After more than a decade, the Sydenham Society is delighted to be able to give a wholehearted welcome to The Greyhound pub, which has finally re-opened at Cobbs Corner on the site it has occupied since 1719.

In the intervening years the pub has had a chequered history, evolving from its original incarnation as a wooden hunting inn facing Sydenham Common, before being transformed into a grand hotel catering for the needs of the visitors to the Crystal Palace until finally, in 2018, opening as a smart gastro pub, graced by an elegant wooden conservatory.

Since the pub closed in August 2007, the Sydenham Society’s main campaign locally has been to work to get The Greyhound re-opened. Recognising its role as Sydenham’s oldest building and mindful of its important position at Cobbs Corner, the Society drew on the expertise of architects and historians to build a case for designating the area around The Greyhound as a Conservation Area in order to protect the building. Advised by conservation architect John Hutchinson, a proposal for a Cobbs Corner Conservation Area was drawn up and presented to the Council in September 2007. To our great delight, on 5 September 2007, Lewisham’s Mayor & Cabinet supported our plan for the new conservation area and agreed to locally list The Greyhound as a building of architectural and historic interest.

Further recognition of the significance of The Greyhound came in an endorsement from architectural historian Dr Gavin Stamp, who wrote:

“The Greyhound public house at Sydenham is of great importance as a landmark. Buildings can be of immense topographical significance while being of no architectural distinction, and places like Sydenham need conspicuous centres… to articulate the continuous built-up areas.

“This part of Sydenham, Cobbs Corner, is such a centre, formed by the junction of Kirkdale and Westwood Hill and by the presence of the railway station. It is marked by the dome of the Cobbs Corner building but given a sense of openness, of place – like a small-scale village green – by The Greyhound and its forecourt.

“This will be lost if the pub is replaced by a block of flats coming right up to the road. The character of Cobbs Corner will be further undermined by the fact that such a block will be private whereas The Greyhound, by its nature, is to a degree a public building and the space in front a public space.

“The demolition of The Greyhound would spoil the character of this part of Sydenham and represent the significant loss of an important landmark. Surely it would be possible to build on the large car park to the side and rear while keeping The Greyhound as a public house.”

Ten years on – and after a number of setbacks, including partial demolition – the rebuilt Greyhound has been purchased by a company with a great track-record in running pubs. We have every confidence that David Montgomery and his team will make a success of their new business, and we’re confident that local residents will take the new Greyhound to their hearts and that it will once again have a starring role at the centre of the community.

Annabel McLaren, Chair, Sydenham Society

Keep an eye on their new website www.thegreyhoundsydenham.co.uk

[Ed: Sadly, Gavin Stamp died on 30 December 2017]
After eight years of campaigning by local residents, a company has at long last been found to run a new cinema in Crystal Palace.

Everyman, which runs 22 cinemas across England, has provisionally exchanged contracts to open a cinema in the former bingo hall in Church Road. This building was previously a cinema for 40 years before it closed in 1968, leaving the town without a big-screen cinema for more than 50 years.

Owned by Kingsway International Christian Centre (KICC), their plans to convert it to a church were finally rejected by Bromley Council in February 2017. KICC then decided to dispose of the freehold of the property. On 24 January the news came that Everyman had exchanged contracts.

The new operator has said it will create a four-screen cinema inside the building but has not yet announced when it will open. Everyman’s cinemas all have comfortable sofa-style seats, which come with cushions and side-tables for snacks.

Every branch has a menu of hot and cold food, including pizza, burgers and hot dogs.

Its newer venues also come with the best projection and sound technology you can get — Sony 4K projection and Dolby 7.1 surround sound – as standard. Sounds good!
Crystal Palace chairman Steve Parish has unveiled ‘ambitious’ plans to redevelop Selhurst Park, creating ‘a new Crystal Palace for a new era.’

The project, costing between £75-£100m, will increase the capacity at Selhurst Park from 26,000 to more than 34,000. Overhauling the stadium, the home of the club since 1924, will transform the match-day experience for supporters and provide new facilities for the community whilst retaining the ground’s uniquely passionate Premier League atmosphere, according to a club statement.

“A central vaulted arch, with the famous Eagle crest, is a reminder of the iconic 1851 Exhibition Hall, and eagle wings flank the 41-metre structure.”

The project is being designed by leading stadium architects KSS, the firm behind the redevelopment of iconic sporting venues, including Twickenham, Wimbledon and Anfield.

The roof of the new stand will be designed to funnel sound down to the pitch and the Arthur Wait Stand opposite.

Plans were submitted to Croydon council in January and, subject to planning permission being granted, work will begin in the next 12 months.

The existing main stand will remain in full operational use throughout the 3-year build process, minimising the impact on the stadium capacity in the coming seasons, say the club.

Concerns expressed over the future of the Crystal Palace National Sports Centre (NSC)

The Crystal Palace National Sports Centre was built in the early 1960s to provide Londoners with outstanding sports facilities and to serve professional sport. The Mayor of London, Sadiq Khan, wants to ensure that the centre has a long-term future, so is launching a review to look at design and development options.

