally approved a plan for a major redevelopment of the important site at 3 Morden Road, near the entrance to the Cator Estate. An earlier application for the demolition of the current building (*seen on the left below*) and its replacement with a hugely oversized and inappropriate villa was refused on appeal.



A new application had a different design and smaller scale. We still objected, believing there should be a presumption against demolition of perfectly decent buildings, and on the grounds it was still excessively large - 90% bigger than the current property. After a good committee discussion it was approved, with a condition covering our concern about the materials.

We reported in the last *Newsletter* on the consultation on plans for the station car park in the Village and we await the next steps. Another important consultation affecting the Village is over plans to redevelop the Post Office building in Blackheath Grove, an important, historically significant and locally listed site.

The proposals envisage the ground floor continuing in commercial use, with a mansard-style floor added at the rear. The sorting office would become a nursery and the warehouse behind it demolished in favour of a three-storey block of six flats. We are broadly happy with this but a lot will depend on details, such as the materials used. And access for construction will again be a big challenge in such a restricted site.

Efforts continue to lobby Lewisham on important detailed aspects of its new Draft Local Plan. A key issue is the need for clarification and justification of its policy for increased tall-building heights. These are important ahead of the consideration of plans for 15-storey buildings at nearby Leigate. We are also keen for the plan to formalise the protection of key views of Blackheath (*below*), as this would assist in assessing future developments for Blackheath and the Village.



BLACKHEATH HAS 40 SHINY NEW CHRISTMAS LIGHTS

Thanks to the generosity of 27 businesses in Blackheath, which have contributed £21,000 so far, we now have new LED Christmas lights in the Village. We hope they will last for many years.

They are fitted on 40 lamp posts in the Village and were illuminated on Village Day, the first Saturday in December, by David Chandra, the partner and manager of the Blackheath office of the main donor, estate agents Judge & Priestley.

The Society has made a donation and we would like to thank the other donors: solicitors Beverly Morris, Dyers Co, Blackheath Yoga, Copper & Ink and Everest restaurants, Sparkly Smile, estate agents Winkworth, Felicity J Lord, Tanya Baker, John Payne/Acorn and Hamptons, Boulangerie Jade, Heath Prep School, Maxivise - In Focus, the Bookshop on the Heath, Devernois, Selectric, Blackheath Hair Co, Le Bar au Vin, Aiko, Blackburn Bridal, John Charles Butchers, Village Staff, Hand Made Food, Hortus, Blackheath Creatives Pop Up.



Our Village lights should be similar to this one

We welcome any donations from members who want to support our lights maintenance fund.

We have two Christmas trees kindly donated by Jimmy Botton, who runs the family fun fair on the Heath. We wish all our members a very merry Christmas.

SOCIETY PLANTS OAK TREE IN MEMORY OF HM THE QUEEN

The Blackheath Society laments the sad loss of Her Majesty Queen Elizabeth II and is proud to announce a permanent memorial to the memory of her long and dedicated reign.

We originally planned to commemorate her platinum jubilee by planting an oak tree, possibly in the grounds of All Saints church on the Heath. But Lewisham tree officers and our tree advisors suggested the tree would need more space for the hundreds of years we hope it will grow. The new site was therefore agreed at the eastern end of Royal Parade, in line with other trees edging the Village, and roughly in line with the drinking

fountain celebrating Queen Victoria's Diamond Jubilee, erected at the western end in 1897.

A small planting ceremony was held at the beginning of Kite Day on 9 October. Members of all ages, including children and many who could remember her 1953 Coronation, were joined by representatives of Greenwich and Westcombe Societies, the Friends of Greenwich Park and Lewisham Councilor Juliet Campbell. Our Chair Paul Watts welcomed our guests and gave the dedication.

We are grateful to officers from Lewisham and its contractors Glendale for their invaluable support with this project.



The oak tree planted near All Saints. Two Glendale contractors are on the left, with Blackheath Society Chair Paul Watts and committee member Liz Wright. Our plaque marks the event for future generations.

KITES WERE A HIGH-FLYING SUCCESS ON WINDY DAY

Blue skies and just enough wind to launch some spectacular kites - these were the perfect conditions for the Blackheath Society's Kite Day, held on the Heath on Sunday 9 October.

The event, which was enjoyed by an estimated 2,000 people, saw the return of the Kent Kite Flyers, an enthusiasts' group from the coast, who brought their huge demonstration kites, including the flying cartoon character SpongeBob SquarePants (*on the right*), and fleets of giant clowns and teddies (*lower right*).

Star of the show was an enormous purple dragon (*seen below*) which was visible for miles as it furled and unfurled itself in the sky.



