



# THE ST MARYLEBONE SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

Summer 2021 Number 362

[www.stmarylebonesociety.org](http://www.stmarylebonesociety.org)

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## 70TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE FESTIVAL OF BRITAIN



Plan of South Bank Exhibition from the Souvenir Guide, with foreground collage: Sherlock Holmes on Strand Magazine cover; St Paul's Cathedral; Marble Arch; the Coade Stone Lion statue from the Old Lion Brewery; the 300ft high Skylon needle; Regent's Park Nash Terrace.

### The Festival of Britain: Britain at Home to the World May 3rd to September 30th 1951

2021 marks the 70th Anniversary of the Festival of Britain. By a happy coincidence, the Society was recently sent a volume of *The Wharncliffe Gardens Story: Vol 3* by the late Ronald Andrew. This fascinating memoir contains various accounts of what went on in London and Marylebone during the Festival Year of 1951 among many other gems of Marylebone history.

### A National Celebration

On the evening of 3rd May, the opening day of the Festival:

*“some 500 young people gathered on a cleared bomb site behind St Paul’s Cathedral to sing around a big bonfire which had been lit by a boy scout. As a song written by Mr. Harold Purcell, to the tune of Lilliburlero was broadcast by the B.B.C, more than 2,000 other bonfires all over the country were lit to unite symbolically the young people of the nation. As the blaze behind St Paul’s*

*grew, being replenished from nearly three tons of wood gathered from the East End, it attracted hundreds of spectators, and at one time the crowd was estimated at nearly 10,000.”*

Although the Festival was a nationwide event, its centerpiece was the South Bank Exhibition:

*“the highlights of the (Festival) buildings on the South Bank of the Thames, were the remarkable Dome of Discovery, the Sea and Ships Pavilion facing Nelson’s Pier; the Skylon, and the old Shot Tower*

continued overleaf

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and the Festival Hall; and in York Road the re-erected Red Lion formerly on the old Lion Brewery, (and since re-erected on the south side of Westminster Bridge, the red paint washed off revealing the Coade Stone. JRA).”

### Meanwhile in Marylebone...

Under the heading, “Clean Up” the *Marylebone Mercury* reported that “it was members of the St Marylebone Society, who persuaded the Commissioners for Crown Lands to paint the Nash Terraces at Regent’s Park for the Festival of Britain, and they would be pleased to hear that the Marble Arch was also to be cleaned.”

Youths on the Wharnccliffe Gardens Estate (Lisson Grove), as elsewhere, born between 1st January and 31st March 1933, were informed they were required to register for National Service by 3rd February 1951.

Before they left, they would have been able to enjoy such un-woke entertainments as the male impersonator, Ella Shields, and the enormously popular “black-face” (white) singer George Elliott, who were both performing from 29th January 1951 at The Metropolitan Theatre of Varieties in Edgware Road, or “The Met” as it was affectionately known.

Urban renewal was underway and in

January 1951 the *Marylebone Mercury* announced the London County Council’s plan to build 39 flats in Aberdeen Place, NW8. Reflecting the post-war baby boom these flats were designed “with the provision of 20 pram sheds”.

### Holmes for Heroes

The *Marylebone Mercury* also reported, under the headline “Sherlock Holmes Comes Home”, that St Marylebone Borough Council was planning to spend £3,500 on a Sherlock Holmes exhibition to celebrate the Festival of Britain.

“At their monthly meeting the Council agreed to accept an offer of the Abbey National Building Society to hold the Exhibition in Abbey House – the master sleuth’s old Baker Street home.”

“Councillor Miss Lucy Nettlefold reported that Sir Arthur Conan Doyle’s son, Mr. Adrian Conan Doyle, hoped to provide his father’s writing desk and its contents and other members of the family had offered to provide the Council with manuscripts and photographs. Miss Winifred Paget, daughter of Sydney Paget, who illustrated a number of the Holmes stories, agreed to lend some of the original illustrations... It was estimated that 400 people a day would visit Abbey House during the Festival, resulting in an income of £2,000. Admission for

adults would be a shilling, and a charge of 6d would be made for children.”