The NSC is an iconic Grade II listed building in the centre of Crystal Palace Park. It was the first multi-use sports hall to be designed in the UK and is a vital asset for communities in South London.

The park’s impressive sporting heritage includes hosting high-profile events including FA Cup finals and motor races. The athletics stadium was the home of the London Grand Prix international athletics event for nearly 60 years. Since the Olympic site in Stratford was opened in 2012, the future of the NSC has been under threat.

The first phase of the Mayor’s review (www.tinyurl.com/CP-NSC-Survey) will consult with a wide range of sporting groups and users, to build a picture of the type of facilities that the NSC needs to support the thriving, local sporting community. The second phase, starting in spring 2018, will look at design and development options for the entire NSC estate. The public will be consulted on more detailed options in summer and autumn 2018.

The future of Crystal Palace Park

Using the terms of the Masterplan for the park, approved in 2013, Bromley Council has begun the process of terminating the Lease of the Caravan Club, as reported in the autumn edition of the Sydenham Society News.

Bromley has now applied for permission for a scoping opinion in accordance with The Town and Country Planning (Environmental Impact Assessment) Regulations 2017, to include a comprehensive phased scheme for landscaping. This includes the planting of trees and improvements to the park, comprising the dismantling and refurbishment of, alterations to, and demolition of existing buildings and structures to facilitate the conservation and repair of heritage assets.

This will also include: removal of existing hard surfacing; alterations to ground levels and tree removal; creation of new pedestrian paths and vehicular access and parking; changes of use including the existing caravan park to become part public open space and part residential; erection of new buildings and structures comprising: 830sqm for a cultural venue, up to 420sqm of park maintenance facilities including the dismantling and reconstruction of existing maintenance depot; up to 670sqm for a community centre, and up to 5519sqm of residential accommodation to provide up to 210 residential dwellings, together with associated and ancillary work, plant and equipment.
Perry Vale NEWS

Councillor Alan Till

Perry Vale Ward councillor, Alan Till, is standing down at May 2018’s Local Government Elections after being first elected to the role in 1992. Alan is a much-loved member of our community and has given active, dedicated and loyal service to our ward and Lewisham borough these past twenty-six years.

He has supported Lewisham’s voluntary sector organisations and has helped with the management of many of them including: Ackroyd Community Centre, Voluntary Services Lewisham, Seniors. Lewisham Parochial Charities and the Marsha Phoenix Memorial Trust. Alan has always believed in supporting young people’s life chances and his roles as a longstanding governor of Kilmorie School and on Rockbourne Youth Club’s management committee, demonstrates his commitment. As an appointed director of London Youth Games, he has enjoyed seeing Lewisham’s Youth Teams win in many sports categories.

Alan was Mayor of Lewisham in 1995/6, and as chair of the Licensing Committee steered Lewisham Council through national licensing control changes which demanded an overhaul of all licensed premises in the borough. As Vice-Chair of Lewisham Council, Alan has been honoured to represent our borough at many events.

I am privileged to have worked with such a good friend, neighbour and ward colleague, and wish him a well-deserved and relaxing retirement away from council duties, although Alan will be attending our Perry Vale Assembly on Tuesday 27 February 2018. It will be held from 7pm at Perry Rise Baptist Church and will include a presentation from Youth First; updates on 2016/17 assembly funded projects; Grow Mayow, Perrymount School and Platform One Youth Club; news from our Safer Neighbourhood Team; and Lewisham’s own Public Health Director, Dr Danny Ruta, on the Be Sugar Smart project.

Danny will be informing our assembly on how we can work with local businesses and shops to reduce the sugar content in our children’s food and drinks.

All those who live, work, or play in Perry Vale will be most welcome.

Councillor Susan Wise
Perry Vale Ward and Ward Assembly Chair
Cllr_Susan.Wise@lewisham.gov.uk

Domestic Abusers Register

Our community was recently shaken by the horrific murder of 5-year-old Alex Malcolm, at the hands of his mother’s partner in Catford Park. His killer, Marvyn Iheanacho, was a repeat domestic abuser; yet this information was not automatically made known to Alex’s mother.

The trial that followed prompted me to call for urgent measures to protect domestic abuse victims and their families. Last autumn, after unanimous cross-party backing from Assembly Members and the Mayor of London, the London Assembly adopted my campaign for a Domestic Abusers Register.

The idea is to create something like the Sex Offenders Register, and force repeat domestic abusers to inform police of any changes to their address and relationship status.

There is an urgent need for something of this kind. In London alone, the number of domestic abuse victims rose to 71,926 in 2016, a 15 per cent increase on the previous year. Sadly, Lewisham has the third highest rate of offences in London.

Whilst there have been worthy efforts to tackle domestic abuse in recent years, we need to go further. ‘Clare’s Law’, introduced in 2014, provides the public with the right to ask the police if their partner may pose a risk. Yet it does not give an individual an automatic right to know about this risk. A Domestic Abusers Register would. Another shortcoming is that the onus currently rests on survivors to recount extremely traumatic experiences in detail to the authorities. A Domestic Abusers Register would shift the onus onto perpetrators.

