

# Institute of Physics

LONDON AND SOUTH EASTERN BRANCH REMS SECTION

**WILTONS MUSIC HALL**

**Thursday 8 May 2008**

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This visit has been organised by David Simmons

John Wilton built this theatre behind his public house, 'The Prince of Denmark' (also known as *The Old Mahogany Bar*), in Graces Alley in the 1850s. One of the early 'public house music halls' that had disappeared by the turn of the century, it provided a program of classical overtures, opera, choral and folk songs performed to large audiences well before the 'old time Music Hall' evolved; stars from the Royal Opera House would go onto Wiltons in full costume after their evening performances, and 'Champagne Charlie' launched his career from there.

Unable to meet new fire regulations it became a Methodist Mission in 1885 and continued to serve the local community till 1956, serving meals to striking dock workers in 1898 and providing shelter during the blitz in World War II. After that it was little used apart from occasional film work before it was taken over by Broomhill Opera in 1999. Remedial work has progressed as funds allowed and though it failed to get through in the first BBC series of "Restoration" fundraising has continued with the aim of a full restoration.

Some info on [www.wiltons.org.uk](http://www.wiltons.org.uk).

MEET at Wiltons where coffee will be available from 10.45. Graces Alley is reached (and signposted) from Ensign St, which runs between Cable St and East Smithfield/The Highway (A1203). It is a ten to fifteen minute walk from Aldgate East tube Station, south down Lemn Street turning briefly left into Cable St and right into Ensign St; or from Tower Hill tube station (I think Tower Gateway is closed) along Royal Mint Street to Cable St. The 100 bus from Liverpool Street station goes along East Smithfield with a stop where it passes Lemn Street or Dock Street as it's called there.

LUNCH at a local pub.

AFTERNOON provisionally a local walk going eastwards along the river and docks, though there is the possibility of an afternoon film show at Wiltons. Details will be circulated nearer the time to those signed up for the visit.

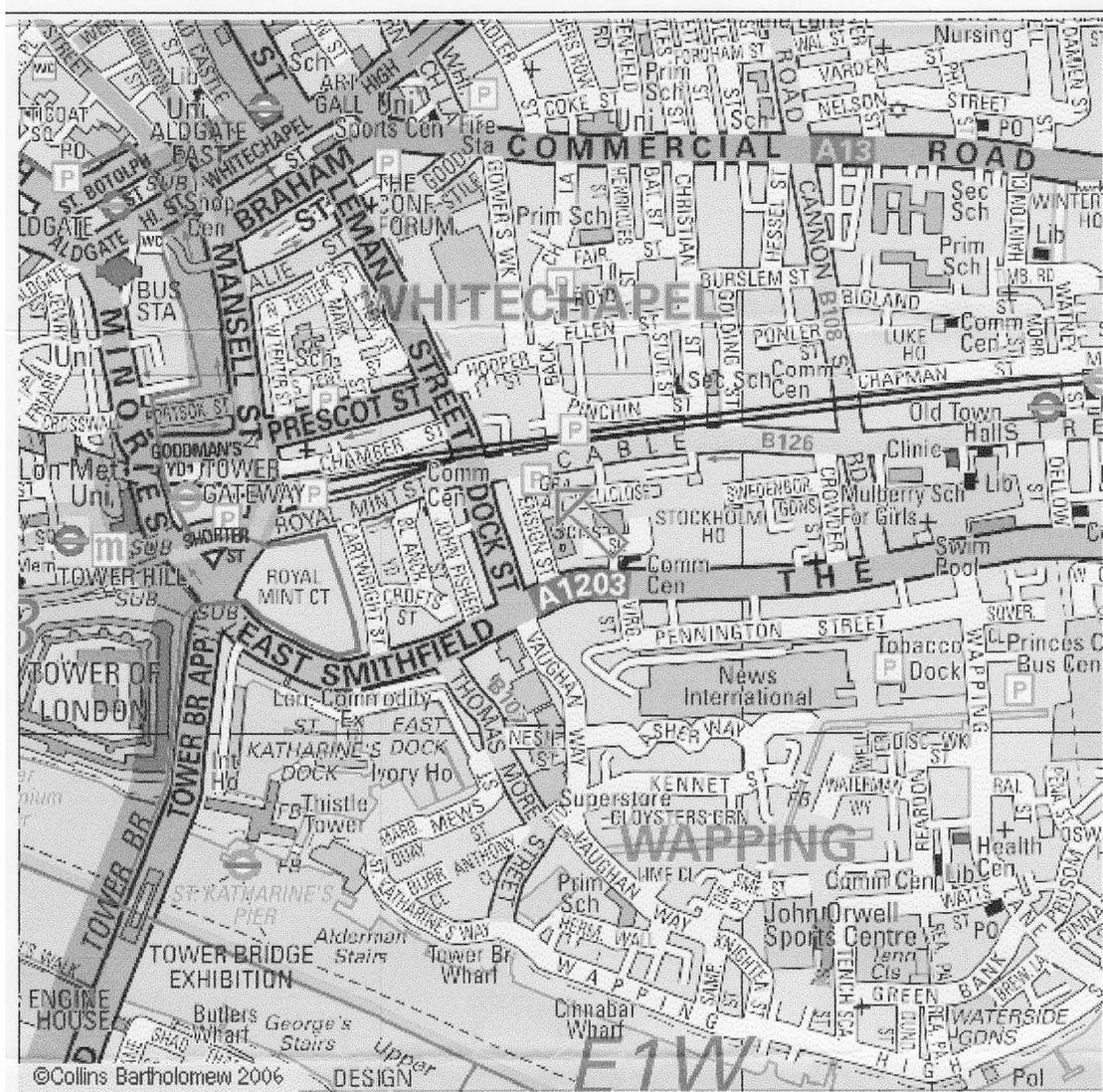
10.45 - 11.15 Assemble at Wiltons

12.00 Finish and walk to Lunch

Afternoon To be confirmed

Minimum number 20, Cost £6 per head.

Map of the area around Wiltons Music Hall



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