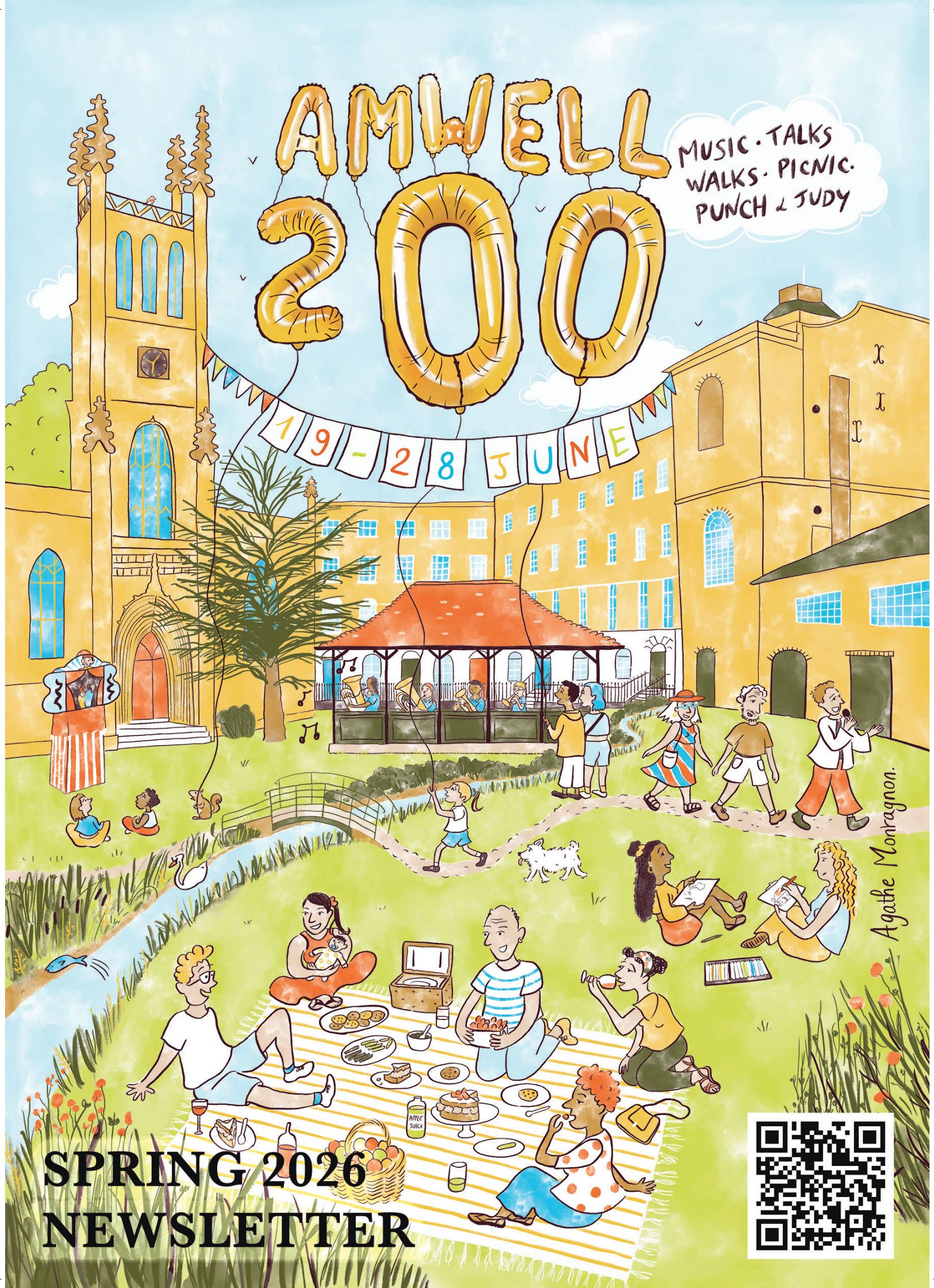


AMWELL 2000

MUSIC · TALKS
WALKS · PICNIC
PUNCH & JUDY

19-28 JUNE



Agathe Monragnon.