Current laws place more focus on reacting to incidents. In a lot of cases help comes too late and allows violent criminals, like Iheanacho, to continue to re-offend and destroy more lives. In fact, four in ten survivors of domestic abuse are repeat victims. I want better for families in our community and across the country.

A Register would provide the police with tools and resources to better protect victims and their families, allowing them to hold information that can be shared and disclosed if perpetrators move area, or start a new relationship. It would also enable the police to more accurately assess the level of risk associated with known abusers and determine where to urgently intervene. Calls for a Register go back as far as 2009, when it was advocated in a report by the then Association of Chief Police Officers as a cost-effective prevention tool.

We should not rest until we know that every conceivable safeguarding measure has been taken to protect survivors. We now need the Government to prevent domestic abuse by establishing the Register. I will continue to take the fight to its highest levels. I also hope I can count on the support of our community for this vital initiative.

Len Duvall OBE, AM

OBE, AM

Len Duvall
Firstly, I wish to extend my thanks to the community, being elected to represent the area I was born and grew up in was an absolute privilege and I am very proud to be your representative in Parliament.

Since being elected I have visited many local projects and organisations. Over this time, I have met many people and it is heartening to see the care and dedication that is put into making Sydenham the place that it is.

A speaker from Fun Palaces will talk at the Assembly about the ongoing campaign for cultural democracy. The weekend of action uses the combination of arts, craft, science, technology, digital, heritage and sports activities, led by local people for local people, sharing their own passions and skills, as a catalyst for community-led transformation, with active participation of all ages.

This is a collaboration among communities, developing local networks, enabling links between individuals and organisations, encouraging large venues to co-create with local people and small groups to shout about their value as grassroots community activists.

For more information visit www.funpalaces.co.uk

The next Sydenham Assembly will be on Wednesday 14 March 7-9pm at The Sydenham Centre, 44a Sydenham Road, SE26 5QF

This will be an opportunity to get involved in the planning of a ‘Fun Palace’ over a weekend of action on 6 and 7 October. The Fun Palaces campaign promotes culture at the heart of community, and community at the heart of culture.

So far, I have met with St Christopher’s Hospice, Sydenham Community Library, Sydenham School, and traders along Sydenham high street, including the much-loved Whites Pet Centre, Kirkdale Bookshop and On the Hoof. I have also met with Sydenham Arts to talk about their local projects, and Sydenham Garden to see the amazing work they do for people dealing with mental and physical ill-health.

One of the big issues I have been working on since coming to Parliament is the proposed downgrade of Sydenham Crown Post Office. If this goes ahead it would mean the Post Office would go to franchise which I fear would lead to a loss in service and experienced staff. I have written to the Post Office and the Minister responsible outlining my concerns, and after much work by the community campaigning locally to save the Post Office, we are still waiting for a final decision. I would like to thank the local Councillors who have worked tirelessly on this.

Another issue is the proposed changes to Southern’s timetable for 2018 which would see a loss of trains via Sydenham station to East Croydon at peak travel times and a reduction in late-night services from Central London to Sydenham. After raising these concerns and meeting with GTR, I have been assured that late night trains to Sydenham will remain at four an hour and trains will now run at peak times from Sydenham to Norwood Junction with an interchange on to East Croydon.

I will continue to push GTR for a direct train as the interchange is not ideal. I would like to thank members of the Sydenham Society who have worked extremely hard on this issue.

All in all, it is now eight months since I was elected to Parliament, and it is safe to say that whilst it has been extremely busy, I have enjoyed every minute of it and I am looking forward to continue representing the area that I love throughout 2018.
Our Magazine
150 Years Ago

Sydenham Life must have had many formats in its time, and I have not seen many of them, but The Local History and Archives Centre at Lewisham Library has a copy of issue no.1.

Called Parish Magazine, it was published on 1 January 1868, thirteen years after the creation of the parish of St. Bartholomew. The first edition gives a fascinating insight into mid-Victorian life in Sydenham. It was to be issued on the first day of every month, costing 1d per copy and available from booksellers (three were identified), and also distributed to ‘the poor’ at the same price. Wealthier parishioners were asked to make an annual subscription of half-a-crown for which the magazine would be delivered to their door.

This worked out at 2½d a copy.

The intention was that the magazine’s outside pages should contain ‘strictly parochial information’, with inserts containing ‘sound and interesting matter’ obtained elsewhere. The names and addresses of four clergy were given, as the magazine covered not only St. Bartholomew’s church but also two recently formed daughter churches of St. Philip the Apostle, Wells Park, and St. Michael and All Angels, Bell Green, both of which are now independent. St. Philip’s was consecrated on 17 December 1867, and the January 1868 issue carried an account of the ceremony conducted by the Bishop of Rochester and the subsequent activities that day. Particular mention was made of the Rev’d Charles English, a much loved minister of the parish for 23 years, who had died in May 1867.

Other items in that January edition recorded that a Sunday Holy Communion had been started at St. Bartholomew’s, and that a gas supply had been laid on at St. Michael and All Angels. Details of services for the churches were given with four Sunday services at St. Bartholomew’s – Morning Prayer, an afternoon and evening service, and an early morning Communion. Weekday services were also held for particular occasions. Music has always been a strong feature of Sydenham’s culture, and so hymn numbers were all printed in advance.