The *Marylebone Mercury* for 23rd February reported that: “Sherlock Holmes relics had started to pour in. Caped coats, deerstalker hats, and out-sized curved pipes are arriving at St. Marylebone Town Hall from all parts of the world... All-night queues are expected at 221b Baker Street, when Conan Doyle’s crack detective ‘returns home’ on May 22nd. Notes announcing the Exhibition’s opening dates have appeared in newspapers from Melbourne to Buenos Aires, and from Reykjavik to Alaska.”

“The *Illustrated London News* reported that on 21st May:

the Mayor of St Marylebone had opened an exhibition of the borough’s most famous inhabitant who never lived in it – Sherlock Holmes... The news item carried a picture of the famous room in Baker Street re-created in one of Marylebone’s most notable contributions to the Festival Spirit.”

Another more enduring Marylebone legacy of the Festival of Britain was of course the Memorial Garden on Marylebone High Street (on the site of the c1400 and 1742 parish churches), which was partly funded as a Festival of Britain project.

J Ronald Andrew & Mike Wood

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## ST MARYLEBONE CHANGING LIVES: A BUILDING WORKS UPDATE

We are very excited that the programme of Changing Lives building and conservation works is now very much underway. Over the last few weeks scaffolding has sprung up all around the parish church and the site is looking very different! As well as this, our Hoarding Artwork will soon be in place – visit the church gardens and find your place in Marylebone amongst the famous faces of the area, all painted by GCSE students from The St Marylebone CE School and artists from around the country.

This month will see the installation of the temporary roof covering. Once this is in place, we look forward to the summer months when the high-level conservation works and long-awaited installation of a new Welsh slate roof will start on our Georgian building.

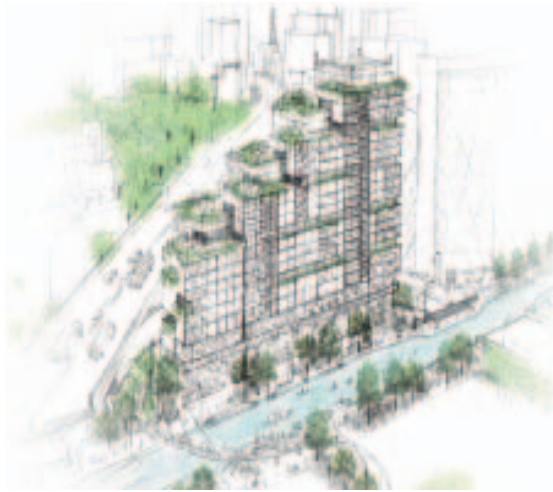
We will aim to keep the parish church open throughout the whole process of the building works. Full access will be maintained throughout for the Marylebone Health Centre (NHS Surgery). If you would like to know more, or get involved in our exciting activity programme, please contact Ginny Walton at [activity@stmarylebone.org](mailto:activity@stmarylebone.org)





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# PLANNING MATTERS



## Travis Perkins Paddington, Harrow Road

Travis Perkins have occupied this disparate group of buildings for over 25 years. The site is to be redeveloped in partnership with Unite Students, and will provide a new enclosed builder's merchant facility (at ground and mezzanine), and 900 student bedrooms above, within a single block, up to 23 storeys in height. There will be a pedestrian connection along the northern canal-side path of the Grand Union Canal, and the development will be car free, with one car parking space for those with limited mobility. Travis Perkins will be temporarily relocated nearby.



## Church Street Regeneration

This image is from Westminster's March pre-planning consultation on proposals for sites on Church Street which will replace lower-rise council blocks. We were taken aback by the proposed heights of the residential blocks which, cliff-like, spring directly from the pavement without any lower mitigating blocks. This height will cause significant shadowing across Church Street and its market. Also, the proposal for a replacement Church Street library is woefully inadequate, especially in an area where many children have nowhere else to do their homework.