**SPRING 2026
NEWSLETTER**



Our Annual General Meeting

Our AGM will be held on **Wednesday 20 May in the Meditatio Centre at St Mark's Myddelton Square. Please arrive between 6.30 and 7.00pm.** Entrance is via the blue door on the right side of the church. Drinks and finger food will be provided. We always invite a speaker with local knowledge and connections, a person who can give insight and a new angle on the area which the Amwell Society tries hard to protect and celebrate.

This year we welcome William Fuller, the Managing Director of the renowned building contractors, based in Walthamstow. William can trace his heritage back to bricklayers from Woodbridge, Suffolk in 1744.

William started his career in the construction industry in 1986, originally training as a carpenter/joiner. Following eight years of working with other contractors, he officially joined the family business in 1994. He continued his studies and further developed his surveying skills, officially taking on the role of Managing Director in 1996. William has managed and overseen works with a cumulative value of around £70m, with most works involving Listed buildings.

William has developed further the long-standing relationship with the Society for the Protection of Ancient Buildings [SPAB], and has contributed to SPAB Technical Days, sharing his expertise with industry specialists. He also provides professional advice as a governor for a local independent school.

At the AGM, David Sulkin will interview William discussing the complexities of Listed houses as well as observations about Georgian building techniques. William will tell us about his most fascinating project and his biggest nightmare. He will also give advice about taking on a Georgian project.

There will be a social half-hour, then the business of the AGM including the election of committee members followed by our discussion with William Fuller. The AGM will end at about 8.30pm. No need to book.



Welcome to spring. Bluebells at Henley on Thames. Photo by DS.

Any Questions? Get ready ...

Any Questions? at St Mark's Church, Myddelton Square on Friday 31 July between 6.30pm and 9.00pm. Part of the Amwell 200 celebrations.

BBC Radio 4's weekly programme, *Any Questions?*, will be broadcast from St Mark's Church, Myddelton Square on Friday 31 July between 6.30pm and 09.00pm. The Society invited the BBC and the *Any Questions?* team to visit the Amwell area. So it's up to us to make sure that St Mark's is full on the evening with a good number of proposed pertinent questions for the panel.

We won't know who will be on the panel until nearer the time, but there will panel members from a variety of political backgrounds. So we hope that there will be searching and challenging questions from the audience.

You can help us! Please mention *Any Questions?* to your neighbours and invite them to join us on 31 July at St Mark's Church. At the same time we will invite people from other amenity societies in Islington.

Any Questions? is the BBC's longest running political panel programme. It was launched on Radio 4 [formerly the Home Service] on 12 October 1948. Originally broadcast fortnightly in the west of England and intended to last for six episodes, it quickly grew into a national programme broadcast every week where spontaneous unrehearsed answers are still given by panelists to questions from members of the audience.

Please make a note of the date in your diary and watch out for messages from the Society concerning booking your place in the audience.

Please note that tickets for *Any Questions?* will be free-of-charge. We'll let you know later how to book.

St Helena Garden

Since the retirement of Darian and Delia Mitchell as the leading volunteers looking after St Helena Garden, committee member Joanna Ward is looking for occasional help in the garden to keep it neat and tidy. Volunteering would be for four or five occasions in a year and no one need commit in advance. We'll put out a call a few weeks before the date on a come-if-you-can basis.

Andrew Hillier, Assistant Area Parks Manager at London Borough of Islington is helping us. The garden will be kept litter-free, uneven paving levelled near the central drain and the whole area, pressure washed.

We are also planning to prune the trees to allow more light, air and rain to nourish the ground cover in summer.

Welcome to new & returning members

Jane Bridgeman, Granville Square. Toby Hughes and Andrew Spira, Myddelton Square. Tara Nei, Wharton Street. Alan Tyers, New River Head, Rosebery Avenue. Nishitha Ningegowda, Claremont Square.