At the other end of the scale, but equally appreciated, the Mir family once again generously gave away hundreds of small, free paper and stick kites.

These kites, of a traditional South Asian design and flown on cotton threads, caught the slightest breeze and provided many children with their first kite-flying

fun. Last year, when there was very little wind on the day, these were still able to launch.

The public had also been encouraged to bring their own kites to fly and there were some wonderful specimens, including a fierce-looking eagle and several home-made efforts.

Kent Kite Flyers did a brisk trade in selling kites, while their volunteers were also available to help people with their kite-flying technique. All the kite-flyers were offered a Blackheath Society Kite Day badge.

Children of Grinling Gibbons Primary School, Deptford, with their excellent steelpan band (*below*) were musical stars of the day, providing a cheerful Caribbean vibe.



They were supported by an impressive turnout for a Sunday of staff and parents. After their performance, many of the children took up the generous offer of free rides on Botton's Family Funfair, which was running in parallel that weekend.



The Caribbean theme was picked up with the food as Perfect Caribbean Catering provided hundreds of portions of jerk chicken, goat curry, and rice and peas. Traditional candy floss, crepes, doughnuts, teas and coffees were also served.



This was the second year of the relaunched Kite Day after a gap of more than 12 years, and many people will remember the huge, international competitive events that used to take place on the Heath.

The annual Kite Festivals were only possible because of substantial local authority support. But those days have passed and the Blackheath Society's relaunched Kite Day is now a community event, run by the Society and its volunteers and with kind donations from suppliers.

In particular, the Society would like to thank Kent Kite Flyers, the Mir family, Botton's Family Funfairs, Grinling Gibbons Primary School, J Hearnden Skip Hire, the London Borough of Lewisham and its contractors Glendale, as well as our many Blackheath Society volunteers, friends and families.

The success of the Kite Day again this year means it could become a regular event and Sunday 8 October, weather willing, is the likely date for 2023.

COPPER & INK RESTAURANT OWNER FEARS FOR FUTURE

Copper & Ink owner Tony Rodd says he fears his restaurant in the Village could go under after EDF Energy told him it will raise his monthly direct debit for gas and electricity by 376% to £6,400 in January.

Tony, who was runner-up in 2015 in the TV cookery show MasterChef, told the Sun newspaper in November this means his annual bill could rise fourfold to £80,000.

He said: "It's terrifying, I have no idea how we are going to make it through the next few months. The only way to remotely cover our costs is to hike up prices or somehow increase visitors - neither of which is easy when most people are deeply struggling with money too."

Restaurants in England have benefited from the government's Energy Bill Relief Scheme from last October, and this ends next March. He said they should qualify for some relief from the scheme but the amount will only be set on the day the contract is signed.

He said the constant stress and anxiety of the situation is starting to take its toll on his mental and physical health.

"My wife and I have always been resilient and resourceful people. We



Tony with his wife Becky in a photograph by Nic Crilly Hargrave

got through Covid, which was incredibly hard, but there's only so much we can do. I struggle to sleep at the best of times, but I hardly get a wink now. Every waking minute is spent with this immense fear about the future."

He said 20 members of staff rely on him, which just adds to the pressure, as the difficulties affect so many people's lives. "I know that my mates who own restaurants are feeling exactly the same way. Without more support I don't see how any of us can survive the winter."

Tony told the *Newsletter*: "We're working on some new products to help keep the business afloat over Christmas. I will also be offering a private dining service in people's homes again, with a full seven-course menu with paired wines."

"The restaurant is also bringing back its cook at home kits, providing a three-course menu that you can finish at home. And we will be selling Christmas hampers full of luxury food and drink items."

WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS

Nina Angelova	Janie Frazer	Jonathan Mackey	Martin Russell
Erika Baker	Ian Gibson	Nicholas Marsh	Amanda Simoes
Myles Ballisat	Sarah Griffiths	Clare Menor	Janet Smith
James Barber	Katherine Hardcastle	Vincent Moffat	Joyce Townsend
Hilary Barber	Patricia Harris	Craig Morris	Pete West
Nicola Barrett	David Higgins	Judith Pemberton	Bradley Young
Nic Basson	Carmel Kelly	Vicki Ratchford	
John Burr	Kevin Lilley	Oliver Rose	
Kaye Fisher	Philip Lunn	Marianne Rueffer-Turner	

BLUE PLAQUE FOR MASS OBSERVATION IN GROTES BUILDINGS

A new English Heritage blue plaque graces Blackheath. It marks the original base for the social survey organisation Mass Observation which started its life in 1937 at 6 Grotes Buildings.

