



The Battersea Society

Newsletter

Spring 2005



Registered Charity no 1096322

Happy New Year ! We hope this year brings good fortune and happiness to all our members and readers.

The new newsletter has been warmly received and we are grateful for your feedback. Don't forget this is your newsletter and we are always open to any new ideas and suggestions for improvement.

We have received a few comments from members, which are included in the Letters column. Please continue to keep in touch with us this way. Thank you to those who took the trouble to write. Contact email address for The Editor is anita-focus@tiscali.co.uk

CHAIRMAN'S MESSAGE

The year ahead promises to be a challenging one for the Battersea Society. There are a number of threats and opportunities looming for the "betterment of Battersea".

We have set ourselves a target of increasing our membership by 25% in the course of 2005. We have done this not only because we want to be more representative of the views of Battersea residents – but also because we want to do more and we want to try to achieve more.

Just as our charitable status will be a launch pad for fundraising, so the efforts of our current management team will be the springboard for increasing not only our total membership, but also our active membership.

We can only ever achieve things if we have people to do them. We can only do some things if we have the income from a large membership base to finance them. You can help. This Newsletter not only has a membership application form on page 8, but should have a separate application form inserted. So do please ask a friend/neighbour to join. If you received this Newsletter, by way of a mail-out or from a local shop or retail outlet, or just through your letterbox, do please look at the Newsletter and see what the Society is involved in. Do join with us. The more the merrier.

Tony Tuck *Chairman of The Battersea Society*

Members who have paid their subscription are requested to complete the gift aid section of the membership form, if they have not already done so. This will enable The Society to benefit further if they are British tax payers. Please return the form to **Wendy Deakins, Membership Secretary, 34 Albany Mansions, Albert Bridge Road, London SW11 4PG**

REFUSE COLLECTION – NEW CONTRACTORS



Refuse collection in Battersea has not been without its problems, and the change in September to new contractors has been most unsatisfactory. Roads half swept, litter left lying about for days makes one wonder if anyone is keeping an

eye on them. The present situation is that if one complains one's road is maintained well, but the adjoining streets are left uncared for, probably until a resident there complains. Stanmer Street is particularly grubby. Considering this road is used continuously to access Battersea Park, it is important that it is regularly cleaned up. It is hoped that Wandsworth Council will be addressing residents' concerns and will give better supervision to the problems. Do you have any concerns about litter and road sweeping

in your area ?

If so, please email The Editor at anita-focus@tiscali.co.uk and we will print these concerns in our next issue



NEW CHAIRMAN OF PLANNING COMMITTEE WANTED

The Society's Planning Sub-Committee aims to protect, and where possible enhance, the amenities of Battersea by identifying significant proposals for redevelopment and making representations about them. Our objective is to safeguard Battersea for the people who live here, and for future generations. The issues taken up over the last year include redevelopment of the Ralph West Hall of Residence in Albert Bridge Road, a proposal for increased density on the site of the South Bank Business Centre at 140 Battersea Park Road, the Lots Road scheme across the river [see separate article] and, of course, the revised proposals for Battersea Power Station.

This is a lively committee. But, because of his many other commitments in London and in Wales, David Lewis feels he must step down as convenor in May. If you are interested in planning issues, and think you might be able to take over that role, please contact Harvey Heath as soon as possible. Or, if you have not previously been involved with the committee, and would just like to be notified of future meetings, let him know.

ADVERTISING RATES

If you would like to advertise in future issues, the rates are:
£10 per issue
£40 for all 4 issues (with a free insertion in the 5th issue.
For more information or to place an advertisement, please contact the Editor on 020 7228 3502 or email anita-focus@tiscali.co.uk
Our distribution is approximately 1,000 per issue and concentrates on the Battersea area.

ENewsletter

Members wishing to receive their copy of the newsletter via email should send an email to battsoc@aol.com. They will then receive the Newsletter as an Adobe PDF file.

REDEVELOPMENT OF LOTS ROAD POWER STATION

Developers Circadian are seeking permission to build two towers, of 37 storeys and 25 storeys, in front of the old Lots Road Power Station, directly across the river from St Mary's Church. The 37 storey tower would be by far the tallest building in south-west London (although the decision is awaited on a proposed 50 storey tower at Vauxhall).

A public inquiry opened at Kensington Town Hall on February 1st, and the Battersea Society will be appearing there to express opposition to the proposals.

