



The Belsize Society is a Registered Charity (number 1180842), continuing the work of the Belsize Residents Association.

www.belsize.org.uk

Notes from your Chair

Welcome to the February Newsletter of the Belsize Society.

In this Newsletter, we bring you an article by Averil Nottage where she shares her research on Old Bailey records about duels in Chalk Farm. (Averil will also be giving a talk at the Library on another aspect of local history, 'Artists, Refugees and Spies in Belsize in the 1930s'.)

Across the Newsletter, we update you on some initiatives being taken in the area. One focuses on the cost of living crisis, with a meeting being held recently exploring the support available to those affected, and the options for taking a community led approach. The Council has recently consulted on climate change and the Society responded to this. A piece in the Newsletter covers what we said. We also cover a skills support intervention focusing on IT. The Newsletter has updates from the Isokon Gallery and some tips on bulky waste collection.

It was great to see many of you at the carol singing before Christmas. People were very generous in donating to the Marie Curies Hospice. We hope to see you again at the AGM, when we will be returning to the Belsize Square Synagogue, and able to talk about the Society and enjoy cakes and tea together.

You'll see, with this Newsletter, the papers for the Annual General Meeting (or you have had the papers emailed). As always, if you have views on the what direction the Society should take, this will be a chance to let the Committee know. Also, if you would like to help in running the Society, do get in touch.

Hope you enjoy the Newsletter.

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Belsize Society Annual General Meeting

*Sunday, 12 March 2021
at 3pm*

*Belsize Square Synagogue,
51 Belsize Square*

*Followed by refreshments and a
chance to meet other members
from 4:15pm*

Members only

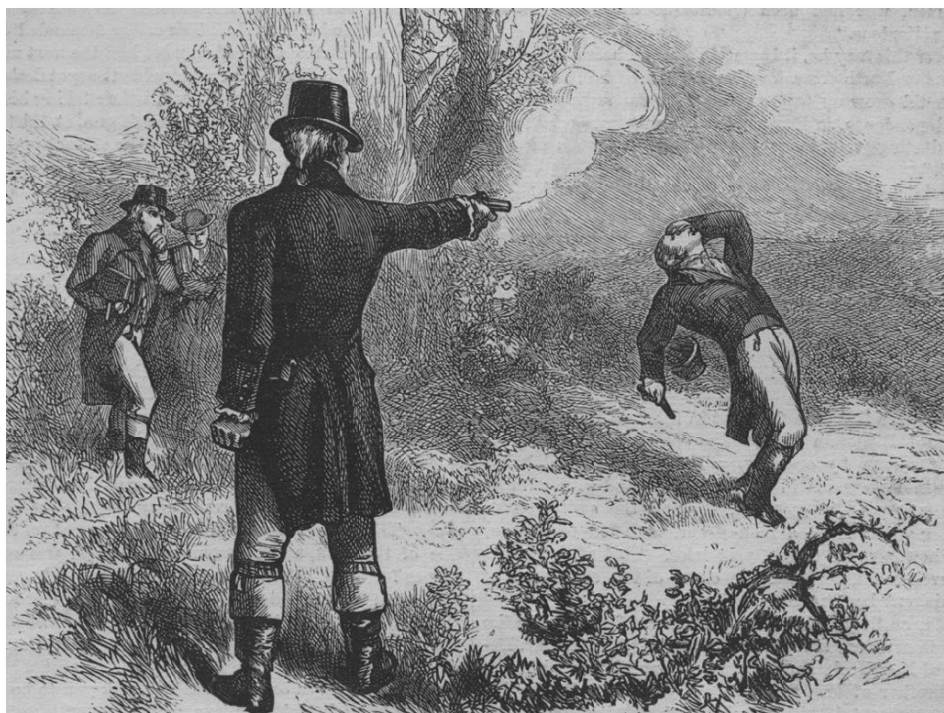
Pistols at Dawn In Chalk Farm

Averil Nottage, local historian and former BRA Chair, tells us about a murky side of life in Chalk Farm in past centuries:

On the morning of Monday 12 January 1818 William Adams, of Little Chalk Farm, England's Lane felt unwell. So, he was still in bed when he heard two firearm shots in quick succession shortly after 9 o'clock. From his window he saw four men standing in a field opposite his house - two facing each other, about 12 yards apart, with the others standing to one side. Realising that a duel was being fought, Mr Adams dressed quickly and rushed out, hoping that he could prevent anyone being injured. The field was about 50 yards from his house and just as he climbed over the gate, he heard two further shots and saw three men running towards a fourth man who was bleeding profusely. Mr Adams confiscated the pistols and observed that it was a most unfortunate affair, to which one of the men responded: "Yes, it is:

it is not our quarrel originally, we are all friends." The others agreed.