After a suggestion some years ago by the Society, we promoted the idea that a blue plaque would be appropriate, and English Heritage eventually adopted the request. It chose the 85th anniversary of the foundation and set November 3 for the unveiling, but this was frustrated by the announcement of a national rail strike the same day.



The event, which was to be attended by Mass Observation staff from Southampton with the plaque unveiled by a VIP, was cancelled.

It was installed instead on November 2. Society president, Neil Rhind, chairman Paul Watts and our archivist Allan Griffin attended. The plaque is

visible from the road and can be seen by passers-by without trespassing.

Where might our next blue plaque be? A strong contender is for the philosopher John Stuart Mill who lived at 113 Blackheath Park for 20 years, but you would need to trespass to see any plaque.

Another possibility would be Frederick Wissler (1860-1924), the inventor of the "love it or loathe it" savory spread Marmite, who lived at 1 Shooters Hill Road from 1904 to his death.

From an exceptionally long shortlist we might also suggest Sir John Simon (1816-1904), a truly

outstanding pioneer of modern public health, who lived at 10 The Paragon. Also eligible might be William Innes (1719-1795), the most famous golfer of his time, who lived at 3 Grotes Buildings.

Lastly, and less well-known but most important in his field, was the novelist Denton Welch (1915-1948), who lived in digs on Crooms Hill. He rode a bicycle to his studies at Goldsmith's School of Art.

It was not just Mass Observation which was first established in Blackheath.

The origins of the BBC, which turned 100 years old in November 2022, can be placed firmly in our neighbourhood.

This was at Cayuga House, 16 Eliot Park, the home of Rt Hon Frederick George Kellaway (1870-1933), MP for Bedford. He married Sarah Robinson in 1903 and moved into her house - built for her late father, Henry Robinson, the flour miller of Greenwich & Deptford - and lived there until he died.

He was a National Liberal who became Postmaster General in 1921 and had to bring together all the pioneering broadcasters. He was on the Board of Marconi Ltd and it was his neutral task to bring order out of the conflicting chaos.

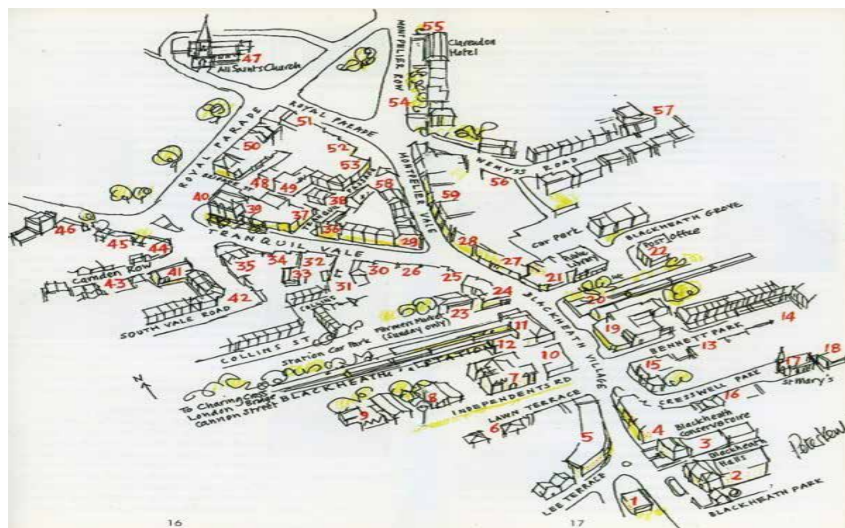
In 1921 Kellaway gathered all the representatives of the serious broadcasting companies and reorganised them into what was he initially called the British Broadcasting Company, later renamed to the British Broadcasting Corporation.

As a result, he was sometimes described as the father of British Broadcasting.

When the Liberal Government was defeated at the general election in 1922, he lost his ministerial portfolio and his Bedford seat. He then returned to the Marconi Wireless Company as managing director in 1927.

Peter Kent, who will be 90 years old next May, has been a professional illustrator for more than 40 years, living in Blackheath and Greenwich. His output is prodigious, with his main focus on three-dimensional drawings of life along the River Thames.

As a sideline, he produced a series of illustrated articles, called *Riverwatch*, for the *Blackheath Guide* magazine from the 1980s onwards. Peter has agreed that the Society can catalogue and digitise his work over the years and make it available on our archive website. This map of Blackheath Village is one example of his work.



NEW DISCOVERIES FOR OUR BLACKHEATH ARCHIVES

The Society has recently acquired two collections directly relevant to our interests, which are important additions to our archive resources.

