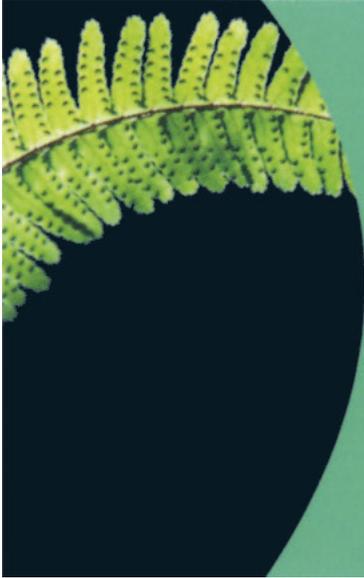


WINTER 2013

THAMES DITTON — TODAY —



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THAMES DITTON TODAY

The Magazine of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green
Residents' Association

Published quarterly since Spring 1970

Winter 2013

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You are welcome to submit
articles or images. Please contact
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Cover photo: <i>Winter pairs by David Spink (07966 238 341)</i>	

www.residents-association.com

Officers and staff of the Association are volunteers, but we must fund costs of this magazine, administrative and election expenses, and other expenses such as spring bulb-planting and the village Christmas tree. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Chemist, 14 High Street, or Thorkill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION



About the Association

Founded in 1934 our Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organization concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interests of the inhabitants of Thames Ditton and Weston Green. We work to preserve and enhance the best in our attractive environment and the quality of life of everyone in our community.

Through regular meetings, social activities, our magazine and website we keep in touch with residents' views and we raise and spend funds for the benefit of the community, from tree and bulb planting to contesting unacceptable development projects.

With five Residents' Councillors we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Council working with other residents' councillors to ensure that decisions are based on the needs of local communities and on good management rather than on party politics.

Our Residents' County Councillor Peter Hickman represents our views at Surrey County Council.

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34 The Woodlands, Esher

Surrey County Councillor:
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Thames Ditton 020 8873 2936

Ruth Lyon,
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Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,
Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

Weston Green Councillors

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Karen Randolph (see above)

Planning: Graham Cooke,
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Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts,
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THE NEXT RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION OPEN MEETINGS ARE

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News from the Residents' Association



to 20 November

Home of Compassion

This is the largest and most problematic planning matter in our area. Bought by private care-home operator Caring Homes from the charity which with the proceeds reconstituted itself as Walsingham Care, the building's use is determined by covenant to the private Boyle Farm Estate. Plans were approved for refurbishment and extension of the HOC itself, to use the entire premises including the area which is currently the chapel as a care home. Then the credit crunch hit in October 2008, shortly before building works were due to commence.

Suddenly, financing was not available for the project. Caring Homes' balance sheet went into considerable debt. Planning permission was renewed in the intervening years and remains current. However, in the search for finance, the company felt compelled to enlarge the project, providing more beds and a more commercially-viable outcome. Part sale of Caring Homes' assets to an American buyer has lately restored the company's balance sheet to a more healthy state and they say they are now in a position to go ahead.

Designs for an extended development were floated by Caring Homes in a public exhibition at the Swan earlier this year, for residents to comment. The major public reservation concerned an enlarged car parking area on the river side. The subsequent planning application drew many

more formal objections: to the car parking issue was added objection to the size of the additional extension overlooking the Estate, and objection to the proposed walkway and observation area overlooking the High Street, and to the "prison block" appearance of part of the extension proposed on that side. Also, an objection widely shared, to the inadequate specification of heritage-quality materials for the refurbishment of parts of the listed Grade II building such as matching "slates" for the new roofing required.

The Elmbridge Planning Officer in his report recommended refusal, but only on the grounds of inadequate provision for trees on the site. He emphasised that a building which is in a poor state of repair would be brought back into a viable and beneficial use (there is a need for care for the elderly in east Elmbridge), and that concerns over suitable materials could be dealt with via suitably worded conditions attached to consent.

