



THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

Registered Charity 27626

Spring Bulletin 2024



This Bulletin is printed and distributed to members twice a year, and electronic mailings are sent to members at approx. monthly intervals. If you are not receiving electronic mailings, please contact Secretary@chelseasociety.org.uk or 07803 147654. For more detail, and to keep up to date with the activities of the Society, visit our website at www.chelseasociety.org.uk

The Society now has 1,121 members. This is fantastic, but please encourage your friends and neighbours to join the Society, by visiting our website and clicking on **“Join Us.”** They do not have to be resident in Chelsea. You can also follow The Chelsea Society on Instagram, where we now have 1,099 Followers.

FUTURE EVENTS

The first ten years of The Chelsea Society

Wednesday 10th April 2024

The Vice-Chairman, Michael Stephen, will present fascinating extracts from the first Annual Reports, from 1927-1937 – together with photographs, and drawings from then and earlier times.

This will be in the elegant Library of Auriens, 2 Dovehouse Street, London SW3, in the heart of Chelsea and within one mile of the place where the Society was founded.

This event is now sold out but there is a waiting list.

For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.



Lord Trenchard - Founder of the RAF

Monday 22nd April 2024 - 6pm to 8pm



The Third Viscount Trenchard will talk about his grandfather, the first Viscount, who founded the RAF.

Marshal of the Royal Air Force Hugh Montague Trenchard, 1st Viscount Trenchard, GCB, OM, GCVO, DSO, learned to fly in Summer 1912 and gained his aviator's certificate (No. 270) on 31 July flying a Henry Farman biplane at the Sopwith School of Flying at Brooklands.

He was commander of the Royal Flying Corps in France from 1915 to 1917. In 1918, he served as the first Chief of the Air Staff before taking up command of the Independent Air Force in France. Returning as Chief of the Air Staff under Winston Churchill in 1919, Trenchard spent the following decade securing the future of the Royal Air Force.

For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.

A taste of Garzon wines from Uruguay

Monday 20th May 2024 - 6pm to 8pm

Ranked 6th Winery in the World, Garzon have recreated Tuscany in Uruguay, and will be bringing their finest wines for us to taste.

For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.



House of Commons

Monday 3rd June 2024 - 09.50 am



The Rt. Hon. Greg Hands MP has arranged a private visit for our members to the House of Commons. All places for this event have now been filled.

FUTURE EVENTS

Sir Hans Sloane

Monday 3rd June 2024 - 6pm to 8pm

Kira Charatan, the Cadogan Estate archivist, will talk about the life and times of Sir Hans Sloane, one of Chelsea's most distinguished citizens.

For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.



Chelsea Walk

Wednesday 12th June 2024 - 11am to 12.30pm

Guy Fairbank, a London Blue Badge Guide, will take us on another of his very successful Chelsea Walks

Politicians, Property Owners and Pop Stars

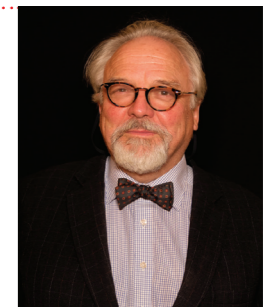
Eaton Square is London's largest square. It's been the enviable address of an extraordinary collection of people, from Seventies pin-ups to an American philanthropist, from an Oscar-winning actress to a man who once mistook Adolf Hitler for a servant. Discover more about some of its most famous residents on this 90-minute walk. For tickets see website.

Martin Vander Weyer

Monday July 1st 2024 - 6pm to 8pm

Martin Vander Weyer will speak to The Chelsea Society at Chelsea Old Town Hall on "A Spectator Columnist's life"

He is Business Editor and weekly 'Any Other Business' columnist of The Spectator. He has written for The Spectator — the oldest weekly in the English language — since 1992. He is also a regular contributor to the Daily Telegraph, and the author of several books. For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.



Germany's role in the defence of Europe

Monday 2nd September 2024 - 6pm to 8pm

Prof. Matthias Strohn M.St. (Oxon), DPhil (Oxon), FRHistS is a Lt. Col. in the German Army reserve, and is attached to the German Military Delegation in the UK. He will speak to The Chelsea Society at Chelsea Old Town Hall.

We have asked him explain how thinking in Germany about defence has changed from 1945 when nobody wanted a German army, to the present day when Germans and their allies realise that Germany has a vital role to play in the defence of Europe. He will tell us what is being done in terms of procurement, recruiting, and training, for the German Army, Navy, and Air-Force, and will evaluate the threat at the present time, with particular reference to the situation in Ukraine. For more information including payment details, see the Society's website.