The historical importance of Lots Road Power Station is only now being recognised. But it has long been a familiar landmark, marking a major bend in the Thames. Although the power station would be

retained in the proposed scheme (converted into a shopping mall and flats), the architect, Sir Terry Farrell, wants to dwarf it with his massive towers. To justify his approach, he has argued there is no need to retain Lots Road as a dominant feature because, unlike the power stations at Battersea and Bankside (now Tate Modern), it was not designed as a 'river palace'. However, Kensington & Chelsea Council roundly rejected this argument in refusing planning permission for the part of the scheme which lies in that borough (the other part lies in Hammersmith & Fulham).

Photographic mock-ups show the two chimneys of the power station framed tastefully between Terry Farrell's two towers; the model at the public inquiry has been carefully arranged to give the same

effect. That view, however, would be obtained only from a short stretch of the Battersea bank. The reality is that, as well as being far too large, the two towers would block views of the power station from most angles, producing a very untidy overall effect.

Over and above visual impact, the Society will be opposing the scheme on grounds of the effect on traffic conditions from building a total of 800 new flats, given the excessive congestion already experienced at Battersea Bridge. In opposing the scheme, we are co-operating with the Chelsea Harbour Residents Association, the Chelsea Society and a number of other amenity societies on the north bank.



RECYCLING – JUNK MAIL DELIVERY

If you are becoming overwhelmed by the ever-increasing volume of junk mail coming through your letterbox, contact Wandsworth Council for a 'No Junk Mail' sticker to put on your letterbox.

I did so, and it has made such a difference and reduced my

orange recycling sacks from 4 to just 2 weekly. Telephone: 020 7291 3310 The service is free of charge !



PROFESSIONAL DOG WALKERS

Wandsworth Council is to be commended for initiating new proposals to control professional dog walkers using the parks and open spaces.

They tend to congregate with each other and this brings out the pack instinct within some of the dogs, which is intimidating to park users and dog owners accompanying their own dogs.

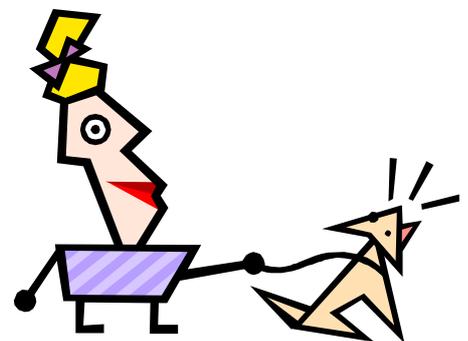
CYCLING ON PAVEMENTS



Is anyone else concerned about the increase in cyclists using the pavements and causing a dangerous hazard to pedestrians? Several people have been badly injured by cyclists who disregard the minute signs put up by the Council. If these signs are brought to the attention of the cyclists one just ends up on the receiving end of a stream of abuse.

Local Councillors have been contacted about these concerns, but this is not a priority for them because they do not want to discourage cyclists. What about the pedestrians who are injured by these cyclists? It appears that the Council is not concerned about them. The signs need to be much larger and local Councils and the GLA need to take a firm stand against cyclists using the pavements.

If you have a view on this, please contact The Editor anita-focus@tiscali.co.uk



DO YOU KNOW

The façade of Wandsworth Library on Lavender Hill has no very distinctive features. Walking past, one is unlikely to give it a second glance. The Reference Library, however, is quite a different 'kettle of fish'. The entrance is around the corner in Altenburg Gardens and is quite easy to miss as it is usually partly obscured by parked 4X4s, motor bikes etc.

The feature of the building that makes it unusual is the fact that it was built in the English