However, Caring Homes withdrew the application, made some fairly small modifications (in the right direction), and presented their comments and proposals at another meeting in the Swan on 15 October, attended by their Chief Executive (and primary owner) Paul Jeffrey, architect Brian Robb and Building Development Manager Nicola Thornton. The meeting was dominated by what seemed to be Caring Homes' determination to put their



top: 2008 approved, centre & bottom: 2013 plans

buildings which must be balanced against the public benefits... we consider amendments could be made to further ameliorate the suburbanizing impact... the U-shaped East Wing would more than double the footprint... the cumulative impact of the development on the setting of the Grade II Listed building and the character and appearance of the Conservation

new application in without there being time to take into account residents' comments at that meeting, and by vociferous objection to the size of the new East Wing by the spokesman of Boyle Farm Estates. Caring Homes indicated that were permission refused on their new proposals they would probably take the matter to the Inspectorate for appeal.

The new application and concomitant application for Listed Building consent were submitted to Elmbridge at the end of October. Meanwhile, both English Heritage and Thames Landscape Strategy have now commented adversely on these applications. English Heritage (8 November): *"this... would cause harm to the character and appearance of the Conservation Area and the setting of listed*

Area cannot be considered as anything other than harmful (but not appreciably more so than the earlier scheme approved)."

Thames Landscape Strategy focused on their policy of conserving the unique river edge, restricting vehicle use on it and wherever possible removing car parking from the waterside.

Readers will see that the matter is very complicated, not least by the earlier planning approval and the recent change in government planning emphasis to favour developers. Our broad aims are, however, clear: we support the early restoration of this important building and understand the need for it to be commercially viable for the owners. We

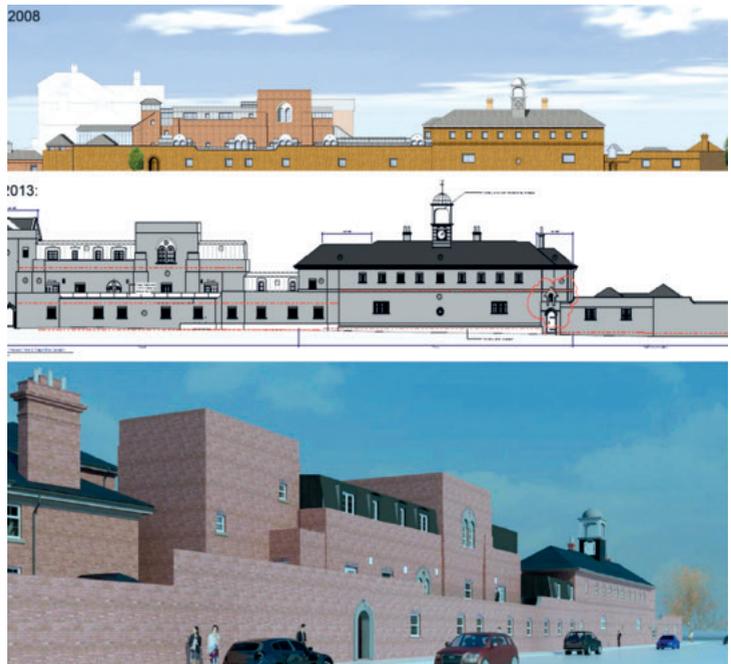
appreciate Caring Homes' efforts to present their thinking and make senior people available for briefing and questioning. We want the best outcome achievable for this very significant building and its setting, but we think there is more to be done to get that outcome.

Taggs Boatyard

A second application for this site, for three storeys including boatyard, offices and 9 flats following demolition of all existing buildings site, has attracted a large number of objections including several weighty ones made by the Thames Ditton Conservation Area Advisory Committee. The application awaits the planning officer's report and consideration by EBC's planning committee.

