



# CLAPHAM HISTORY

## TWO AMERICAN VISITORS



### BENJAMIN FRANKLIN

Benjamin Franklin was well known as a writer and politician, and was living in London as representative of the Assembly of Pennsylvania and three others of Britain's then American colonies. Franklin was also a keen experimental scientist.

On his sea voyages he had noticed that when ships threw out greasy slops, this had the effect of smoothing out the waves. Around 1770, he was staying with Christopher Baldwin, a wealthy West Indies plantation owner and merchant who lived on the West Side of Clapham Common.

One day when there was enough wind to ruffle the water on the ponds, he took some oil and poured it on one of the ponds. It is often thought to have been

Mount Pond, but there were at that time many other ponds, now filled in. It was no more than a teaspoonful, but it spread to cover the surface of the pond. Franklin repeated the experiment many times on lakes and at sea, and described it to scientific societies.

He measured carefully how far the oil would spread, and the experiment was an important step in the science of molecular chemistry, though Franklin himself did not grasp its full significance. He was one of America's most influential Founding Fathers and his image appears on the \$100 bill.

By presenting your Clapham Guide you will receive 10% off 'Benjamin Franklin in London' by George Goodwin at Clapham Books on The Pavement.

# CLAPHAM HISTORY



### PHILLIS WHEATLEY

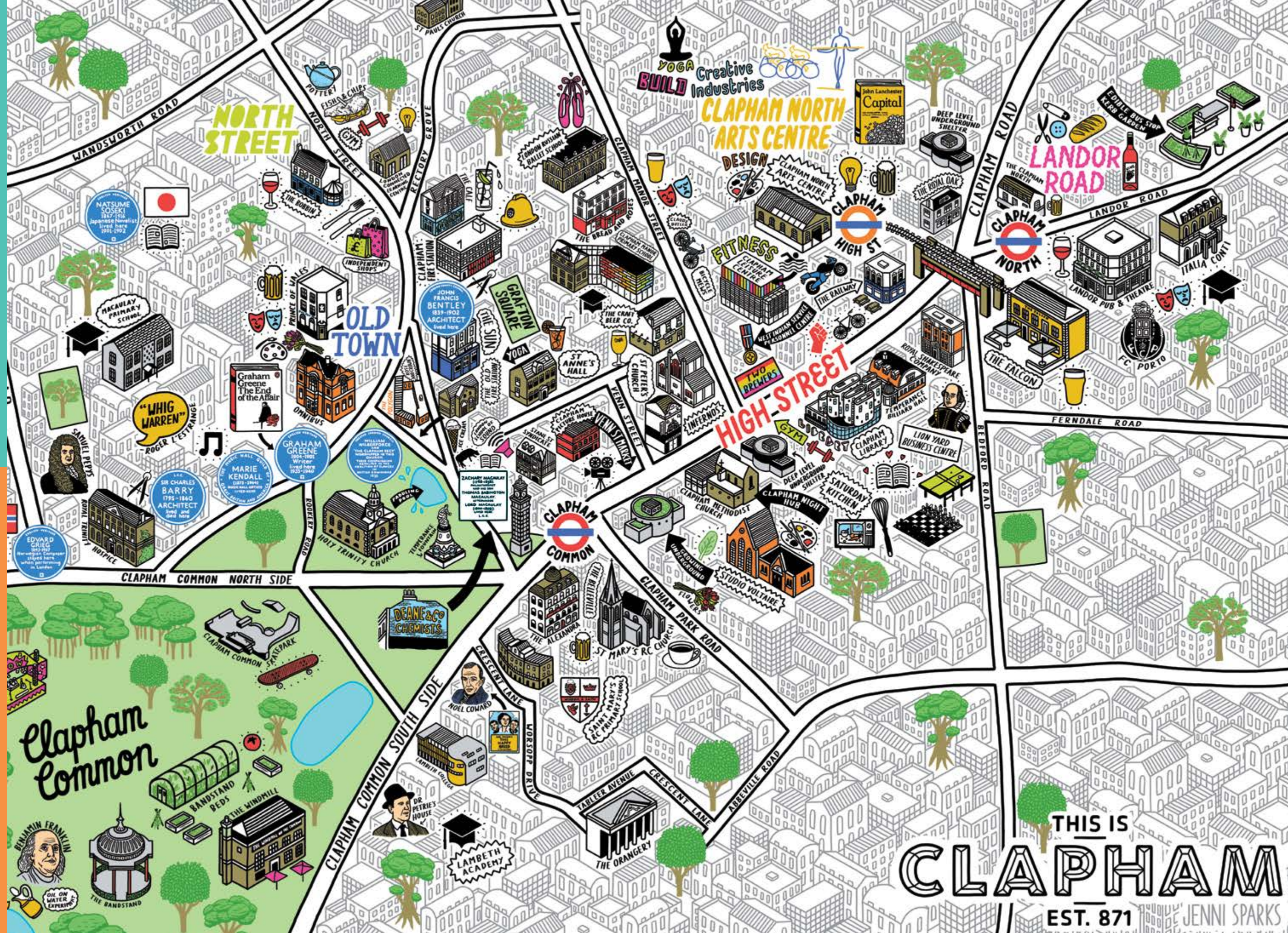
The other American visitor could not have been more different. Phillis Wheatley was a young African-American slave, transported from the Gambia to Boston, she was bought by John and Susanna Wheatley to be their domestic servant.