The injured man, Lieutenant Edmund Bailey, was carried to Mr Adams' house and laid on a sofa in his parlour. Mr George Rodd, a surgeon from Hampstead, was summoned but unable to save Lieutenant Bailey because of several injuries to his intestines. Before he died the Lieutenant shook hands with Mr



O'Callaghan, who had shot him, and said he freely forgave him and that everything had been conducted most honourably. He asked Mr O'Callaghan if he would have forgiven him if he was in his place. Mr Callaghan replied, "Yes my dear fellow, I wish I had been wounded instead of you."

Mr Adams sent for Thomas Hunt, the Hampstead constable, who arrested Mr O'Callaghan and the two friends who had acted as seconds. They were taken to Newgate Prison and tried at the Old Bailey on Friday 16 January. All three men were charged with feloniously, wilfully and with malice of forethought murdering Edmund Bailey. Ten respectable witnesses gave the prisoners excellent character references for their humanity and gentleness of mind. The jury found them guilty of the lesser charge of manslaughter for which they were imprisoned for 3 months.

It wasn't surprising that Mr Adams was alert to duels as the peaceful meadows near Chalk Farm were a favourite meeting place for them in the 18th and early 19th centuries. With no houses between England's Lane and the Chalk Farm Tavern (where the Lemonia Restaurant

now stands), and trees screening the fields, they provided perfect privacy.

In 1806 an Irish poet, Thomas Moore, published "Epistles, Odes and Other Poems" that were deeply critical of America. Francis Jeffrey condemned him as "the most licentious of modern versifiers" in the Edinburgh Review. Moore retaliated by challenging him to a duel at dawn on 11 August 1806 in Chalk Farm. Both men were totally ignorant of the practicalities of duelling. A friend, who lent pistols to Moore, informed the Bow Street Runners. So, as Moore and Jeffrey faced each other across a Chalk Farm meadow, the constables appeared. Both men and their seconds were taken into custody and bound over to keep the peace. Moore and Jeffrey subsequently became good friends and Byron recorded the foiled duel in "English Bards and Scottish Reviewers" (1809).

There was another literary duel in 1821. John Scott, the editor of the radical London Magazine, was affronted when the High Tory Blackwood Magazine dismissed what they called the "Cockney School" of poets including Leigh Hunt and John Keats. The argument played out in further articles in both journals. On 16 February 1821 Scott demanded an apology or "instant satisfaction". When no apology was forthcoming, a duel was arranged for that evening at Chalk Farm. It was a clear moonlit night, but unfortunately Scott and his second were not familiar with the duelling codes. In the first round Jonathan Christie, his opponent, deliberately fired wide, which should have ended the process. However, because Scott's second did not understand this, another round followed where Christie, in defending himself, mortally wounded Scott. Scott was taken to the Chalk Farm Tavern where he died on 27 February "without a groan." He left a wife and two children. Jonathan Christie was charged with wilful murder but found not guilty.

By the 1820s there was strong public opposition to duelling which gradually faded out over the next few decades as buildings began to replace the pretty hay meadows of Chalk Farm.



If you missed Averil's "Artists, Refugees and Spies in Belsize in the 1930s" walk in September, there are two more opportunities to find out about this fascinating subject. Averil has written it up as a self guided walk which is now available on our website at www.belsize.org.uk in the About Belsize section. Averil is also giving an illustrated talk about how art and espionage flourished in Belsize as Fascism spread across Europe in the Belsize Library.

This talk is being organised by the Friends of Belsize Library and held at 7.30 on Thursday 20 April. See back page for further details.

JOIN THE COMMITTEE

Would you like to help steer the organisation? We'd be delighted to welcome members to shape what we do through joining the new 2023 Committee.