Remembrance Sunday

Sunday November 10th 2024 - 10.45am

There will be a short service of remembrance at the War Memorial on Sloane Square on Sunday 10th November 2024 and then at Holy Trinity church, Sloane Street

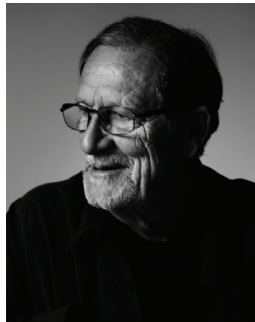
The Chairman of the Society will lay a wreath, and hopes that many members will attend

Meet on Sloane Square at 10.45



PAST EVENTS

Paul Davis – architect



We heard a talk by Paul Davis, founder of PDP architects , who is best known for rebuilding the Duke of York Square, Saatchi Gallery and Cadogan Hall – as well as much of Sloane Street.

Setting up in practice as an architect in London, a new mews for the Grosvenor Estate, and friendships in the Rock n' Roll world, turned into commissions for recording studios, stage sets and homes for Roxy Music, Duran Duran, and Beatle Ringo Starr.

The reinvention of hundreds of historic buildings in Chelsea and Westminster on behalf of Cadogan, Grosvenor, the Royal Hospital Chelsea, Brompton Hospital and other major estates, earned Paul the nickname “Mr Chelsea.”

He has written a book called “Mr Chelsea” – A Life in Rock n' Roll and Architecture from The King's Road to Tokyo published by Prospero Press. www.mrchelsea.co.uk

The fall of Margaret Thatcher - A whodunnit!

On Monday 15th January 2024 more than 100 members heard an authoritative and entertaining explanation of the last days in office of Margaret Thatcher, and the political forces at work within the Conservative Party at that time.

We were joined by Paul Allen, who was Mrs. Thatcher's hairdresser, and by the Marquess and Marchioness of Salisbury. The Marquess was a parliamentary colleague of Margaret Thatcher, and is a past-President of The Chelsea Society.

Charles Moore is the authorised biographer of Margaret Thatcher, and his final volume, *Herself Alone*, was published in 2019.



Gen. Sir Simon Mayall

Lt. Gen. Sir Simon Mayall spoke to the Society on Monday 27th November 2023 at the Chelsea Old Town Hall on the strategic military situation, with particular reference to Ukraine, and the Middle-East.

He was appointed Assistant Chief of the General Staff in January 2007 and, in 2009, became Deputy Chief of the Defence Staff (Operations). He retired from the Army in 2015.

Celia Johnson

Many of us will remember Celia Johnson, who starred opposite Trevor Howard in the wartime film “Brief Encounter” set on a railway station in the steam age, and also in Noel Coward's film about the Royal Navy “In Which we Serve.”

Celia Johnson was married to Ian Fleming's brother, Peter, who was serving in the Far East during the war, while Celia remained in England.

Dame Celia Elizabeth Fleming (née Johnson), lived in Tedworth Square in Chelsea, and died in 1982. After her death, her daughter, Lucy Fleming, found the letters that her parents had written to each other during the war, and she read some of them to us. She was supported by her own husband, Simon Williams, who took the part of her father.

Celia never quite knew where Peter was, and told her daughter that it was like “posting letters to the moon.”



NEWS

The Houseboats

Chelsea Reach is an important part of Chelsea's character and heritage.

The Chelsea Society has therefore been working for more than two years with the Cheyne Walk Trust and others to persuade RBKC to prevent the removal of traditional houseboats from Chelsea Reach, and their replacement by very large floating structures, each containing two dwelling units.

The Councillors had been advised by their officers that they could not prevent this, but the Vice-chairman of the Chelsea Society disagreed with their interpretation of the law, and the Society contributed, with the Cheyne Walk Trust, and the Boatowners' Association, and other local people, a substantial sum toward legal fees to prove that the officers were mistaken.

Also, several hundred letters were sent to the Council by local people, and we are grateful for the support of Chelsea's Councillors.

Eventually, on 19th December 2023, the Council's Planning Applications Committee decided unanimously that:

1. Each berth at Chelsea Reach be treated as the relevant planning unit and
2. The introduction of significantly different boats constitutes a change of use by reason of intensification, and would do so even if the moorings as a whole were treated as the relevant planning unit.

On 27th February 2024 the Council's Planning Applications Committee (differently constituted) decided unanimously to authorise enforcement proceedings. For more information regarding this important issue, see the Society's website.

The Society now expects the Council to take enforcement action without further delay to remove the very large boats which have been brought to Chelsea Reach without planning permission for such change of use, and to prevent the arrival of any more.

The Society also expects the Council to take action to remove from Cadogan Pier the large boats which are incapable of navigation under their own power or sail, and which have been placed there without planning permission.”



Benches neglected

The benches on the Embankment are an important part of Chelsea's riverside heritage but they are in an appalling state. If woodwork exposed to the weather is not properly maintained, it becomes de-natured and eventually has to be replaced.