The railway came to Sydenham in 1839 and, by 1868, on weekdays (which included Saturdays) there were 49 trains a day to London Bridge and 26 to Victoria and the magazine devoted a page showing the train times.

Journey times 150 years ago were actually shorter! In 1868 trains took 18 minutes to reach London Bridge compared to 20 now. Similarly, the journey time to Victoria was 5 minutes shorter than today’s 40 minutes.

It is worth remembering that at one time the parish was the basic unit of administration locally, and was responsible for much local infrastructure and social welfare. In the nineteenth century the state began to take over many of these functions, but in 1868 St. Bartholomew’s was still involved in running ‘Benevolent Institutions’. The principal one was the District Visiting Society where lady visitors ‘visited from house to house to enquire personally into the wants of the poor’ and also to distribute the Parish Magazine. There was also a ‘dispensary’ affording ‘medical relief to the sick poor without distinction or preference’. The irony was that a fee of one shilling a visit was payable, and access required a ticket provided by a regular subscriber. ‘Nurse children’ and ‘domestic servants in service’ were excluded. There was a separate Maternity Society for respectable married women at the time of their confinement. This was available for a subscription of 6d per week and provided 7 months of medical supplies and ‘coals and meat’. There were also separate clubs for purchasing coal, boys’ and girls’ shoes, and clothing. Deposits could be made as savings towards these purchases. For the coal and shoe clubs the parish made an additional financial contribution depending on the amount saved.

Magazine sales were obviously good, because by the end of 1868 the circulation had reached 700 per month, of which ‘the poor’ purchased 300. Nonetheless, sales did not cover the increased cost of 2d per issue, and the selling price was increased to 2d per copy for those sold via booksellers. So that ‘the poor’ could continue receiving their 1d copies, the wealthier subscribers were urged to maintain their subscriptions and do their best to recruit others. Domestic servants could also obtain their copies at 1d ‘on application from the master or mistress of the house’.

Today Sydenham Life, the Parish Magazine’s successor, appears ten times per year. It is produced in colour and written, edited, designed, packaged and distributed free to every household in the parish, all by a team of volunteers. It also pays for itself thanks to the generous support of its advertisers.

And I hope some of its articles are of interest!

Stuart Forbes

Note Approximate monetary equivalents in 2017 compared with 1868
1d = £0.43p  Half a crown = £12.87p
Jonathan Kaufman set up Spontaneous Productions ten years ago and in that time has used local venues such as Kirkdale Bookshop, The Dolphin, Mayow Park and many other pop-up locations around Sydenham for more than 40 shows. The company has now found its home Upstairs at the Sydenham Centre and has been making good use of the space. Since last February, they have staged Jack and the Beanstalk, Three Men and a Boat, 600 seconds (short plays), an evening with Jonathan Coe and Matthew Sweet, Goldilocks, Frighteners and The Snowman and the Christmas Fairy.

Although he has been very busy with productions, Jonathan also runs two writing groups. WriteClub meets every other Tuesday to discuss any kind of writing and is a small, informal group which aims to publish an anthology of the group’s work later this year. Every other Wednesday night, Jonathan runs ScriptHub, for anyone wanting to write for the stage, TV, film or radio. The work from this group will be performed by professional actors later on in the year.

And never one to rest on his laurels, 2018 looks to be just as productive (please excuse the pun!), kicking off in February with Love Bites Again – an evening of short plays on the theme of love and heartbreak. Then, March sees The Little Mermaid and Other Tails, adaptations of three stories by Hans Christian Andersen (including The Ugly Duckling and The Emperor’s New Clothes). The show will feature many elements including video, song, dance and fantastic scenery created by the very talented design team Abby & Alice (abbyandalice.com), who are working with Spontaneous Productions to further transform the stage Upstairs at the Sydenham Centre.

Excitingly, the company has received Arts Council Funding for a play written by Jonathan’s sister, Lucy, about Eleanor Marx, Karl Marx’s youngest daughter. Eleanor was a translator, actor, union activist, social campaigner and definitely a woman ahead of her time. She lived in Jews Walk, Sydenham for the last couple of years of her life and sadly died under mysterious circumstances, which are explored in the play. There will be a chance at the beginning of the run to hear from biographer Rachel Holmes and poet Tara Bergin in an evening of talk about Eleanor.

Plans are afoot for an open-air performance of The Tempest in August, using the bowling green in Mayow Park. The production will use both professional and amateur actors so for any budding thespians out there, Jonathan will be holding open auditions and this could be your chance to tread the boards!

Spontaneous Productions also works closely with other small Sydenham initiatives, such as Ignition Brewery, who are based in the Sydenham Centre and run by adults with learning difficulties. So if you come along to one of the plays, you can enjoy a drink up in a brewery!

Underlying all this activity, Jonathan’s main aim is to make Sydenham a cultural destination, creating a community fringe theatre and providing an outlet for local talent and creativity.