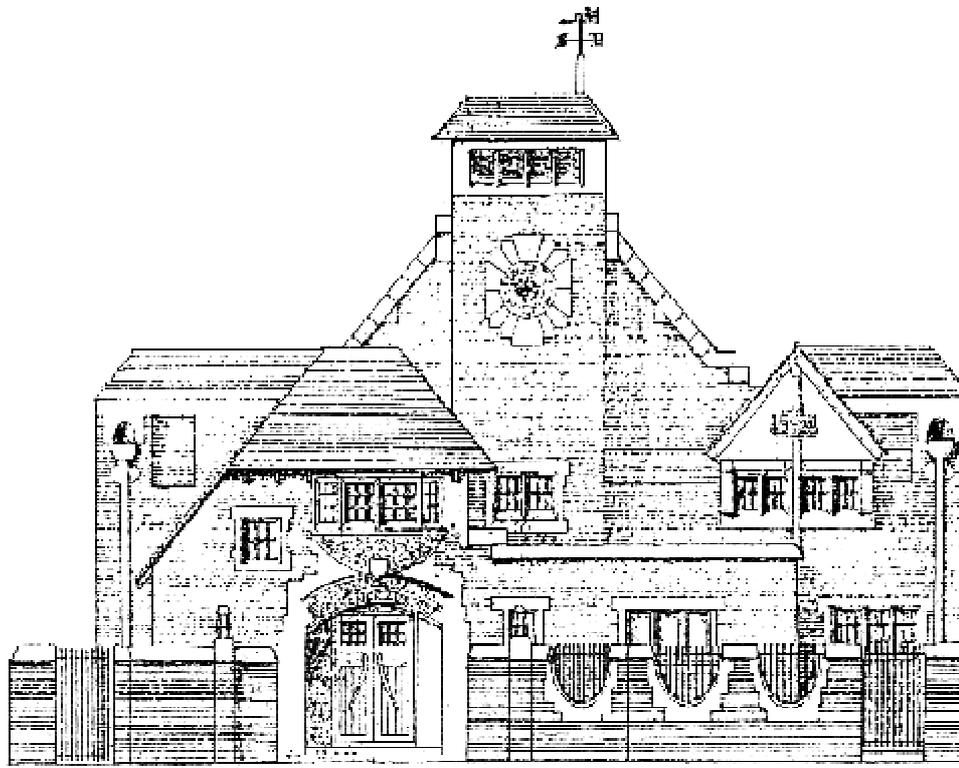
Arts and Crafts style in 1924, much later than one would expect. There seems to be no record of who was responsible for the distinctive design, but the circumstances of its construction are detailed in a paper by Local History Librarian, Tony Shaw, which is available in the Reference Library.

The illustration shows the asymmetric façade of the building, a mixture of fanciful medieval detail with a touch of continental Art Nouveau. One enters the building through the

doors on the left. The inscription on the porch reads "Non mihi, non tibi, sed nobis" ("Not for me, not for you but for all of us"). The Reading Room is much simpler; a splendid top light space; unchanged since it was built; the only decoration some interesting carved wooden panels.

Well worth a visit, if you are not already familiar with this building.

Brian and Cynthia Newman



Cynthia Newman

announces an exhibition
by

Bronwen Cunningham,

Elaine Nelson,

Brian Newman,

Charles Shearer

of

drawings, paintings, prints
and pieced silks.

from

Friday 6th to Monday 9th May.

Phone 020 7228 3612

for details and invitation.

WINDOW CLEANING SERVICES

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DID YOU KNOW?

The Irish in South London

Strange to say, potatoes – or rather, the dearth of them – were the cause of a huge influx of people from Ireland to South London in the middle of the last century. For it was what became known as ‘the potato famine’ that drove hordes of people over here to seek their fortune, or at any rate, a living.

This came about through a sudden potato blight caused by a killer fungus, which once established makes the potato end up as a rotten pulp. Out of a population of eight million, half of them subsisted on potatoes alone, the effect of the famine was devastating, and it is reported that over a million people perished, while another million emigrated.

Many of the famine refugees made their way to the United States, but a huge number came to Southern England where, in the first instance, they found work in the hop fields of Kent. When that

harvest was over, they made their way North to the Thames where they found immediate employment in the London Docks, and on projects such as the building of London Bridge, and, much later, on the construction of Battersea Park whose contours were built up by soil which had been excavated from the Royal Docks and brought up river by barge. The huge expansion of the railways also provided a massive source of employment.

All in all, the South Bank of the River Thames provided work which started the beginning of a new prosperity for these Irish immigrants. Factories and many commercial enterprises such as granaries and oil refineries sprang up in Battersea, whilst candle making, chemicals, gas making, locomotive building, laundering and general river work provided a reliable source of work and a resultant rise in the fortunes of these people who had fled from conditions of utter poverty.

With this influx of people from Ireland, came the building of both Catholic churches and schools. When the first immigrants arrived, Catholic services were conducted in community rooms and even, in one case, on the first floor of a public house! The Church of Our Lady of Mount Carmel was built in Battersea Park Road in 1868 and in 1893 the present Catholic Church in Trott Street replaced an earlier iron building, while two years later the Salesian Catholic College was opened behind it.

A hundred and fifty years later, the Irish community still play a valuable part in the life of London, and more especially south of the river, in Vauxhall, Southwark, Bermondsey, Deptford and Battersea.

Researched and contributed by The Dowager, Lady Cottesloe.



EVENTS

March 16 TRANSPORT FORUM at 6.30 pm at Battersea Technology College, Battersea Park Road. Free Admission. Update on current transport policies and funding. Speakers from Transport for London and others.

