

- Pascal Worton: 00:00 The area has had years and years of dealing with development.
- Tudor Allen: 00:06 Three of the biggest right away is in London within Camden onto Euston Road.
- Cynthia Ramsam: 00:12 I have never known a period where there wasn't some sort of construction going on.
- Peter Darley: 00:19 There's a lot of history here of course.
- Tudor Allen: 00:23 Construction work like the railways will impact the local people living in an area. There's this famous passage in Charles Dickens, which refers to it in the 19th century and this evocative description at the start at Donby and Son is all about the disruption caused by the coming of the railways in the 19th century on a community. In this case Camden Town.
- The first shock of a great earthquake had, just at that period, rent the whole neighbourhood to its centre. Traces of its course were visible on every side. Houses were knocked down; streets broken through and stopped; deep pits and trenches dug in the ground; enormous heaps of earth and clay thrown up; buildings that were undermined and shaking, propped by great beams of wood. Here, a chaos of carts, overthrown and jumbled together, lay topsy-turvy at the bottom of a steep unnatural hill; there, confused treasures of iron soaked and rusted in something that had accidentally become a pond. Everywhere were bridges that led nowhere; thoroughfares that were wholly impassable; Babel towers of chimneys, wanting half their height; temporary wooden houses and enclosures, in the most unlikely situations; carcasses of ragged tenements, and

fragments of unfinished walls and arches, and piles of scaffolding, and wildernesses of bricks, and giant forms of cranes, and tripods straddling above nothing. There were a hundred thousand shapes and substances of incompleteness, wildly mingled out of their places, upside down, burrowing in the earth, aspiring in the air, mouldering in the water, and unintelligible as any dream. Hot springs and fiery eruptions, the usual attendants upon earthquakes, lent their contributions of confusion to the scene. '

If you walk down the street anywhere, then you can enjoy the experience, the weather, the surroundings on a kind of sensory level. If you know something about art or architecture, you could enjoy things aesthetically, but if you know about the history of the area, you've got another dimension, another level of meaning as you walk along the street. You think, well I know what was here before. I know about the development of the area, the people who were here before, some of the things that happened here before and it just makes life more meaningful and the good thing about this job is trying to foster that same interest with the people of Camden and our other users. Where we are at the moment is Camden Local Studies and Archives Center based in Holborn Library. We're a separate section which focuses on the history of the London borough Camden area.

So, we've got archives and all sorts of other resources people can use to study the history of the area. My name is Tudor Allen, which is a Welsh name. My mother had chosen the name Tudor, which is Welsh for Theodore, but I don't think they had any idea that I would go into the history field and how apt my Christian name of Tudor is for working with archives. I'm the archivist here. I'm trained as an archivist and there's three main strands to a job like mine.

Looking after the collections, the heritage documentary, heritage of the area. The second is making that available and the third strand is the outreach, the community engagement side. We really do work hard at community engagement. I think that archives have a very important place in a local community. I think the history of an area, the documentation of that history that is the archives is very important for a sense of community and for a sense of place for people and I really feel strongly that it does add something to residents' lives if they know about the history of their area and they're part of that history as well.

We're very pleased to take people's history. We're always encouraging people who've got memories, who've got records about their life, about their connection with Camden to pass them onto us so that they can be preserved for future generations.

Peter Darley: 04:39 Camden's on the north edge of London. At the time that the railways were starting to be developed in the 1830s, they were looking at a variety of lines coming into London and the one that came first was the London to Birmingham. Originally the London terminus of that station was going to be at Camden, but in the end, they managed to get permission to take it down to Euston and Camden became the good step home.

Tudor Allen: 05:12 The first big station was 1837 Euston station. The demolition of the original Euston station was controversial in the early 1960s and there was a campaign to save it, that was demolished. Then we have the new Euston station there since the late sixties. The second one of those three big railway stations on Euston Road would have been Kings Cross station, beautiful building that was completed I believe in 1852 designed by Louis Cubit and has been restored in

recent years. Behind King's Cross station there was a huge, goods yard, which would have been a hive of activity in more recent times. The last 20 years or so, there's been a huge redevelopment of the King's Cross area, which has involved the demolition of some of the history, some of the old industrial buildings, but others have been given a new lease in life.