One is a family album of photographs and ephemera of the family of Arthur Robert Marten (1840-1904), a stockbroker resident in Blackheath, who was related through marriage and his children to several important local families.



The real interest lay in the fact that he commissioned the building of a grand house in Kidbrooke Grove called Stonefield (*seen above*) in 1877. The house was recently sold to the trustees of Morden College, which has restored the property and converted it into several flats for college residents. But unfortunately the College changed the name of the house after about 140 years to that of one of its trustees.

A remarkable item is a hand-written list of the names of all the men who worked on building Stonefield, and

their craft skills, followed by a detailed estate agent's prospectus created when Marten sold the house, and we will never know why. It also contains several high-quality photographs of Blackheath buildings, some of which have long gone, and ephemeral items, like the first prospectus for the Blackheath High School for Girls in 1879-1880.

But the volume is irreparably damaged, with pages half torn out and all the items stuck in with an impenetrable glue, often on both sides of a single sheet. We have shown this to Claire Gaskell, a professional paper conservator, and she thinks the separation of the items from the pages is not possible without risking considerable damage.

Our archive expert Allan Griffin scanned the Blackheath items, and they are of excellent quality. We intend to cut up the album, remove items that are not local, and take out those which have a strong Blackheath connection for our collection. It seems reasonable to donate the Stonefield items to Morden College for its archives and keep scans of those in our files.

We will also keep, now that Greenwich Heritage Centre is virtually closed, the first volume of the prospectus and minutes of the Westcombe Park Estate Company from 1877 to 1886.

This is a remarkable, beautifully handwritten document of immense size, and we wish we had further volumes. It is of great value and full of important historic details on the unfolding development of the Westcombe Park estate. It will be an invaluable source in completing *Walking Westcombe* in our "walking" series.

NEW COFFEE BUSINESS FOR BLACKHEATH VILLAGE

The new Blackheath branch of 15 GRAMS is the sister store to the one that opened in Greenwich a year ago.

This coffee specialist roasts its own beans and buys them seasonally from all over the world, including Ethiopia and Colombia. Kenyan coffee is now in season and, as store manager Laura Wright told the *Newsletter*, "We support small farmers buying quantities of coffee whenever it is their harvest season".

The company is called 15 Grams as that amount goes into a single serving of coffee. They are also wholesalers, supplying other independent cafes. The café is dog-friendly, which is important for Blackheath. It also sells fresh pastries every day and they hopes to add lunches soon due to demand.

On November 8 *Village Staff* celebrated 40 years in business in Blackheath village. It is run by Lorraine Power who has been finding jobs for local people from the same site on Tranquil Vale since the start.

"I was 26 when I decided to set up my own business and I've never looked back," she explained. Lorraine's philosophy is to offer a personal service in this online age as she believes people appreciate the opportunity to call in and see her to discuss their ambitions.

A wide mix of jobs is available, including office, catering and driving positions. The firm has worked for Greenwich Council for 30 years.



GREENWICH PARK - ONE TREE HILL, FROGS AND TRAFFIC

The Royal Parks management says it will improve access to One Tree Hill in Greenwich Park and enhance its seating area, thanks to a donation of £50,000 from the Friends of Greenwich Park.

One Tree Hill is to the east of Observatory Hill, from which tourists enjoy views of the Thames, and it was the preferred view of visitors in the 18th and 19th centuries, but the path up to the viewpoint is steep.

A more accessible path will be laid between January and April next year, and a new bench and explanation of the area's history will be installed around the principal tree at the viewpoint.



The work will include a poem about One Tree Hill, published in 1784 and ascribed to Thomas Nichols, etched on paving along the new path. The area will be closed during the works, which are part of the Greenwich Park Revealed project, supported by The National Lottery Heritage and Community Funds.

The Parks also said it will create a new haven for frogs, newts, dragonflies and damselflies at the Flower Garden Lake in the Park.

This will improve sustainability and the water quality, and the habitat will be enhanced with aquatic planting and landscaping. The lake will be drained and cleaned and a borehole connected, to supply a sustainable water source that does not rely on a mains supply.

New bog areas will be created and marginal planting edges will be introduced around the lake, with aquatic plants, including yellow flag iris, brooklime and arrowhead. Some of the waterlilies currently growing in the Queen's Orchard Pond will be brought to the Flower Garden Lake.

Work began in November and should finish next spring. There will be no access during the works to part of the flower garden, including Blackheath Gate, Bower Avenue Gate and the lake from January to April.