Here is the Amwell 200 festival programme. Celebrate with us two centuries of vigorous social, cultural and political life following the building of the New River and the Lloyd Baker estates.

Between 19 and 28 June we are inviting members of the Amwell Society, all residents, businesses and community organisations in the Amwell area and wider Islington and friends from further afield to join in Amwell 200, a series of events that mark 200 years since the first bricks were laid in London's Amwell area and the surrounding streets and squares.

We have included events for all ages including walks and talks, live music, a day trip to the New River's source in Great Amwell, Hertfordshire as well as a Grand Bicentenary Picnic on Sunday 28 June. The picnic will be open to all and especially families, with an accent on brass band music, Punch and Judy and fun stories. Come in costume from any period if you'd like to: Elizabethan, Carolean, Georgian or Victorian, Edwardian or choose your own special sparkly outfit.

Booking opens for all events on Wednesday 17 April. Go to www.amwell.org.uk/amwell-200 and you'll be able to sign up. Tickets are very moderately priced – some events are free - but tickets will be required so that we know when an event is full. We expect demand to be high ... so book early to avoid disappointment.

Date and times	Amwell 200 events	Location
<i>Friday 19 June</i> 6.00pm - 7.00pm 7.15pm - 8.30pm	Opening reception. <i>The Mercenary River</i> . A talk by Nick Higham.	St Mark's, Myddelton Square. [Main church]. Meditatio Centre, St Mark's, Myddelton Square.
<i>Saturday 20 June</i> 10.00am - 12.00pm 1.30pm - 3.30pm 2.00pm - 3.30pm 7.00pm - 8.30pm	Outdoor sketching class 1. Outdoor sketching class 2. <i>'The Amwell amble' – hidden histories and colourful characters</i> with Louise Halfpenny. <i>How Amwell was Built</i> . A talk by Alec Forshaw.	Quentin Blake Centre for illustration and around the Amwell area. A walk round the Amwell area. Meditatio Centre, St Mark's, Myddelton Square.
<i>Sunday 21 June</i> 9.30am - 6.30pm	A day-trip by coach to Great Amwell, the source of the New River.	Great Amwell, Hertfordshire. Limited numbers of coach places ... so book extra early.
<i>Monday 22 June</i> 7.30pm - 9.00pm	Finsbury A Cappella – choral concert.	St Mark's, Myddelton Square [main church].
<i>Tuesday 23 June</i> 7.30pm - 9.00pm	<i>George Cruikshank, illustrator who lived in Amwell Street</i> . A talk by Martin Attridge.	Quentin Blake Centre for Illustration.
<i>Saturday 27 June</i> 2.00pm - 4.00pm	<i>Radical Amwell</i> . A trio of talks. • <i>Radical women</i> . Rachel Holmes. • <i>Radical politics</i> . Bob Henderson. • <i>Radical architecture</i> . John Allan.	Marx Memorial Library, Clekenwell Green.
<i>Sunday 28 June</i> 1.30pm - 5.00pm	<i>Grand Bicentenary Picnic</i> . Story-telling workshops, Punch and Judy and London City Brass Band. Children and families welcome.	Wilmington Square. The picnic events will be free-of-charge. No need to book. Bring your own snacks and picnic food. Please, though, no barbecues.

The Amwell Society. Campaigning on behalf of the locality for 54 years

Message from our chair ...

Peadar Sionoid writes...

Welcome to our Spring/Summer newsletter. We are continuing with the Amwell 200 theme and are pleased to finally be able to give you a full programme of events. **Booking opens on 17 April.** Go to www.amwell.org.uk/amwell-200

Amwell 200 has been almost three years in the planning and I am very grateful to my fellow committee and other volunteers who have supported us with their time and, in some cases, financial support for the festival. We are still looking for volunteers to help with marshalling and support at some of the events in June. If you can help, please send me a message to info@amwell.org.uk We will be very grateful for any assistance.