April 17 ANNUAL SPRING LUNCH 12.30 for 1.00 pm at Chada Thai 208, Battersea Park Road. Buffet Lunch at £15 per head. Contact Cynthia Newman on 020 7228 3612 to reserve a place.

May 7th VISIT TO THE ROYAL OPERA HOUSE at 2.30 pm. Backstage conducted tour. Booking deadline beginning of March. Sae (self addressed stamped envelope) and £10 cheque made payable to The

Battersea Society to be sent to John Garvan, 1 Frere Street, London SW11 2JA. Tel: 7738 9350.

May 12th ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING at 7.00pm at St Mary's Parish Church, Church Road, Battersea. To include a talk on 'The History of the Working People of Battersea and their lives', by noted historian/lecturer Sean Creghton.

June 4th 'PARK TOWN AND ARRIVAL OF THE RAILWAYS WALK' (2 hours) led by David Lewis. 11.00 am meet at Queens Circus Gate, Battersea Park. Free. Contact: David Lewis 7622 8017. Part of Wandsworth Heritage Fortnight.

June 9th BI-PLANES IN BATTERSEA TALK by Patrick Loobey, local historian and author of Battersea Past. 7.30 pm at Battersea Dogs' Home, Battersea Park Road. Admission £5. Sae and cheque to be made payable to The Battersea Society to be sent to John Garvan, 1 Frere Street, London SW11 2JA. Tel: 7738 9350

July 6th TOUR OF CROSBY HALL, CHEYNE WALK, CHELSEA from 3.00-4.30 pm. £20 admission fee to include light refreshments. Part of the admission fee is to be donated by the owner to his chosen charity. Sae and cheque made payable to The Battersea Society and sent to John Garvan, 1 Frere Street, SW11 2JA. Tel: 7738 9350

BATTERSEA PARK

The Open Spaces Committee continues to monitor the park and report back any concerns to the Parks Officers. Refuse from the Adventure Playground, Under 5s Toddlers Playground has caused concern because of it not being held in closed containers.

We are relieved that the Park officials agreed to do this following our concerns about it, because it was regularly full of refuse and nasty items and was also a complete eyesore as well as unhygienic.

Another area of concern is the

circle around them and a notice saying no cycling, others just have a N/C marked out roughly in yellow paint and have been like this for nearly a year. We have asked the Parks Officer to look into the signage and to consider uniform signs as to where cyclists are allowed and not allowed. This will greatly assist all park users.

The No skating sign is completely obscured by shrubs.

A motorcycle going at great speed past the Toddler's playground narrowly missed some of us. It does not bear thinking



Vermin open the bags and spread the refuse and dog owners complain that it is hard to keep their dogs away from the contents of the bags. The situation is made more unfortunate because the bags are not collected early in the day.

The large skip that was placed outside the Adventure Playground opposite the Prince of Wales exit for almost a year has now been removed and replaced with a covered skip.

confusion over the signage in the park with regard to cyclists and motor -cycles using the paths, some showing complete indifference to the children's play areas and pedestrians. There is a jumble of signs, which add to the confusion.

Some have a cross, some have a bicycle with a red



about as how he could he avoided a small child running out of the playground and across his path ! There should be no vehicles whatsoever in this area where there are very young children running about.

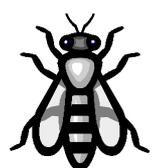
If you have other concerns about Battersea Park or other local parks and open spaces, please consider joining the Open Spaces Committee or contact The Editor anita-focus@tiscali.co.uk

A WARM WELCOME TO OUR NEW MEMBERS WHO HAVE JOINED SINCE NOVEMBER 2004 !

Vivian Redhead
Dr N Roberts
Mr J Bryne Daniel
Mr R Barker
Ms JMD Williams
Robert De Wynter

Elaine Nason
Mrs Ilinca Bossy
Gill Sutch
Adele Cassin
Mr Gilles Coustere
Diana Margolis and Alistair Johnson

Erica Schuele Grosso
Rosemary Broke Evans
Mrs Helen Searing
Beth Robson
Tim Morris
Jane Smith
Hazel James



BATTERSEA PEOPLE - JOHN JOHNSON

Perhaps one of the most familiar faces in Battersea is John Johnson, the Ward Officer for Latchmere and St Mary's Park Wards. It is rare to see John cycling down any street in Battersea without people stopping him for a chat. His reassuring presence and manner makes him an extremely popular Battersea person. Also the fact that he lives in Battersea, really makes him one of us! He knows his community well and has been doing this job for 19 years and has lived here for 9 years. John joined the Metropolitan Police in 1980, was awarded Metropolitan Police Community Constable of the Year by the Metropolitan Police in 1994 and 2001.