St. Pancras is the third of the big stations on Euston Road to be built. That was the Midland line I think originally. It opened around 1867, 1868 and they built a few years later the beautiful and Midland Grand Hotel next to it. In the late sixties they were going to demolish it and probably St Pancras station too. People like John Betjeman and the Victoria Society fought against this and they saved it. They got it listed, they got it preserved. Of course, in recent years it's been enlarged and converted into St. Pancras International.

Peter Darley:

06:35

There was a lot of industry in the Midlands and in the north and a lot of manufactured goods would be coming through. There was a lot of coal came through, certainly plenty of woods and brick for rebuilding London, which was expanding at a phenomenal rate. It must have been a huge employer of people, not just the railway, but also Gilbey's and yet when it came to doing the research, the one group that seemed to be kind of omitted from all information that we can glean of people apart from a few conduct books, which are basically about employees that tried to hide a bit of tipple on their person. But apart from those conduct books, we don't know where they socialized, what clubs they had, what numbers. It's very hard to get information on people.

My Name's Peter Darley. I sort of semi-retired from the work I was doing as an engineering consultant. Started taking an interest in my surroundings, discovered all this railway heritage, which was very close to me but which I'd never spotted before.

Took an interest in that, tried to do bit of research and when certain parts of that heritage came under threat from developers, we founded Camden Railway Heritage Trust. Well, the first thing I noticed was the Primrose Hill tunnel portals, which you have to see through Network Rail, security fencing, and trees and basically, they almost invisible. Very few people around here are aware of them. So, when I started researching, of course that took me into the London and Birmingham Railway, Robert Stephenson and various others.

Pretty soon I was into Camden Goods Yard and Stables Yard, and then it needs a few threats, you know, and suddenly, you know, you have to do something, so who's going to do it? Well, we thought we would and aim really ultimately of opening up this heritage, which is quite remarkable in itself, to the public. A bit like the Roundhouse was opened and preserved by Torquil Norman at the beginning of the noughties. The steam era ended in the 1960s. There was still some action going on with electric and diesel vehicles, but pretty soon all of the locomotive sheds had been pulled down. The Roundhouse magically survived, but the rest of the good shed was pulled down by the 1980s. Camden and others had decided how all of this was going to be sold off. I suppose British rail sold it off partly to Camden for social housing and part of it went to Safeways for a supermarket, which is now Morrison's.

Pascal Worton: 09:40

We're about five minutes from Euston station, so you get out of Euston and you go up Eversholt Street and Somers Town is really on the other side of the road there and we've got next door neighbours, the British library. We've got the new state of the art Crick's centre, lots of social housing and other flats surrounded by these big creations. It's quite a sort of tiredness of developers doing things around people's homes. I'm Father Pascal Wharton and I am the parish priest of St .Mary's Anglican Church.

I've been here about six and a half years. The church goes back to 1835. St. Mary's Church has had a history of trying to serve the community even though we have very little funds ourselves. I came from leafy Norfolk and I'd never worked in a city before, so I had no real preconceptions of what the place would be, but I was struck very much that this was a kind of very real place, a community which had been a community of poverty and deprivation but had a strong sense of community even though it's surrounded by great, great wealth. St Mary's over the years has been a real centre for renewal, particularly in social housing and trying to give people dignity in their lives.

Carol Cluskey: 11:04

I think it's now an environment where people keep to themselves, which is quite sad. Lots of barriers are built up over the years and it's trying to break down those barriers and thank God for the church. It does bring in lots of local people. I'm Carol Cluskey born and bred here. So that's quite a few years. I was baptized in St. Mary's Church. I work in St Mary's Church and I also work in St. Mary's and St. Pancras school. Growing up around here, it was very family orientated. Lots of building works, lots of bombed ruins as their record then. Because it was a family orientated area, everybody looked after everybody else.

It's still like that in a sense, but it's different people. Sadly, lots of our families, my daughter had to move away from the area where there were no places available. Years ago, there used to be a thing called the Sons and Daughters List with Origin Housing, but sadly they had to revoke that.

Pascal Worton: 12:16

It's a very accepting community. That's what I've been struck by people don't stand on a ceremony in Saint Mary's, Somers Town. It's a very real place.