Our AGM will be held on Wednesday 20 May, as mentioned on page 2 of this newsletter. We usually enjoy a great turnout and look forward to welcoming you there. A new committee will be elected. A number of our long-standing committee members will be stepping down and we urgently need people to agree to join the committee. There are many reasons why the Society still fills an important role. Recently a friend showed me a message written in 1972 when both the New River Conservation Area was established and the Society founded. I think it express perfectly why the Society is still needed, so I have included it here.

The New River Conservation Area represents so much that is worth saving in the way of a decent urban environment. If you live here you know that it is not just a question of architecture, but of homes. We have been successful in having a preservation order placed on much of the bricks and mortar; but there are many other dangers, not only from land speculators. We must preserve the quality of life in our village in the heart ion London - keep back the life of dirt, noise and juggernaut traffic The Amwell Society gives its members a chance to express their concern and affection for their own neighbourhood. Together we can preserve the character of this historic area - and at the same time help to improve the amenities. There is a lot of work to be done. There must be constant vigilance. At the moment, we have just over 200 members [in 1972]. We need more. Join the Amwell Society today.

Today [2026] we have just under 200 members. It is for the Amwell Society cause, outlined in 1972, that we are looking for new committee members now. I ask myself, 'Why do people live in the Amwell for many years?' 'How is it that they know their neighbours?' 'How is it that we live so near to King's Cross and St Pancras and yet the Amwell area feels quietly suburban, if not village-like?' If you feel moved by our mission, please stand for the committee and help us. Write to info@amwell.org.uk

Subscriptions

There are about forty members who have not renewed their subscriptions for 2026. Our treasurer, Keith Baker, met a lapsed member recently who said that he'd not renewed since 2023 ... not that he didn't want to renew, but because it had slipped his mind. Members' subs are the lifeline of the Society which is entirely volunteer run. If you are one of the forty or if you can encourage your neighbours and friends to join the Society. Please help.

Subscription is still £10 a year payable on 1st January. A bargain. If you are outside the area and want your newsletter sent by post, the subscription is £15.00. You can cancel at any time. **Amwell Society. Co-op Bank. Sort code 08-92-99. Account 65192526.** Tell us your name and address when you pay so we can contact you by e-mail in future. treasurer@amwell.org.uk

Cardboard plaques

Everyone recognises London's Blue Plaques memorialising good, notable people and some infamous ones.

We have a blue plaque to Vladimir Lenin [1870-1924] in Percy Circus and another in Wharton Street for the female Egyptologist, Amelia Edwards [1831-1892]. There are also a few green plaques put up by London Borough of Islington the most important one being the plaque to George Cruickshank [1792-1878] at 71 Amwell Street.

As part of Amwell 200, we are planning to display temporary, cardboard plaques to celebrate other residents from the past and up to the present. The people who we'll celebrate will include those who made a difference to the arts or sciences as well as people who made a more modest contribution to the world in which they worked. So, to give an example, we'll feature George du Maurier, [1834-1896] engraver and novelist who lived at 45 Wharton Street and, in 1892 published his novel, *Peter Ibbetson*, partly set in Clerkenwell. We'll also feature Edwin Moffat [1915-1983], vacuum cleaner salesman who fought in the Spanish Civil War for the International Brigade. He lived at 65 Myddelton Square in 1939. His record says '*Politically solid, but his nerves are shattered and he is in a deplorable physical condition.*'

Look out for the cardboard plaques which will be attached, mostly, to railings. They will be displayed for most of the summer.

With many, many thanks.

Amwell 200 has been made possible with the financial support from the London Borough of Islington. Thank you especially to our councillor for Clerkenwell, Ruth Hayes. We have received generous donations from Amwell Society members, Nathan K, estate agent. Michael Fowle, Theresa Marteau, the Union Tavern and Amwell Veterinary Practice. A donation has also been received from Naylor Drainage.