

u3aBike Rides
Passmore Edwards
Tuesday 24th March 2026

The riders assembled at the Clock Café in Dulwich Park for this ride on a cold but dry morning, to see five buildings south of the river which had been funded by the philanthropist, John Passmore Edwards.

The route we followed is based on a walking route which can be found at

<https://www.southlondongallery.org/projects/john-passmore-edwards-walk/>

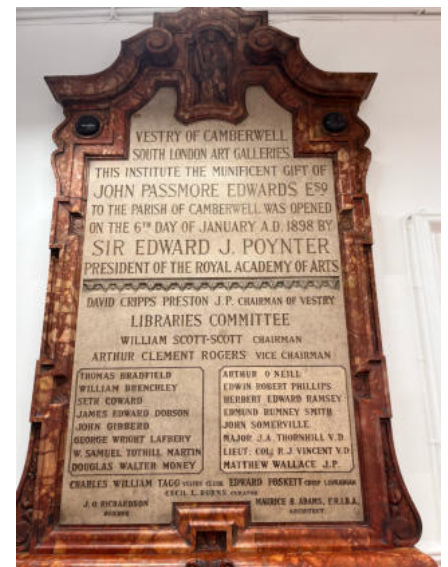
Eight of us took a very pleasant ride though south London, visiting five of the buildings financed by Passmore Edwards.

Leaving the park, we cycled up a slight hill, Eynsford Road, to the first building that Passmore Edwards helped to finance, the **Dulwich Library**.

Alas, this building is being refurbished, internally and externally and was in scaffolding and we couldn't see the ornate decorations. The picture shows a stock photo of the library.

Via little alleyways and past glorious spring-flowering shrubs the group cycled to **Nunhead Library**, the least decorative building and tucked away around a corner, easily missed.

Arriving at the **South London Gallery** and the **Camberwell College of Art**, we spent quite some time studying the ornaments high up on the building -with a google lens. We could see three items depicted: an artist holding a pallet and brushes, a stonemasons hammer and a building. Inside the building was a commemorative plaque.



There was a coffee stop in Burgess Park, where Niesje managed to find another Nederlander and exchange pleasantries.

Time too to visit the Chumleigh Gardens and have a group photo taken.



The next building was a surprise. The path led to the **Wells Way Library**, currently not in use. But the decorations were on the side of the building and not the front. These were partly hidden from view by the large trees. To the right and just around the corner on Wells Way was the more substantial **Public Baths and Washhouse**, now a boxing and gym venue.

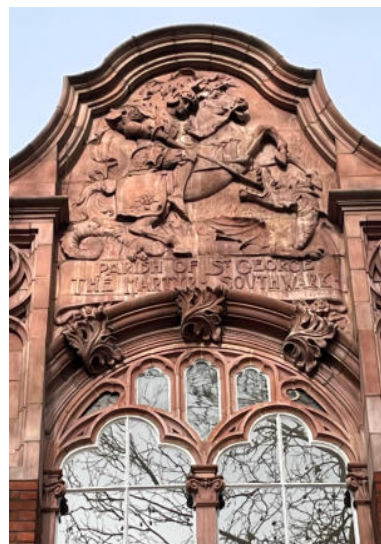
Cycling through Burgess Park to the Elephant and Castle to the last building south of the River Thames when we reach the most impressive **Southwark Public Library**, now the Passmore Centre.

The figure in the upper portion of the gable represents St. George and the Dragon.



The shields on either side bear the Cross of St. George and the Badge of the Vestry of St. George the Martyr.

Details are shown here in these two photos.



A big thanks to Denise for helping with the directions and being the backstop. Thank you for Gerry for the pictures and the write up.

For the most part we were unable to access the interior of these excellent buildings. However each of them demonstrated a fine consideration of their contribution to the urban environment, long seemingly abandoned in favour of a utilitarian approach in public building design and construction.

About half of us concluded the ride by having lunch at "Ev" - a delicious way to finish.

Riders: *Denise, Joanne, John, Martin, Martin, Gerry, Patrick and Niesje (the ride leader).*