If you are interested in seeing any of the upcoming performances, joining the writing groups, or volunteering to help with the box office and backstage, take a look at www.spontaneousproductions.co.uk and follow @SpontaneousJK on Twitter or fb.me/SpontaneousJK on Facebook.

Emma Mallinder
Annabel McLaren looks back on a busy year in SE26

Sydenham is a great place to live and in recent years it has become even better. Local parks have once again been awarded Green Flag status, Mayow Park’s tennis courts have been totally refurbished and new Friends groups are springing into life – including one at Baxter Field which has received funding from the Forest Hill Assembly.

It’s not surprising then that many young families are moving to the area – in fact we’ve heard that Sydenham is now one of the most popular destinations for families in London, along with Hackney and Putney. With the rebuilding of the Greyhound pub, 2017 was a momentous year – a time when our oldest building was restored to the heart of the community and the culmination of a 10 year campaign by the Sydenham Society. On the high street there are promises of new businesses – from a Nando’s restaurant to a proposed yoga centre.

Elsewhere the outlook is not so positive – the former Budgens store still bears a ‘To let’ sign and there are a number of empty shops along Sydenham Road. Rents and business rates are high and it’s often difficult for new shops to get started.

But we shouldn’t despair – other exciting businesses have opened including The Poodle Club at 167 Sydenham Road, a craft beer shop called The Bottle Cave at number 20 and Kitchen Skills at 134 Kirkdale.

In the wider world, a snap general election was called. Along with the Forest Hill Society we rose to the occasion and staged a hustings, giving all major political parties a chance to address the public. Approximately 300 people crammed into the JK Banqueting Suite in Perry Vale, listened intently to the candidates and took part in a question and answer session. We’re very grateful to Nigel Desborough from Here For Good for his expert chairing of the event.

Inevitably some members have passed away during the course of the year. Shirley Rayner, a former editor of Sydenham Society News and a keen member of the tennis and croquet club, died in a nursing home in Sevenoaks, and Gavin Stamp – Private Eye’s architectural writer – died on December 30. Gavin had been particularly helpful to us with his advice on the Greyhound and his support for a Blue Plaque in Jews Walk to commemorate Eleanor Marx. Our condolences go to both their families.

At the time of writing, there is currently a consultation on the new London Plan. Len Duvall, London Assembly Member, wrote about it in the autumn edition of Sydenham Society News, and the draft plan can be viewed at: www.london.gov.uk/what-we-do/planning/london-plan/new-london-plan

It’s encouraging to see that the plan places great emphasis on ‘heritage led regeneration’. This is a strategy that the Sydenham Society has supported over the years, and is why we campaigned to save the Greyhound and, more recently, the Bell Green gas holders. In November Lewisham’s Mayor and Cabinet agreed to locally list the gas holders; at the planning committee later that month members voted unanimously to refuse the application by Kier/Southern Gas Network to demolish them and replace them with a supermarket and storage facility. The committee rejected the application for the following reasons: building on the bowling green would destroy the setting of the listed Livesey Hall and war memorial; allowing more retail at Bell Green would exceed the amount permitted in Lewisham’s core strategy; a retail development would increase the amount of traffic on the road network and there would be a consequent decrease in air quality.
We are now waiting to see if the developer will go to appeal or come back with a revised scheme. In our view the gas holders should be retained, as part of a mixed use development which includes residential units within the gas holders and landscaping – as at King’s Cross and now planned for the iconic Oval gas holders.

In other parts of Sydenham, development continues apace. At 22a-24 Sydenham Road the new building, now named Zanara Court, fits in splendidly with the streetscape and both the residential and retail units are being marketed. A full planning application for residential units at Regent House (to the rear of Cobbs) is expected shortly, to be preceded by a consultation meeting. A new application has been lodged for 29 residential units (a mix of flats and houses) at the former O’Rourke’s site at 154-158 Sydenham Road and in Kirkdale the former Windmill will shortly be demolished to make way for a new residential block with a bar below.

ROADS & TRANSPORT

The arrival of the Overground in 2010 transformed our local rail services – and the introduction of longer trains helped make the experience even better, even though the increased numbers using the trains often didn’t make it feel that way! However we are now facing major setbacks to local services.

Plans to introduce two extra Overground trains per hour to and from Crystal Palace have been cancelled by the London Mayor, Sadiq Khan.

He is also running a consultation on permanent closure of all ticket offices at all Overground stations, including Sydenham and Forest Hill. While ticket office use has fallen, more than 600 passengers still use the Sydenham station ticket office daily.

Southern have been consulting on their new timetable. This is intended to start later this year when the new Thameslink service opens. Working with our new local MP, Ellie Reeves, the Sydenham Society has helped to ensure that we can continue to travel to and from East Croydon throughout the day.

The London Borough of Bromley are consulting on two proposed Quietway walking and cycling routes, one going from Lower Sydenham to Bromley and the other from Kent House to Greenwich.

EVENTS

The Events Committee filled our diaries with interesting visits, giving members an opportunity to meet and socialise. Destinations during 2017-18 included the newly opened Design Museum in Kensington, the Queen’s House in Greenwich, the Charles Dickens Museum in Bloomsbury and the Army Museum and Royal Hospital in Chelsea. We had an outstanding guided tour of St Paul’s Cathedral and we continued with our annual trip to Brighton, including lunch in an excellent pub in Rottingdean.