We're always on the lookout for people with an interest in representing residents' views to Camden, organising events and contributing to the Newsletter.

If you would like to find out more about what the Committee does, then please contact us at info@belsize.org.uk.

Camden consults on climate change

In December the Council asked Camden residents: "How ready are we for a changing climate?" The aim of asking residents for their views is so that Camden can better understand community experiences of extreme weather events. Camden said:

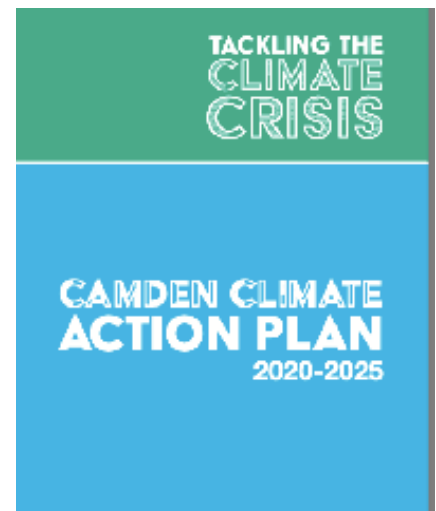
"Extreme weather events such as flooding, overheating, and drought, are now occurring more frequently than ever before. We all experienced this in the summer with the two-day heatwave, and extreme cold is also likely to occur in a more volatile climate. We need to ensure residents, vital services, and businesses in the borough are able to adapt when such events happen.

We will shortly be presenting a new strategy to the council's cabinet setting out our approach to managing flood risk in Camden, but we need to go further than this and consider all weather extremes. Next year, we will be developing our first Climate Resilience Plan and we want our communities to be a part of this journey."

They invited us to respond to a survey. Feedback received from the survey should help inform the Climate Resilience Plan and, crucially, should enable Camden to develop its services in line with community needs in order to ensure that we are better prepared for these events in the future.

BelSoc responded under their various headings with the following suggestions

- produce an information sheet to be delivered to every household on which hazards are possible and how to respond to them
- issue warnings of forecasted hazardous events in social media and the local press
- create a team to assist those in difficulty and to help clear up after any damage
- install public drinking water dispensers
- maintain drinking fountains and pools for children
- subsidise the issue of water butts
- discourage non-porous hard standings
- ensure that street and park drains are kept clear
- issue flood barriers to vulnerable properties
- provide free advice in the home on retrofitting insulation, solar panels and heat pumps
- continue discouraging the use of fossil fuels
- encourage the planting and maintenance of trees and hedges.



The Council are hoping to arrange a number of small workshops to talk more specifically about experiences and to share ideas about how to prepare collectively for the future and we hope to be able to participate.

CORRECTION

In the November Newsletter, we said on page 5 (Energy Saving in Primrose Hill: One Day Workshop) that a home can use about 24 electric ovens of to keep warms if it's freezing outside. We should have said nine ovens. Thank you to the kind reader who pointed this out.

Belsize cost of living meeting

On 1 February, a meeting was held in Belsize Community Library about the cost of living. The meeting brought together ward councillors, community organisations and local groups, schools, health partners, council services and individuals in Belsize to work towards:

- A shared understanding of the local cost of living crisis support available to people living in the Belsize wards of Camden - so that everyone can signpost people and help communicate local offers of support.
- A community-led approach to understanding the gaps in the local support offer and agreeing how to tackle them - including agreeing applications to the Council's Cost of Living Crisis community response fund. The Council has established this fund to support people and communities through this winter, and Belsize ward has an allocation of £15,000.00. Examples of community action this fund could support include development of warm spaces or food projects, personal hygiene provision and warm clothes projects.

Applications for part of the £15,000.00 funding pot for Belsize were due by Friday 10 February. We hope to keep you posted on the allocation of funds.

LIFT: Creating a knowledge economy with fairness, opportunity and prosperity for everyone

LIFT (Leading Inclusive Futures through Technology) is a 3 year partnership between four London boroughs (Camden, Islington, Hackney, and Tower Hamlets). Its primary purpose is to put residents from these boroughs in touch with good entry-level training and job opportunities in tech, digital, creative production (music or film production through computers) and life sciences (work in laboratories).