Land rear of 1 Lime Tree Avenue

Applications to build a house on this site now run well into double figures. Elmbridge refused planning permission in August on the latest one, ref. 2013/2306, on the grounds of vehicle movements, domination of the street scene, the proposed development being too large for the plot and detrimental to the adjacent



top: 2008 approved, centre & bottom: 2013

property. The applicants have had recourse to the appeal process. Objections must be received by 19th December 2013 marked with the Planning Inspectorate's appeal ref: APP/K3605/A/13/2208102. Email teamp1@pins.gsi.gov.uk or mail 3 copies to Jonathan Alden, Planning Inspectorate, 3/09 Wing, Temple Quay House, 2 The Square, Temple Quay, Bristol BS1 6PN.

Car parking &c.

The current preoccupation is to ensure the use (and therefore survival) of Ashley Road car park and where possible to help customer and staff parking for our High St businesses. To this end, the Association resisted Elmbridge's recent extension of parking charges to Saturdays and increases in charges. It should be possible

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to devise a better scheme to boost use, including use by half- or all-day parkers. We want the new path from the car park to the High Street to be open permanently, as soon as operational considerations allow (building work on the new studio and flat to the rear of Simply Fresh). We support the idea of car boot sales in the car park. The first one, which Tracey Blatchford of Bradley & Brown played the major role in organising, and which had to meet various conditions set by Elmbridge, was a success.

We are also looking again at earlier proposals, which achieved support among residents and businesses at the time, to provide at least two multiple parking bays for short-term shoppers in the High Street, during the working day. This plan was scuppered by Surrey when, instead of the free and unencumbered short-term parking envisaged, they wished to impose metered bays. The metering policy ended in ignominy. It may now be time to revert to the original proposal, without meters and largely dependent on drivers behaving as honourably in the High Street as they do at Winter's Bridge and Summer Road where there are similar, successful bays.

Meanwhile the ten Conservatives who rule Elmbridge in the council's cabinet have decided to impose car parking charges in some of the borough's recreational areas such as Cowey Sale in Walton, Long Ditton Recreation Ground, Hurst Park and the recreational centre opposite the Princess Alice Hospice which is also used by visitors to the dying. The motive is money. But Elmbridge's car parks already make a profit, taken together.

TD Polling stations

For some time, parents have been unhappy that Thames Ditton Infant School has been used for polling. It's well positioned as a polling venue, particularly for voters arriving from the railway station in the evening. But children lose yet another day's schooling to bureaucracy, and working parents have to make arrangements to look after them. Therefore the Association has put forward a proposal to use the Vera Fletcher Hall instead. This is even closer to the station so voter turnout should be preserved.

Miscellaneous

The **High Street should be resurfaced** by Surrey during the financial year 2014-5 (thanks to Peter Hickman for persistent lobbying on this).

Substantial **maintenance of the railway bridge at Thames Ditton station** was lately carried out. It was infested by neglected buddleia, the roots of which had deeply penetrated the brickwork. Many bricks had to be cut out and reset. Work followed some months after we lobbied Network Rail, and alerted the Surrey Advertiser to the problem (who kindly ran a piece on it). Maintenance shortcomings throughout the country were the object of criticism of NR by the regulator.

We have four more **snow shovels** to cater for new volunteer Snowmen. Please contact Peter Haynes (see p.5) if you'd like to join this residents' snow-clearing scheme, or need more information on things like gritting.

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Remembrance, Giggs Hill Green, 2013

Doings and dates

At this year's **Remembrance** ceremonies Residents' Councillor Tannia Shipley laid a wreath on behalf of the Association at the memorial at All Saints Weston Green, with Residents' Councillor Ruth Bruce laying one on behalf of the Borough. At Giggs Hill memorial, Rhodri Richards, the Association's Chairman, laid a wreath on behalf of the Association while Residents' Councillor Ruth Lyon laid one for Elmbridge. Both ceremonies were very well attended on a bright, chilly Autumn day.

After the First World War, a memorial was erected on the outside wall of **A. B. Burton's Bronze Statuary Foundry** in Summer Road to commemorate the workers who served and died. It is no longer there. If anyone has any memories or details of the memorial or of its removal; or indeed of the Foundry in general, please contact Jon Moore, c/o Dittons Library, Mercer Close.