Our regular Quiz Nite was held for the first time at Sydenham Library. It was well attended and very successful, and we raised £211 for the Friends of Sydenham Community Library. I’m very grateful to Jackie Aldridge who has organised some wonderful events over the last 10 years and is now stepping down as Chair of the Events Committee.

SUBSCRIPTIONS

Annual subscriptions to the Sydenham Society are due for payment every January. Please help our Treasurer, Roger Feather, by paying your subscriptions now. If you haven’t already done so, it would assist us if you could set up a standing order. Please complete the form on the inside cover of this newsletter and send it to:

Roger Feather, 71 Hall Drive, London SE26 6XL

Your continuing membership means a lot to us – don’t let this be your last Sydenham Society News!
### Income and Expenditure Account

**for the year ended 31 December 2017**

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<thead>
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<th>2016 £</th>
<th>2017 £</th>
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<td><strong>Excess of income over expenditure</strong></td>
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**Balance sheet as at 31 December 2017**

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**H R Feather - Hon Treasurer**

I have examined the above Income and Expenditure Account and Balance Sheet with the books and records of the Society, and have obtained all the information I require. In my opinion these financial statements give a true and fair view of the financial affairs of the Society as at 31 December 2017 and of the income and expenditure for the year then ended.

**K Davenport - Hon Auditor**

Date: 1 February 2018

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**March screening:**

**Breakfast on Pluto**

*Neil Jordan, UK/Ireland, 2005, 128mins*

**When:** 7.30pm, Thursday 29 March

**Where:** The Sydenham Centre, 44a Sydenham Road

**Tickets:** £5

The story of a young transgender woman in 1970s Ireland who travels to London in search of her mother and of her own identity, getting into big troubles all along her journey.

Neil Jordan’s critically acclaimed dramedy features an outstanding performance by Cillian Murphy and a fabulous soundtrack!

To visit our website and Social Media pages, please visit:

**Lewisham’s six Victoria Crosses**

In the summer of 2013 the Department of Communities and Local Government announced that, as part of the national Remembrance events marking the First World War, all recipients of the Victoria Cross awarded between 1914 and 1918 would have a memorial stone unveiled in their honour.

In Lewisham, six local residents were awarded the Victoria Cross during WW1, and it was decided that all six such stones should be placed alongside each other at the Lewisham War Memorial site in Lewisham High Street, across the road from the main entrance to Lewisham Hospital.

The stones would be unveiled on the 100th anniversary date of when each VC was awarded.

The first stone was laid in honour of John Lynn in May 2015. In May 2017, two further stones were unveiled at a joint ceremony (as their VCs were awarded within a few days of each other) honouring Richard Brandram-Jones and Francis Hardy. In July last year another stone was unveiled commemorating the award to Clifford Coffin (who survived the war).

In November the penultimate stone was unveiled in honour of Walter Stone, who grew up in Blackheath and returned from studies in Canada to join up, ready to serve, in November 1914. The following month he went to Sandhurst and was gazetted to the Royal Fusiliers in May 1915. He became a Lieutenant in May 1916 and was appointed Acting Captain in November that year.

Walter Stone was killed in action at the Battle of Cambrai on 30 November 1917, aged 25 years. His body was never found.

His VC citation reads: *For most conspicuous bravery when in command of a company in an isolated position 1000 yards in front of the main line, overlooking the enemy’s position. He observed the enemy massing for an attack, and afforded invaluable information to the battalion headquarters. He was ordered to withdraw his company. Leaving a rearguard to cover the withdrawal… Captain Stone sent three platoons back and remained with the rear guard himself. He stood on the parapet with the telephone under a tremendous bombardment, observing the enemy and continued to send back invaluable information until the wire was cut under his orders.*

The rearguard was eventually surrounded and cut to pieces, and Captain Stone was seen fighting to the last, till he was shot through the head. The extraordinary coolness of this heroic officer and the accuracy of his information enabled dispositions to be made just in time to save the line and avert disaster.

The Commemoration Service and the unveiling of the stone plaque took place on 30 November with members of the Stone family present, including Jamie Stone MP, who read the above citation, and with a Guard of Honour drawn from the Royal Regiment of Fusiliers.

The sixth and final stone in honour of Alan Jerrard (who also survived the war) will be unveiled on Saturday 24 March at 11am.

*Pat Trembath (with thanks to Derek Johnson at Lewisham Council)*
Mayow Park

In 2018 we commemorate the 140th anniversary of the park’s opening on 1 June 1878, the first public open space in the south of Lewisham. In addition, Friends of Mayow Park are also celebrating their formation twenty-five years ago.

We plan to mark the occasions throughout the year culminating with Victorian fun and games at ‘Lark in the Park’ in June. I don’t think we will be able to emulate the eleven thousand attendees who witnessed the opening in 1878, but we do plan to make it a memorable occasion for all.