## Paddington Green Police Station site

Update since last newsletter: a planning application has been submitted for three buildings, (1x 32 storey, 1 x 18 storey and 1 x 15 storey), providing 556 residential units with public realm improvements and linking through at basement level to the almost complete "West End Gate" development. (Ref. No: 21/02193/FULL on WCC's planning database).

## Proposed Library and reconfigured swimming pools in Seymour Place Leisure Centre

See the link below for updates.

<https://www.westminster.gov.uk/leisure-libraries-and-community/seymour-leisure-centre-project>



## Proposed Redevelopment of M&S Marble Arch (458 Oxford Street)

The existing building, Orchard House, was built for Lyons Teashops by Trehearne & Norman, with Marks and Spencer only occupying the lower floors initially. Sculpted heads of *Alice in Wonderland* characters once adorned the facade, but are lost. A rear block was added in 1968 and two further extensions in 1978 and 1994. When the road was widened in the 1960s, a new pavement was created by taking a piece of the interior of M&S. This is why there is a roofed colonnade on the west side of Gloucester Place outside the store. The 20th Century Society is considering a listing bid to try and save the building.

The replacement building, with an arcade at ground level, would see the amount of retail space on the site reduce from five floors to two and a half, with the rest being office space. Given the good condition of the existing fabric, this glitzy project is wasteful in environmental terms.

## 25-26 Ivor Place

There have been repeated applications since 2014 for a super-sized, 6-bedroom, 7-bathroom home at 25-26 Ivor Place NW1. The Society and 58 neighbours objected to the latest application (19/06766/FULL) across four rounds of consultation. The application was refused on 27th April 2021 because it failed to optimise the number of residential units on the site. At 404sq m, the area of the proposed single home was twice the limit of 200sq m set by Policy 8 of Westminster's City Plan 2019-2040 (adopted on 21 April 2021, after delays because of Covid-19).

The Council has long aspired to restrict residential size, because demand from global investors for super-size properties adversely impacts the provision of housing for local people. As Cabinet Member for Place-shaping and Planning in 2019, Cllr Richard Beddoe clearly flagged the Council's intention to stop permitting Monopoly Board-style investments for oligarchs. It is good to see that policy acted on as soon as the City Plan was adopted and to have Cllr Barbara Arzymanow representing the concerns of neighbours to the Council.

Cynthia Poole

# THE DIORAMA: AN OBJECT OF WONDER AND DELIGHT

Walker Art Gallery, Liverpool. (public domain).



Daguerre's painting of the ruins of Holyrood Chapel – later made into a Diorama that was shown first in Paris (Oct1823-Sept1824), then in London (Mar-Dec1825), and which subsequently toured the UK.

Before inventing his famous photographic process, Louis Daguerre, a skilled trompe l'oeil painter, in partnership with another painter, Charles Marie Bouton, devised what was called a "Diorama". This consisted of two huge (80ft x 40ft) paintings on calico, painted using translucent and opaque colours, which could be lit both from behind and in front with ingeniously modulated daylight to produce varying and dramatic effects.

Mogg's *New Picture of London and Visitor's Guide to its Sights*, (1838) contains an enthusiastic entry on the London Diorama:

*"The Diorama, in Park Square, Regent's Park, long an object of wonder and delight in Paris, was first opened in London, September 29, 1823. This is a very extraordinary and beautiful exhibition; it consists of two pictures that are alternately brought into view by a very ingenious mechanical contrivance; the interior resembling a theatre, consisting of one tier of boxes and a pit, being made to revolve upon a centre with the spectators, thus gradually withdraws one picture and introduces the other to the view.*

The Diorama required a distinctive building form, with two or more angled "picture rooms", visible sequentially from a rotating circular auditorium with each of the scenes displayed for 15 minutes. Having two viewing rooms meant that one display could be changed while the other was viewed but it is unclear if this was often done.