The Parks also announced it has decided to retain measures to reduce the impact of cut-through traffic in the park on a permanent basis, after a two-year trial, a visitor engagement exercise and detailed traffic analysis, and The Avenue (*seen above*) will remain permanently closed to vehicle through traffic.

It said consultation responses from across the parks had indicated that a majority of respondents supported the proposals and the Royal Parks will explore how the space will be repurposed. Director Tom Jarvis said: "The decision is a key part of ensuring the Royal Parks are delivering on our charitable objects."



These photos, taken by Joe Beale, show an Azure damselfly above and a Willow Emerald damselfly below

GRAFFITI GROUP SCORES 12,500 REMOVALS



Meg Dinkeldein stands at a local bus stop marked with graffiti, showing it before and after cleaning

The Blackheath Society was a founding member of the West Greenwich Graffiti Removal Group in 2008, when we joined teams from the Greenwich and Westcombe Park Societies.

The Group has removed nearly 12,500 defacements (plus 3,800 stickers) in an area from Creek Bridge to Morden Wharf and down to the Standard and the Village. Society volunteers Richard and Meg Dinkeldein were founder members, and they are still going strong.

Many people find graffiti and litter a depressing urban blight, as most of it is just ugly scribbles or tags, and the sooner it is removed the less likely it is to reappear.

Richard told the *Newsletter*: "We clear graffiti mainly from our own areas but keep in touch through emails

and an annual meeting. Greenwich does get more than its fair share of graffiti, which we suspect is by vandals creeping across from Lewisham, where graffiti is rife and unchecked."

"We all get huge support from Paul Knight and his graffiti removal team in Greenwich Council. We can call on them to clear tags which are difficult to remove, or are present in great quantity, and they also supply us with graffiti removal wipes and gels."

"Strangely, there is great satisfaction in getting rid of these unsightly tags and at the same time sending a clear message to the vandals that they are not tolerated in Blackheath and Greenwich."

Anyone wishing to help remove graffiti should contact the Society's office.



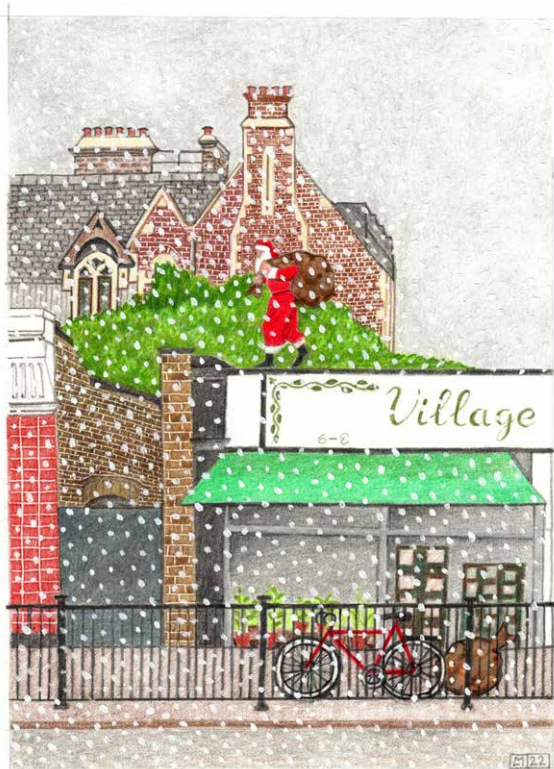
Has anyone heard of The Excellent Mineral Water Co. of Blackheath which made this stone flagon?

Advertising its home-brewed ginger beer, the flagon was found by Terry Lane in someone's garden in a village near Reigate where he lives, with a couple of other flagons and a stone hot water bottle.

Terry told the *Newsletter* he goes digging for old bottles from years gone by and has been interested in them since the early 1980s.

So he contacted the Society archive, asking if anyone can throw some light on this. Please contact the office if you can help solve the mystery.

TWO SOCIETY CARDS TO BUY FOR CHRISTMAS 2022



Our two Christmas cards this year feature paintings by local artists. *Christmas in Blackheath* (above) is by Maria Zvaric. Born in Romania, she is now an artist and illustrator based in south east London.

She specialises in watercolours, her favourite technique, and loves bold colours.

On the left is *Village View* by Lindsey Malin who lives in Blackheath, is a member of the Blackheath Art Society and regularly exhibits with them. She paints to celebrate nature, colour and design and improve the quality of life.

She now concentrates on small watercolour drawings and paintings.

They can be bought at the Selectric shop in the Village at £5 for a pack of 10 cards.

To learn more about the artists, go to:
www.mariazvaricillustration.com
and www.lindseymalin.com.

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