If you have relatives or neighbours that remember the park in bygone days perhaps you could ask them to share their memories/anecdotes/pranks/photographs with us. Please send to me at friendsofmayowpark@ymail.com. Look out for notices in the park, on our Blog and on our Facebook page.

We plan to celebrate in style!

Sue Hatchard

An afternoon in the life of a LIBRARY VOLUNTEER

I first thought about volunteering at the library, when I became too unwell to work, because of my love of books. I stayed because of the people. I had overlooked the ‘community’ aspect of the Sydenham Community Library.

I usually arrive for my shift gasping for a cup of tea, and gulp it down complaining about my bus journey. Yes, I mean you 356! After an update on the morning’s happenings and any priorities - like new displays, tidying shelves or checking reservations - I sit at the reception desk and let the afternoon unfold.

Can I use the computer to write a CV if I’m not a member? OK, I just sign in here.

I want to type a letter to my sister as my arthritis is too bad for writing. Can you help me find Word? 10p a sheet for printing, mmm maybe I’ll do double sided for 15p instead. Is there a copy of Lewisham Life? I saw a salsa class advertised in it.

What day is Rhyme Time for under-fives? Ollie loved coming with Daddy last week. Can I use headphones to play Roblox please Miss? George won’t let me play on it, but it’s my turn.

Where are your craft books please? I saw a lovely design someone was making at Knit and Natter on Saturday.

Ooh yes I’d love another tea.

The toilet is just through there. We have a changing table for little people. Oh it’s for you? Take the buggy in, no problem.

Yes, you can buy little Paddington bear to take home if Mummy has 50p to help towards our fundraising.

Library closing in fifteen minutes. Goodness that came around quickly. Let’s set up the tables for the Bridge Club to use this evening. I wonder where I left my tea mug?

Oh, my bus is due in 6 minutes - must dash. See you next week.

Janet

If Janet’s afternoon inspires you to join us, please call at the library for a volunteer form, and book an interview with our manager. Please note that the library is closed on Wednesday, Friday and Sunday.

ALBION MILLENNIUM GREEN

A NEW FOREST SCHOOL FOR 2-5 YEAR OLDS IS COMING TO FOREST HILL
* EARLY SPRING 2018 *

Come and be part of a Forest School where you can watch your little ones:
* building dens
* swinging in/and climbing trees
* being creative in the mud kitchen
* exploring the natural surroundings

To express your interest/book your toddler’s place, please contact:
info@wildtreelearning.co.uk  www.wildtreelearning.co.uk

ALL SESSIONS ARE RUN BY A REGISTERED FOREST SCHOOL PRACTITIONER
After enjoying the snowdrops and crocuses, the daffodils and tulips will be beginning to flower, the days will be longer, the sun a little warmer and our spirits brighter.

In celebration, the Concordia Chamber Choir is putting together a spring concert full of joy and exuberance. Our exhilarating centrepiece is Poulenc’s Gloria, a masterwork which, with exquisite melodies and breath-taking harmonies, manages to combine buoyant optimism and a deep, spiritual tranquillity.

We will also perform Poulenc’s 4 Motets, a popular choral work often performed during Holy Week. In an eclectic programme we also include pieces by Debussy, Messiaen and Stravinsky.

So come out of hibernation and join us for our first concert of the new season. We promise to put Spring in your heart.

The performance is at 7.30 pm on Saturday 10th March at All Saints’ Church, Lovelace Rd, SE21 8JY. Tickets cost £12 at the door, or £11 in advance from www.concordiachamberchoir.co.uk. Concessions (students and those on means tested benefits) half price.

Remember that feeling you get coming home from an amazing concert? Make a note in your diary now!

FULL OF THE JOYS OF SPRING.

This March, St Christopher’s Hospice will be holding its first ever Legacy Awareness Month. Legacies, also known as Gifts in Wills, are so important to everything St Christopher’s does, but we know that many people have questions about leaving a gift in their will and might not know who to ask.

We will be running a number of activities to help demystify legacies, and answer any other questions that you might have along the way. Anybody is welcome to come along to any of the activities and learn a little bit more, without any obligation to leave St Christopher’s a legacy.

Activities include:

‘Planning for Peace of Mind’

An afternoon of impartial advice, information and discussion around end of life plans, including expert talks from funeral advisors, solicitors and Hospice staff. Our Sydenham ‘Planning for Peace of Mind’ session will take place on Monday 12 March. The session is free to attend and refreshments will be provided.

Tours of St Christopher’s Hospice

If you would like to learn more about the Hospice, and hear more about some of the things legacies have helped us to achieve then please come along to join us for a tour. Tours will be running at various times throughout Legacy Awareness Month.

During Will Week a number of local solicitors kindly waive their fee to make or update Simple Wills for St Christopher’s supporters in return for a donation to St Christopher’s.

Although March is our Legacy Awareness Month, you are always very welcome to contact us at any time with any questions about leaving a gift in your will, and we are always happy to offer a tour or just a chat over a cup of tea.

For more information about Legacy Awareness Month and details of the full programme of events, or if you have any questions about Gifts in Wills in general, please contact Helen Wheeler on 020 8786 4715 or at h.wheeler@stchristophers.org.uk
With the promise of spring there’s a welcome splash of colour at the Horniman Museum and Gardens over the coming months – indoors, outdoors and underwater!