Cynthia Ramsam: 12:25

We moved here in 1985 when we got married because I was a nurse, and worked at the ear, nose and throat hospital on Grayson Road. I'd never heard of Somers Town and it was quite a culture shock when I came because having lived in Rochester, in Kent and Guilford and Sari, this was a totally new world. I think they sort of looked at you with suspicion because you are different.

You are an outsider, but once they got to know you, then they welcomed you and you became like family and friends. I am Cynthia Ramsey. I have been Sunday school teacher, deputy warden, warden, and now treasurer as warden. We run a Bingo club for the elderly on a Tuesday. For some of those people Tuesday may be the only time they see another face or have a conversation with another human being. So, they quite welcome the opportunity of coming here for the couple of hours, play bingo, see their friends, have a conversation.

Pascal Worton: 13:23

We opened the church for other things, not just churchy things and so I hope that when the floor is re-done, we'll be able to be more flexible in what we do in church and the whole space can be a place for the community where many things can happen in it. You can't force people to attend church of course, but I think a church building can be a trusted friend to people.

People know that we're here. We still have people coming when they are in trouble and the homeless come, the people come for food, and we do the Moms and Tots group here twice a week and for some mums, maybe the only place in the day where somebody will offer to make them a cup of coffee. So, it's not just about childcare. It's about having time for people. I don't see my role as getting people to heaven by the cartload. It's just being here and hopefully being available.

Cynthia Ramsam: 14:23 This church is a focal point in the area because even the Muslims come in to pray, you know it's not just Christians who come here. Yes. There used to be a Muslim man who brought his mat in every day and said his prayers on his mat. So, it's an open forum and we welcome everybody here.

Pascal Worton: 14:41 People have to work hard to keep it as a community and the various individuals in the area and various groupings who are striving to keep this community.

There's a neighbourhood forum which meets together different people to discuss local concerns. There's now a local Somers Town history club. They're hoping one day to have an actual place to record the lives and photographs of people that have been significant so that it's not all lost because it's like a little island. We're surrounded by great wealth and so in the middle is social housing and as I say, deprivation still as there was in the 1920s and 30s when priests, particularly Father Basil Jericho from St. Mary's Church Founded the Pancras Housing Association to help to pull down the slums and rebuild houses of dignity for people.

Cynthia Ramsam: 15:36 The buildings they getting higher and higher and bigger and bigger. While that is going on, of course we are losing our trees and our gardens and our little green spaces.

Danny Gallivan: 15:51 Well, I originally started off in a block of flats, named Riedel Water and we were doing the gardens with the children and we were approached by Groundwork, the large gardening facilitator. They asked me, did I know anybody who'd need plots? So, I immediately got in touch with the tenants in my block and a lot of other people came along and we had about 60 people there clearing the plot, which was all fallow land at the time

and now we've got 26 plots. So, we've been there and now for five years.

Danny Gallivan: 16:29

My name is Danny Gallivan and I'm the chair and chief executive of the Regions Park Gardening Association. That's when William Road NW1. Well, it's in the middle of an estate and there's blocks of flats either side of it and it's like an oasis in the middle of it. They're just small plots. Each person that has a plot must live in the area and it's interesting to see that the various nationalities, we have about 12 different nationalities and the different nationalities grow different things.

For example, the Irish will tend to grow carrots and onions and potatoes, whereas the Bangladeshis will grow coriander primarily, you know? They grow quite a lot of pumpkins. I mean you have to appreciate them.

That this is the fourth poorest ward in the U.K. And a lot of people rely on the projects that they get from the garden to keep going. You know, it brings me joy from the garden when people are happy that they've produced some stuff at the end of the season or when they get a plot and we are over subscribed as well, I may add. We deal with a lot more allotments, you know. We're going to try and open it up to the public so they can go in there. People, particularly from the offices up here in Region Place. They've got about 134 different offices here and there's no green space for them to go and have a break, you know? Whereas they can go in the garden and have their cup of tea and watch nature go by.

Peter Darley: 18:14

We would love to see a walk from the towpath at Gilbey's Yards where it would take you north past the winding bolts and up towards the Roundhouse and Regent's Park bridge.

Danny Gallivan: 18:30 It's about time they introduce some kind of structure where we can actually get people walking over the land.

Pascal Worton: 18:39 I pray that this church will be a welcoming place and a place where people can celebrate difference because we're living in a diverse community. When people meet together, they realize there's more that unites than divides.