LIFT has a free service that links residents to local businesses in these sectors, offering jobs, training opportunities, start-up/enterprise support, business support, free or subsidised workspaces and funding opportunities.

LIFT is an entry-level programme which can help residents without higher education to progress either into work or onto vocational training courses. Its short courses are typically between 10 and 12 weeks long and include a paid placement to learn and earn on the job.

LIFT also has apprenticeships and internships, which are excellent ways for people to access entry-level career opportunities with room for further development.

LIFT offers insight sessions on a variety of roles within the tech and digital industries, employer visits and networking events.

For further information, visit <https://www.liftfutures.london/about>, or you can contact Cina Aissa (the LIFT community engagement officer in Camden) on 07977 178528.

You can register for LIFT's bi-monthly Bulletin to find out about the latest opportunities: <https://public.govdelivery.com/accounts/UKISLINGTON/signup/31820>.



Update on Howitt Close

January was a rollercoaster for residents and neighbours of Howitt Close. On 5 January, Camden Planning Officers announced that they were recommending approval of the second planning application to add an extra storey of seven flats on top of Howitt Close; a complete volte-face after their robust rejection of the first 2021 planning application. On 9 January, it was announced that the Planning Committee of Camden Councillors would make their final decision on Howitt Close at the hearing on 19 January. The residents and neighbours of the mansion block, who will be so badly affected by the development, felt that they were being treated with complete disrespect as they had had to wait 8 months for the Planning Officers to release their decision on the 2021 planning application, but now had a mere 10 days to prepare for the Planning Committee. However, the hasty attempt to add Howitt Close to the 19 January hearing backfired as the wrong papers were attached to the formal notice of the meeting, and the hearing had to be postponed until 30 January.

BelSoc's application to add Howitt Close to the Local List of Heritage Buildings last October had proved insufficient to stop the Planning Officers, who appear determined to vandalise a building they described last year as "a complete composition of considerable charm which, through good design suits its context well." An application for Grade II listing had been discussed amongst BelSoc Committee members and the decision was reached that it was 'Now or Never.' BelSoc Committee Member, Barbara Abraham, had already researched the history of Howitt Close and its architects, Henry F Webb & Ash, but considerable further work was needed to construct, review and finalise a credible application to Historic England for Grade II Listing. This was submitted to HE late on 26 January and Camden's Planning Committee was informed the next day.

At the same time as the listing application was being prepared, three key players (Tom Symes for BelSoc, David Thomas, Chairman of the Belsize Conservation Area Advisory Committee and BelSoc committee member, and Sally McFall, who has campaigned tirelessly for Howitt Close residents and neighbours) were frantically preparing and rehearsing their joint presentation to the Planning Committee, to ensure that they were ready to put forward all the critical arguments to Camden Councillors on the night.

All this activity came to an abrupt stop at 11pm on Friday 27th, when Belsize Councillor Tom Simon emailed to advise that Camden Council had cancelled the hearing of the planning application until after Historic England has decided on the Grade II Listing. It has been an extremely stressful start to the year for all those who care about preserving Howitt Close.

Interests, whims and curiosities

Do you have a particular interest in the architecture, history, notable residents or cultural contribution of Belsize? If so, we would welcome an article for the Newsletter. Please contact info@belsize.org.uk for further information. The whimsical and curious are welcome.



The Italian street artist Enko has made this mural in Daleham Mews for local architects and designers Omnide.

Isokon Gallery, Lawn Road

As we head towards spring, readers may be pleased to know that the Isokon Gallery in the Isokon Building will reopen after the winter break on Saturday 4 March 2023. The story of Isokon (aka Lawn Road Flats, which opened in 1934) is told through texts contributed by leading experts on the Modernist period, a number of original artefacts and the recreation of an original bathroom and kitchen. The Gallery is open to visitors 11am-4pm every Saturday and Sunday, from the start of March until the end of October. Entry is free and no booking is required. For further details, go to <https://isokongallery.org/>.



Belsize Carol Singing

The Society's Christmas Carol Singing was well-attended with over fifty singing along with Matthew Watts at Belsize Terrace. We were joined by the Primrose Hill Community Choir. During the 45 minutes, some old favourites were rolled out, many with our youngest singers leading from the front. Also, over £250 was raised for the Marie Curie hospice, a good local cause.