These benches are the responsibility of TfL.

The Chelsea Society has asked our GLA member, Cllr. Tony Devenish, to get the necessary maintenance done as soon as possible, and we are advised that the work has been programmed.



Skyscraper proposal

There is a proposal to build a 38-storey skyscraper at the south end of Battersea Bridge.

The Chairman of the Society's Planning Committee has objected as follows:

“The Chelsea Society exists in order to safeguard the unique heritage of our part of London. We have over a thousand members.

We strongly object to this proposed development and urge the Council of the London Borough of Wandsworth to reject it.

For more information regarding this important issue, see the Society's website.

NEWS

South Kensington Station

We were informed on 13th December 2023 that the Planning inspector had allowed the developer's appeal, and overturned the refusal by RBKC of all proposals except the introduction of shop fronts to the grade II-listed pedestrian subway.

For The Chelsea Society's views on the redevelopment of this station see TCS submission on SOUTH KENSINGTON STATION.

For more information regarding this important issue, see the Society's website.



Memorial Service

On 28th November 2023 The Chelsea Society was represented by its Chairman and Vice-chairman, and members of its Council, at a memorial service for the 8th Earl Cadogan at St. Lukes church, in the presence of the Bishop of London.

The service was attended by the 9th Earl and his family, and many hundreds of people who had known Lord Cadogan as a landowner, as a racehorse owner, and as a supporter of many charities, including The Chelsea Society.

Christmas lights

Chelsea's Christmas Lights were switched on at 5pm on Saturday 18th November 2023.



AGM 2023

The 2023 AGM of the Society was held at Chelsea Old Town Hall on Monday 13th November.

The President, John Simpson CBE opened the meeting at 6pm and spoke about the situation in the Middle East.

The Minutes of the Annual General Meeting held on Monday, 14th November 2022 (Published on pages 10-21 of the Society's Annual Report for the year 2022) were adopted.

The following members of Council retired by rotation and were re-elected: Michael Bach and Jules Turner.

Marina Murray, a co-opted member of Council was elected.

The Chairman, Dr. James Thompson, delivered his report for the year ending 13th November 2023.

For more information regarding the AGM see the Society's website.



NEWS

History of Chelsea

Simon de Maré has written some very interesting notes on the streets, squares, and buildings in Chelsea.

<http://www.athomeinnchelsea.com/simons-walks.html>



Lord Cadogan

The Chelsea Society is delighted that the 9th Earl Cadogan has agreed to be a Vice-president of the Society in the place of his late father.

PLANNING & ENVIRONMENT

The Chelsea Society has a long history of involvement with architecture, land use and infrastructural planning locally and plays a key role in the decision making process.

The Constitution of the Society requires it to preserve and improve the amenities of Chelsea by:-

- stimulating interest in the history, character and traditions of Chelsea;
- encouraging good architecture, town planning and civic design, the planting and care of trees, and the conservation and proper maintenance of open spaces;
- seeking the abatement of nuisances;
- making representations to the proper authorities on these subjects.

The Chelsea Society exists because its members have for nearly 90 years loved Chelsea for its character, its style, and its charm, and wish to maintain those characteristics for themselves and future generations. We recognise of course that change is inevitable but the Society will seek to influence change so that it does not impact adversely on those characteristics. The Society will therefore encourage the design of new and altered buildings so that their size, proportions, architectural style and setting are compatible with the characteristics of Chelsea.

Where changes of use are proposed, the Society will seek to maintain the balance which has been achieved in Chelsea between residential accommodation for people of all income-groups, shops, offices, restaurants, schools, hospitals, open spaces, and other uses.

The Society values the relationship it has established over many years with the Councillors and Officers of the Royal Borough, and the Committee will seek to maintain and enhance that relationship, and with the Mayor of London. The Committee will nevertheless engage in constructive opposition to the policies and actions of the Borough Council and the Mayor whenever necessary. The Society is always willing to engage with architects, planning consultants, and their clients, and we find that if engagement takes place at an early stage the result is more likely to be beneficial both for Chelsea and the developer.

The Society is not a Residents' Association nor a Trade Association but it recognises the valuable contribution made by the many Associations in Chelsea in relation to their immediate locality and their particular interests. The Planning Committee envisages a relationship of mutual support between the Society and the relevant Associations whenever possible.

The Committee will also work with similar societies in Greater London and nationally in appropriate cases.



THE CHELSEA SOCIETY

FURTHER INFORMATION

Please encourage your friends to join the Society by visiting “Join Us” on the website, and to become a “Follower” on Instagram.

Our Secretary, Clare, can be contacted on secretary@chelseasociety.org.uk or 07803 147654. Please make sure she has your current e-mail address and telephone number.

Our mailing address is: 30 Paradise Walk, London SW3 4JL

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