John is also involved with Neighbourhood Watch in Battersea and edits the Newsletter. He is Vice-Chair of

Governors at Chestnut Grove School. He is also a student mentor at Chestnut Grove School and at the Salesian College. He is a past President and active member of the Rotary Club of Battersea Park.

John's other involvements with our community are too long to list, but he is actively involved with St Mary's Parish Church as a Server, and is the Founder of Battersea Crime Prevention Panel's Battersea Police Ball, which for the last 9 years has raised money for Crime Prevention. John's huge contribution to Battersea life is much appreciated.

Reader's Letters

First of all congratulations on the newsletter; very interesting and informative; keep up the good work! We were most interested to read the article explaining how a car club would work; and we would certainly be interested in find out more with a view to getting something like this off the ground in Battersea. Please count us in at this exploratory stage. Best regards. Angela and Mike Roden 13 Sunbury Lane, SW11 3NP. Email angela@ladybarn.com if you would like to join them in this.

Congratulations on the Newsletter. I found it really interesting and it's just the sort of thing the Society should be producing. I'm sure it was a lot of work, but it was worthwhile. I have a couple of suggestions 1) Might it be a good idea to ask if some members would be

happy to receive copies by email, thus saving postage? 2) How about a series of articles on each of the sub-committees, so members know what they do? Best wishes, Jenny Sheridan

Christine Fremantle writes: 'Rubbish and litter are a continuing concern, which show no improvement in spite of regular reporting back to the Wandsworth Council. Added to this is fly tipping by residents, which again the Council is slow to act on'. Christine is also concerned that the noise from the Exhibition/Conference Centre within Battersea Park is becoming a problem for the zoo animals.

Sylvia Rushbrooke of the Quecumbar suggests: 'A proposal to have Battersea High Street opened up again from the river right through to

Battersea Park Road. This is because there have been several incidents of violence near the bridge late at night, and her staff are vulnerable to attack. She would also like to see the Battersea Park Road end of Battersea High Street improved. Many shops now empty and it has become seedy and unkempt. The area is crying out for regeneration, which would give it a new lease of life'. Sylvia also writes that there is supposed to be funding for this area. 'Where is it? Who is getting it?' Sylvia is also concerned that there is no bank in the area. We hope that Wandsworth Council will look into these concerns. If you support Sylvia's concerns, please contact Wandsworth Council with your comments.



Battersea Society Committee

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Co-chair Open Spaces s/c

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Minutes Secretary: Cynthia Newman
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APPLICATION FOR MEMBERSHIP

THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY

registered Charity Number 1103560

Patrons: Dido, Lady Berkeley John Bowis OBE MEP Lord Dubs of Battersea

I/we should like to join THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY (Please use block capitals)

Name Date
 Address Post Code
 Home phone Work phone Mobile
 Email Special interests

Type of membership:	Individual £7.00	Family (up to 4 members) £10.00	Voluntary Groups £10.00
	Businesses £10.00	Life membership £70.00	
	Donation		Total

The annual Membership Subscription covers the period from the 1st. January to the 31st. December. However, new members joining after the 31st. October will not be expected to renew their subscription until 1st. January up to 14 months later.

Standing order: Membership subscription paid by standing order simplifies administration and means the Society saves the cost of sending 'reminder' letters. A standing order is simple to set up and can be cancelled at any time by instructing your bank.

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Bank Name Address
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 Please pay to: Barclays Bank (20.80.14) 349 Kings Road London, SW3 5UT
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 The sum of £..... to be paid now and thereafter annually until further notice.
 Name: Date
 Address Post code

Signature

Gift Aid Declaration (Please use block capitals)

If you are a U.K. taxpayer you can make your donation worth more by signing the declaration below. For every pound you give, THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY is able to reclaim the tax paid on your donation, substantially increasing the value.

I, the undersigned, confirm that I am a U.K. taxpayer and that the income tax and/or capital gains tax I pay, will be at least equal to the tax that the charity will reclaim on this gift. Please treat all payments I make to THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY, on or after the date of this declaration as Gift Aid donations, until I notify you otherwise.

Signature Date

**Please make cheques payable to: THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY and send with the completed form to:
 Membership Secretary, THE BATTERSEA SOCIETY, 34 Albany Mansions, Albert Bridge Road, SW11 4PG.
 If you would like a receipt, please enclose a stamped and addressed envelope.**