Open daily from 10 till 4, admission 2s., the exhibition was viewed by daylight, using "ground glass" windows and roof lights, and contemporary reports note that the spectacle could be affected by fog.<sup>1</sup> Unlike some gas-lit later examples, it was not subject to the dangers of fire, surviving where others burned.

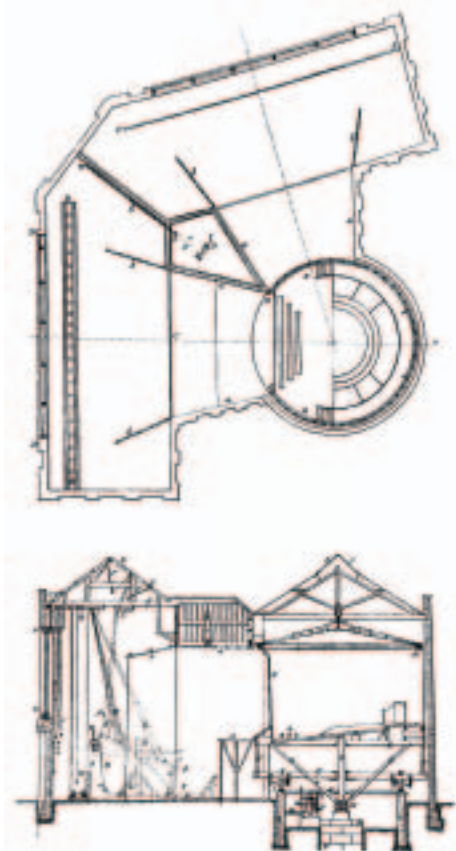
John Timbs<sup>2</sup> also wrote about the invention: *"In viewing the Diorama, the spectator was placed, as it were, at the extremity of the scene, and thus had a view across or through it.*

*Hence the inventor of the term compounded it of the Greek preposition dia, through, and orama, scene; though, from there being two paintings under the same roof in the building in the Regent's-park, it is supposed the term was from die, twice, and drama; but if several*

*paintings of the same kind were exhibited, each would be a Diorama...<sup>3</sup> ...the scenery remained stationary, and the light was distributed by transparent and movable blinds – some placed behind the picture, for intercepting and changing the colour of the rays of light, which passed through the semi-transparent parts. Similar blinds above and in front of the picture were movable by cords, so as to distribute or direct the rays of light...*"

The Diorama was therefore very effective in presenting the same scene during the day or with moonlight, etc. Timbs also wrote about the fate of the venture:

*"...Although the Regent's Park Diorama was artistically successful, it was not commercially so. In September, 1848, the building and ground in the rear, with the machinery and pictures, was sold for £6750; again, in June, 1849, for £4800; and the property, with sixteen pictures, rolled on large cylinders, was next sold for £3000. The building has since been converted into a Chapel for the Baptist denomination at the expense of Sir Morton Peto, Bart."*



Plan and section from John Arrowsmith's Patent.

© British Library British Patent No. 4899, February 10, 1824.





1827 Greenwood map showing location of the Diorama.

It is the last extant diorama building in the UK. The Nash façade is intact, but the much altered interior and rear were by Morgan<sup>4</sup> and Pugin<sup>5</sup>, working for John Nash.

Arched windows, heavily buttressed, were added at the rear in Morton Peto's 1852 chapel conversion.<sup>6</sup> When the chapel lease expired in 1922, the building was rearranged by the Red Cross for what became the "Arthur Stanley Institute", a rheumatic diseases hospital.<sup>7</sup> This facility merged with the Middlesex Hospital in 1964 and the building then served as an annex of Bedford College for 11 years. Listed Grade I in 1974, there were many attempts to find a permanent use for it. It was an artists' co-operative until 1994, when the Prince's Trust moved their offices there. Currently vacant, planning consent has now been granted to retain the Diorama (no.18) as offices and convert the flanking houses at 17 and 19 back to residential use.