Bulky waste collections

It is always very irritating to see large items dumped on the pavements of Belsize in the vain hope or misguided expectation that they will be collected by Veolia with ordinary waste on bin day. That does not happen, of course.

Veolia can collect large items that do not fit in your bin, including beds or mattresses, broken furniture like sofas or chairs, and extra bags of rubbish. To book a collection, you should contact Veolia on 020 3567 8105. Help to move items for collection to the outside edge of your property can be provided by Camden's handyperson service (charges apply). Large electrical items can be collected for free by Clearabee, or also by Veolia for a separate charge. You are entitled to two free collections a year if you are a Camden resident and are aged 65 and over, or receive 100% Council Tax Support. You should email uk.occamden@veolia.com to find out more about the service.

Bulky waste, including reusable furniture and large items that do not fit in your bin, can still be taken to Regis Road reuse and recycling centre in Kentish Town.

The Love Clean Streets app can be used to report street cleaning issues, such as illegally dumped rubbish, dog mess, graffiti and litter, using your smartphone. You can report fly-tipping online through the Love Clean Streets web page (camden.lovecleanstreets.com/help) or by calling Veolia on 020 3567 8105.



Dates for your diary

Belsize Society

12 Mar, 3pm. Annual General Meeting. Agenda and papers sent to members. Belsize Square Synagogue, 51 Belsize Square. Members only.

Camden Arts Centre, Arkwright Road, NW3 www.camdenartscentre.org

23 Feb, 7pm. Public Knowledge: Quantum Listening. Celebrate musician Pauline Oliveros with an evening of sonic meditation, ambient resonance and abyssal sounds. £4/£5.

16 Jun-17 Sep. Martin Wong: Malicious Mischief. Exhibition of the work of Chinese-American artist surveying over 100 of the artist's works, paintings and sculptures made in the euphoric environments of California in the late 1960s and early 1970s. Free

Belsize Community Library, Antrim Road, NW3

Thurs 20 Apr, 7.30pm. Averil Nottage will give a talk on Artists, Refugees and Spies in Belsize in the 1930s. In person, suggested donation £5.

St Peter's Church, Belsize Square, NW3

Sat 15 April, 7pm: Belsize Baroque plays Handel's Messiah. Tickets at www.belsizebaroque.org.uk. £18.

Freud Museum, 20 Maresfield Gdns NW3 5SX

25 Feb - 26 Jul. Freud's Antiquity: Object, Idea, Desire. A major new exhibition, with an accompanying digital archive, exploring the crucial role that Freud's collection of antiquities played in his development of the concepts and methods of psychoanalysis. www.freud.org.uk. £14/£12.

Burgh House, New End Square, NW3

12 Feb, 1.30pm. Mezzacapo Ensemble. Mandolin and guitar recital featuring Stuart McGowan and Jamie MacRae, with the Ensemble playing duos, trios and quartets from the Renaissance to Molitor, Strauss, Sardelli and Piazzolla. £10.

22 Feb, 6.30pm. Simply Bowie. Singer Oliver Darley and pianist Chad Lelong strip back some of Bowie's most recognisable hits to present a new interpretation of great songwriting. £15.

1 Mar, 6.30pm. An Evening of Music with Sodi Cookey. Performs his eclectic sound using Hi-life, Blues and Soul elements. £10/£8.

Contact Us

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For Newsletter submissions and letters:
info@belsize.org.uk. Deadline for next issue is: **11 April 2023**

To send posters for noticeboards:
haverstockboard@belsize.org.uk
villageboard@belsize.org.uk

To send details for Tradesmen You Can Trust:
TYCT@belsize.org.uk

For planning matters: info@belsize.org.uk

Interested in keeping up with Belsize news and events? If you wish to receive occasional emails from us with news about Belsize and BelSoc and are not already on our list, please send your email address to info@belsize.org.uk

To find out the latest about Camden Planning:
<https://www.camden.gov.uk/ccm/navigationenvironment/planning-and-built-environment/>

Would you like to join our committee and/or help with events, distribution and other tasks? If so, please email info@belsize.org.uk

www.belsize.org.uk