Our exciting new family-friendly exhibition Colour: The Rainbow Revealed runs until 28 October, exploring the endless ways in which colour shapes our world through hands-on exhibits, games and activities. On 1 March, adults can enjoy a vibrant evening of performances, music and tours celebrating colour at our Neon Late. Whilst our Big Wednesday day of family activities and performances on 4 April is inspired by the colours of spring.

The Horniman Butterfly House is open
Visitors can get up close with hundreds of colourful butterflies in a tropical indoor garden, whatever the weather. Outside in our Gardens there are signs of spring emerging. Why not search for bats, and take part in some bat-inspired arts and crafts, on a Family Bat Walk on 13 April? Or look for animals, insects and plants on a Welly Walk on the Nature Trail on 29 April.

Throughout 2018 the Horniman is celebrating the International Year of the Reef, a year-long campaign of events and initiatives to promote coral reef conservation. Visit the beautiful coral reefs in the Aquarium, see textile artworks inspired by coral, hear from people working to protect and restore reefs around the world, and join in with activities, events and workshops celebrating these fragile ecosystems. Details are on our website alongside information on the Horniman’s ground-breaking Project Coral research project.

There’s lots of fun for everyone during the Easter Holidays including the Horniman Easter Fair on 31 March and 1 April with an Easter trail, craft market and craft workshops, face painting, activities across the Gardens and a special storytelling experience of The Ugly Duckling featuring song and puppetry.

Other special events coming up include an evening of music from some of Lewisham’s best up and coming young musicians at Live at the Horniman on 2 March, a celebration of the diversity of our neighbourhood at Crossing Borders on 10 March, and a Youth Takeover family day on 24 March.

And it’s only a few months until our exciting new World Gallery opens in June, displaying over 3,000 extraordinary objects from around the world and celebrating what it means to be human. You can find updates online at www.horniman.ac.uk plus further details on events and activities and how you can support us through our Membership and Benefactors schemes.

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David Milne: Modern Painting

14 February - 7 May 2018

A major exhibition of one of Canada’s greatest modern painters, David Milne (1882-1953). It will showcase, for the first time in the UK, a wide selection of his oil paintings alongside watercolours, drawings and photographs, to reveal an artist of true originality and vision.

Rediscover: Tiepolo’s 'Joseph Receiving Pharoah’s Ring'

20 March - 3 June 2018

Rediscover one of Dulwich Picture Gallery’s finest masterpieces: Joseph Receiving Pharaoh’s Ring by Giambattista Tiepolo (1696–1770).

Since 2016, this painting has been the focus of a major conservation project. With the help of X-rays, this display explores the changes the artist made during the course of its production.

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Dulwich Picture Gallery

FORTHCOMING EXHIBITIONS

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**SYDENHAM SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP FORM**

Annual cost of membership
- Individual (includes partner) £6.00 per year
- Senior citizen (includes partner) £5.00 per year
- Postal member (includes partner) £8.50/£7.50 per year

Name ____________________________
Address ____________________________
Post code ____________________________
Tel day ____________________________ Tel eve ____________________________
Email ____________________________

Renewal is due in January. Postal members are those resident outside SE23 and SE26 post codes. Subscriptions can be paid by cheque or standing order. Please make cheques payable to The Sydenham Society.

**Bank details for The Sydenham Society standing order**

Name of your bank/building society ____________________________
Address of your bank/building society ____________________________
Account number ____________________________ Sort code ____________________________
Signed ____________________________
Your name (please print) ____________________________

Please pay the Sydenham Society (Lloyds Bank plc, Sydenham Branch, Sort Code 30-98-42, Account no. 00524410) the sum of £8.50/£7.50/£6/£5 (please delete as appropriate) on 5 January each year until further notice. This replaces any standing order in favour of the ‘Sydenham Society’. Please return to: Roger Feather, 71 Hall Drive, Sydenham, London SE26 6XL Tel: 020 8778 4318 Email: membership@sydenhamsociety.com
A warm welcome to the following new members

John Barnes  Barry Channon  Coral Howard  Caroline Newton-Hardie  Eric & Sue Yeasey
Steve & Karen Belk  Sophie Davis  Mr & Mrs J Letts  Max Brode  Edith Walker
Amanda Caley  Honorata Formela  David Mannerson  Sarah & Graham Putt  Rosalind Whitford

Please note that subscriptions for 2018 are now due. If you have not paid for 2017, you will not receive future newsletters. Many thanks.
Roger Feather, Treasurer, 71 Hall Drive SE26 6XL Tel: 020 8778 4318 Email: membership@sydenhamsociety.com

Issuing of Membership Cards We agreed at the 2015 AGM that to lower costs we will only issue membership cards when you pay your subscription in cash or if you send us a self-addressed envelope. We will also issue you a membership card to support your National Trust free entry voucher if you send in an SAE.

www.sydenhamsociety.com
Covering all aspects of local community matters ■ Member of the London Forum ■ Member of Civic Voice