### Origins of the Diorama

Daguerre and Bouton invented the Diorama in France c.1821. Spectacles using theatrical lighting techniques

were not new: peepshows, panoramas, cycloramas, and the wonderfully named "Eidophusikon", were devised from the late 18th Century onwards. Variations continued to appear into the 20th Century: eg., the first "Son et Lumière" show dates from 1952. The Paris Diorama opened in July 1822, and was initially very successful. A brother of Daguerre's English wife, Louise-Georgina (née Arrowsmith), assisted Daguerre at that time, and by the beginning of 1823 the partnership had firm plans for Dioramas in London and Berlin: investors were swiftly found, and except for the main facade, the London Diorama was built very shortly afterwards, initially in timber and glass.<sup>8</sup>

Some of the Diorama tableaux from Paris were sold to the London Diorama. Bouton retained an interest in London, but following a rift between them, Daguerre withdrew from the British venture. When the Paris Diorama burned down in 1839 – taking 3 Dioramas with it – Daguerre was preoccupied with his photographic inventions. He was awarded a French

State pension in exchange for the Daguerreotype process the same year.

John Arrowsmith had acquired a British Diorama Patent early in 1824. But this did not stop imitators from building their own versions in other British cities within a few years.

Many competing dioramas were built around Europe<sup>9</sup>, all with a pattern of initial success and rapid decline, as ever more sophisticated cinematic techniques rendered them obsolete.

Few of the gigantic paintings survive. But there are written descriptions, woodcuts, and some original paintings from which the diorama tableaux were produced.

Cynthia Poole

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup>Christopher Hibberd, Ben Weinrub, *Encyclopedia of London*, 1983.

<sup>2</sup>John Timbs, "Curiosities of London", 1855.

<sup>3</sup>Daguerre's Paris Diorama had three picture rooms.

<sup>4</sup>James Morgan (1776-1856), architect and engineer, associated with the construction of the Regent's Canal in London.

<sup>5</sup>Auguste Pugin, father of the Gothic Revivalist, Augustus Pugin, who designed the interior of the Houses of Parliament, and many "Gothic" churches. Auguste later became an illustrator and writer on Medieval architecture.

<sup>6</sup>An article in *The Builder* of 5th May 1855 describes the main alterations to the building and details of the 'Byzantine' architectural style adopted for the interior. Samuel Morton Peto, Bart., was a civil engineer, MP, and Baptist. The architect was John Thomas, also a sculptor, who had worked with the younger Pugin.

<sup>7</sup>Architectural drawings by Thomas A. Pole for the 1920s changes to the building are held by the National Archives, and included in the current architectural proposal.

<sup>8</sup>There is a foggy pencil and wash sketch of the Diorama, complete except for the Nash facade (which was added later), by Dr William Crotch (1775-1847). [Guildhall Library].

<sup>9</sup>1825: "The diorama Tableaux of Daguerre and Bouton were seen by the public not only in Paris and London but were then sent on to authentic Diorama buildings constructed in Liverpool, Manchester, Dublin and Edinburgh. There were two imitation 'Dioramas' or rival ventures in Edinburgh and Bristol in 1825... when the renown of Daguerre's Diorama was at its height during the first two or three years... it is not surprising that imitators (in spite of the difficulties due to the requirement of a large specialist building) would try to cash in on the situation." (R. Derek Wood at [www.midley.co.uk](http://www.midley.co.uk) – one of the best contemporary sources on the Diorama phenomenon).









FIGURE 2: The interior of Marylebone Church, copied from Hogarth's *Married to an old maid*, Overton et al. 1735.

the church interior depicted by the plagiarists is so different from Hogarth's version<sup>2</sup>.

