

PRESS RELEASE

The History and People of Wardley Street Project

On Saturday 22nd October 2022 at 2.00pm a blue plaque will be unveiled in Wardley Street, Garratt Lane, Wandsworth, SW18 4LU, in commemoration of the history and people of Wardley Street.

Geoff Simmons and Anna Hoare invite you to come and celebrate this historic event for London, recognizing the lives of generations of Romany Londoners who lived at Wardley Street for over a hundred years. As far as we know this is the first blue plaque to honour the history and lives of Romany Gypsies and Travellers, not only in London but anywhere in the country, and we hope it will be the first of many.

Geoff's history walks around Earlsfield and Wandsworth have had warm local support for many years, but when more than a hundred and fifty people turned up for a talk on Wardley Street one Tuesday afternoon two years ago, having come from Kent, Essex, and Gloucestershire- it was clear that Wardley Street was very special. Thanks to the contributions made by people who have come to Geoff's history walks on the history and people of Wardley Street over the past two years, we have been able to commission the plaque.

Wardley Street was famous as the home of a large community of London costermongers, and in the 1940s it was featured in an article in The Leader magazine and a BBC Light Programme broadcast. Working with former residents, maps and historical records, Geoff and Anna will continue researching Wardley Street, and look forward to sharing the fruits of that research with you in the near future.

So the plaque is not the end of this project- but rather, another step towards recognizing and appreciating what Wardley Street represents, and towards a better understanding of London itself. Please come and join us on 22nd October at 2.00pm and be part of history as it happens! If you would like to take part in a history walk before the event and learn more about Gypsies and Travellers in Wandsworth, meet up at St Andrew's Church, Garratt Lane, Earlsfield SW18 3QG at 12.00pm. The walk will end at Wardley Street in time for the unveiling.

You can contact us by email at: wardleystproject@gmail.com