They saw to it that she could read and write, and she became proficient in English and even learnt some Latin. She wrote poems, the first published in 1765 when she was about twelve. Among the Wheatleys' English friends was John Thornton, a merchant living on Clapham Common South Side in a house on the site of the Notre Dame Estate. The

Wheatleys corresponded with him regularly, and he came to know Phillis and her writings.

In 1773, aged nineteen, Phillis travelled to England for the sake of her health. Here her friends arranged for the publication of a book of her poems. She stayed for a week with the Thorntons and enjoyed a long conversation with their teenage daughter and sons.

While in England she negotiated her freedom from slavery, but returned to America and died in poverty aged only 31. She is remembered as the first African-American to have her writings published in a book, and the mother of African-American letters.



# UPCOMING EVENTS



### JOHN SHEEHY

Studio Voltaire will be presenting a major new commission by Irish artist John Sheehy including large-scale paintings that have never been presented to the public.

5 May - 18 June 2017



### COMMON PEOPLE

A celebration of food-growing, with music, spoken word and dance on the Bandstand, with community stalls and lots of fun activities for everyone.

27th May 2017



### A MIDSUMMER NIGHT'S DREAM

Starting in a secret Clapham location, team up to navigate your way through the misunderstandings and mishaps of Shakespeare's finest comedy.

16th June - 30th June 2017



### TWO BREWERS STREET PARTY

After the success of last year Two Brewers will be hosting their street party with music, food, cabaret and lots of fun!

1st July 2017

# CLAPHAM HEROES



### MICHEL ROUX JR

After deciding to follow in his father's footsteps Michel joined the family business in 1991 and took over Le Gavroche, gradually changing the style of cooking to his own - classic French with a slightly lighter, modern twist.

Since then Michel has opened Roux at Parliament Square and Roux at The Landau at The Langham Hotel. Michel is also a regular on popular TV shows such as Saturday Kitchen and will soon be debuting his new television programme, Hidden Restaurants.

What many people will not know is that Michel has lived in Clapham for the past 32 years and is involved with the Michel Roux Jr Cookery School at Cactus Kitchens (above the Saturday Kitchen studios on St Luke's Avenue) and Growing Underground, which grows micro greens and salad leaves in WW2 air raid shelters, 33 metres below the streets of Clapham.

Michel explains that "over the last 32 years Clapham has changed in many ways for the better. It's cleaner, more vibrant, and has great bars and cafés. It's become a foodie hub and the short commute home made it the perfect location for the cookery school."

"Clapham is a great place both to live and work. Every street is completely different to the next, but it still retains a lovely village feel whilst being a very vibrant place to live. There are so many different drinking and dining options, and it's made even better by the fact you have Clapham Common which is never more than a ten minute walk away."

And what does Michel like most about Clapham? "I'd recommend Omnibus for shows and exhibitions, Moens butchers for the best meat and service, The Dairy for a foodie feast, Eco for wood fired pizza and WC for a glass of sherry and a plate of charcuterie."

THIS IS CLAPHAM EST. 871 JENNI SPARKS