### The curious case of the Tayler Monuments

Plagiarism itself does not explain why a Tayler Monument came to appear in such different forms in the two prints. I happened to recognise Hogarth's depiction of the Tayler Monument because I was researching the handful of monuments transferred from the c1400 church, first to the 1742 church, and from there to the current parish church. The Tayler Monument was transferred to the 1742 church but not to the current church because, as the antiquarian Thomas Smith explained, it was stolen during alterations in 1816. Smith says the monument was made of "lead, gilt", which may explain why it was targeted and suggests that it may have been melted down. Fortunately, a wash drawing survives to show us what it looked like (see Figure 3). The sculptural relief monument memorialises Thomas & Sarah Tayler's five children, who all died under the age of five. The verse monument in Figure 2 reads as follows (semicolons mark the line-breaks):

*"John<sup>3</sup> Tayler lies; beneath this stone;  
Four Wives he had; but children none;  
Therefore to keep; his Name alive; This  
monument; he did contrive."*

There is nothing in Hogarth's painting which identifies the monument, so the plagiarists must have relied on other sources to render it in verse. Hogarth conveyed the story of *The Rake's Progress* in a narrative poem. Was this the inspiration for turning the Tayler

Monument from sculptural into verse form?

There is some scrambling of information in going from Hogarth's Tayler Monument to Overton et al.'s Tayler Inscription – which is not surprising given the clandestine nature of the undertaking and the fact that information was obtained through intermediaries. The verse memorialises the father rather than his dead children and "Thomas" Tayler has become "John", the latter being the name of one of Thomas's sons on the actual monument. Overton et al.'s Tayler is said to have had Four Wives. We do not know how many wives the actual Thomas Tayler had, but the fact that his first child was born when he was 53 (his wife, Sarah, being 30 years younger than him), suggests he could

have been on his fourth marriage. Equally, this could be an exaggeration for comic effect. All we can say at this distance in time is that the (verse) copy of the Tayler Monument is no more accurate than the depiction of the rest of the plagiarised church interior.

Mike Wood

### NOTES

<sup>1</sup> Kunzle, David (1966) "Plagiaries-by-Memory of the Rake's Progress and the Genesis of Hogarth's Second Picture Story." *Journal of the Warburg and Courtauld Institutes*, vol. 29, 1966, pp. 311–348.

<sup>2</sup> I am grateful to Cynthia Poole for bringing to my attention that the windows in the plagiarised copy bear a striking resemblance to those in the old (before it was rebuilt in 1833) St Dunstan-in-the-West church in Fleet Street, which was near Overton's family print publishing business. The windows share the same gothic-arched, centrally divided tracery, with broad horizontal divisions. The plagiarists have lazily rendered the door with a similar shape and design to the windows, complete with an improbable lattice, mirroring the leading in the windows. Unusually, St Dunstan's had its main door on the south/street side, equivalent to the large window in the south wall in Hogarth's painting. The unseen door in Hogarth's print is in the more conventional west wall, left of where Sarah Young stands with the Rake's child. Hogarth's unusual square wooden post, behind the head of the old maid's servant, is reproduced by the copyist, but rendered in stone (in hexagonal form) and replicated along the W-E axis to form a more conventional aisle.

<sup>3</sup> "I" and "J" were often used interchangeably in eighteenth century texts. It is worth noting that Smith's 1833 record of monuments does not include one to a "John Tayler", only one to a "Thomas Tayler" and a separate one to his children. Thomas died in 1716 and his monument made no reference to his children nor to having had more than one wife.



FIGURE 3: A wash drawing of the Tayler Monument from the c1400 Marylebone parish church (later transferred to the 1742 parish church).

# EVENTS IN MARYLEBONE

After a year of cancellations, Marylebone is coming back to life and will be full of music and drama and art this summer:

**The Marylebone Music Festival 2021** in Manchester Square from 24th-26th June. Programme and tickets: [www.marylebonemusicfestival.com](http://www.marylebonemusicfestival.com)

**The St Marylebone Festival 2021** will take place at St Marylebone Parish Church from 18th-23rd July. A full programme of events is enclosed with this newsletter. To book tickets or for more information: [www.stmarylebonefestival.com](http://www.stmarylebonefestival.com).

**Summer Music in the Park 2021** takes place in Regent's Park and offers an extensive programme of weekend concerts absolutely free every Saturday and Sunday from 26th June to 19th September. The main bandstand will host a dazzling variety of Wind Orchestras, Brass Bands, Concert Bands and Jazz Orchestras from 12.30-2.30pm and 3.30-5.30pm. In addition, a separate bandstand on the Broad Walk will be home to Jazz ensembles from 2.00-4.00pm. Posters will shortly be on display with a full programme.

**Regent's Park Open Air Theatre** has announced a shorter than usual but packed season: Romeo & Juliet (17 June -21 July) and Carousel (31 July-25 September), as well as two productions for family audiences, **Anansi the Spider and Dragons & Mythical Beasts** and Sunday evening comedy and cinema events throughout July. [www.openairtheatre.com](http://www.openairtheatre.com)

**Taste London** returns to Regent's Park in July

This year, this popular food festival is spread across 10 days to enable maximum attendance while adhering to guidelines to keep everyone safe and secure.

Week 1: 7-11 July

Week 2: 14-18 July

For session times and tickets see [www.london.tastefestivals.com](http://www.london.tastefestivals.com)

**Frieze** outdoor sculpture show in Regent's Park's English Garden will run from 16th September to 31st October and will feature a record 19 pieces.

**Frieze and Frieze Masters** will be held in mid-October, details yet to be announced – see their website in due course for further information: [www.frieze.com/fairs/frieze-london/visitor-information](http://www.frieze.com/fairs/frieze-london/visitor-information)



## The Wigmore Hall Celebrates its 120th Anniversary

Wigmore Hall re-opened to the public on 17 May after more than 200 streamed and broadcast concerts over the past 12 months.

120th Anniversary celebrations were headlined by the appointment of nine new Associate Artists including Nitin Sawhney, Amjad Ali Khan and Elaine Mitchener and a new partnership with African Concert Series.

25 concert festival (17 May-3 June) by leading artists including Louise Alder, Mary Bevan, Michael Collins, Alice Coote, Doric and Heath Quartets, Angela Hewitt, Stephen Hough, Steven Isserlis, Sir András Schiff, Dame Mitsuko Uchida and Roderick Williams.

Wigmore Hall green room to be renamed 'Jessye Norman Green Room' in memory of the legendary soprano who enjoyed a decades-long association with the Hall.

Wigmore Hall Learning Festival explores a theme of 'Connectivity', focusing on music's role in the face of isolation.

John Gilhooly has invited the acclaimed cabaret artist Miss Hope Springs to pre-record a celebration in honour of Pride Month, which will be available throughout June.

See their website for a full listing of events over the Summer: [www.wigmore-hall.org.uk](http://www.wigmore-hall.org.uk)

**A bold, new 'Marble Arch Mound' temporary visitor attraction will be delivered in the Oxford Street District.**

The temporary Marble Arch Mound will include a viewing platform which allows visitors a unique opportunity to look out over the area from a new perspective as the council and its partners start to transform the District.

Marble Arch Mound will be open to the public in summer 2021 for a period of six months.

Works are now ongoing on-site, and can be viewed live here [www.osd.london/project/marble-arch-hill/](http://www.osd.london/project/marble-arch-hill/)

## CORPORATE SUPPORTERS

Able Homecare  
Alan Higgs Architect  
Aльтиplanto Finance Ltd  
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Blandford Estate Residents' Association  
Cambard RTM Ltd  
Chiltern Court (Baker Street) Residents Ltd  
Clarence Gate Gardens Residents' Association  
Crown Estate Paving Commission  
CWC Enterprises  
Fellowship of the School of Economic Science  
Howard de Walden Estate  
Ian Wylie Architects  
Kubie Gold  
Mac Services  
Manchester Square Trust  
Old Philologists  
Portman Estate  
Royal Parks  
St Marylebone Parish Church  
The Chiltern Firehouse  
The Fruit Garden (TFG)  
York Estates

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