Resident **Eric Austin** of Camm Gardens has been elected Master of the prestigious Guild of Mercers' Scholars for the coming year. The Mercers' Company supports many schools, including some originally set up by the Guild as far back as the 16th century. The installation and dinner took place in the magnificent Grocers' Livery Company Hall with over 150 Guildmen and guests attending.

Colets Squash club men won the English Club championships this year for the twelfth time, while the ladies team came third. In late October Colets hosted

a regional squash competition which attracted 124 entries and was most successful, with local players featuring among the top places. The club's squash pro and organiser, Dave Peck, has created and sustained a very fine squash club of national standard in our village.

By the time this issue reaches the streets, the **Residents' Christmas Party** and the **High Street Christmas Fair** will be over. Our Hon Sec Tricia Bland has again arranged the mini-Christmas trees along the High Street, and the lights on the lime tree will be switched on by East Enders star, Charlie Brooks. The Association's highways convenor Andrew Roberts has arranged the Christmas tree and lights for the Fountain roundabout. In Weston Green, **All Saints Christmas Fair** will be on Saturday 14 December from 10 - 3.

The **Friends of Thames Ditton Hospital** host **Charles Court Opera's Christmas pantomime "Buttons – Another Cinderella Story"** on Friday and Saturday 10th and 11th January. Again, **Dairy Crest** are generously sponsoring the production. See p. 39 for details. In recent years these pantomimes have raised £40,000 for vital equipment for NHS patients at Emberbrook, including the ultrasound and this year's echo-cardiograph equipment which complements the existing consultant cardiologist clinics held at Emberbrook. This enables patients in the Esher/Thames Ditton/Weston Green area to be diagnosed and treated much more quickly than having to wait for an appointment at Kingston or St. George's.

Don't forget that you can get a good range of Christmas goodies and smaller presents from our local shops – so **please spend in Thames Ditton and Weston Green** where you can. The new High Street website is up and running at

thamesdittonhighstreet.com

We still have **no replacement Editor** prepared to take on responsibility for this

magazine. If you'd like an interesting volunteer rôle, step forward. There's a story behind every front door...

Merry Christmas – and thanks to all those who support and volunteer to help your Residents' Association.

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Two Wheels Good

– cycling around Thames Ditton



*Chris Froome on Portsmouth Road 2012
photo by David Marsden*

This article isn't going to debate cycling in the area. There is an ongoing Surrey Cycling Strategy Consultation process with everyone given a chance to share opinions. A driving factor for the Consultation is the increase in the popularity of cycling; as a way of keeping fit, as a social activity, as a means of commuting, and as a sport. There is a growing number of bicycles on the road, so it's logical that appropriate planning safely manages this inevitable and positive development. As long as there is peaceful coexistence on our roads, I will be happy: I write as a passionate and committed, novice cyclist who enjoys Thames Ditton's proximity to the beautiful Surrey countryside. In terms of the sport of cycling, Thames Ditton has been lucky to

play host to international events with the world's top cyclists. In 2012, Olympic time trial and road races were enjoyed by thousands of spectators lining Portsmouth Road and Hampton Court Way. The Prudential Ride London-Surrey Classic in August saw 150 top international riders plus thousands of amateur riders enjoy the route through Surrey. Closed-road professional cycling events in the area are rare but they draw huge crowds. The RideLondon-Surrey Classic returns to the area in August 2014.

Fitness benefits

In recent years, the number of people cycling in the area has increased significantly. I've been commuting by bike to my office in Kingston for at least eight years – it's less than four miles each way – but I soon realised what a significant positive effect cycling has on your health.

A Get Britain Cycling report published this year showed that £1 invested in cycling saves £4 in healthcare – that's great for the community and the economy. I'm asthmatic, I've had knee problems since I was 18 and was 10Kg overweight before cycling. Now in my 40s, I am healthier than I've ever been – thanks to cycling.

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it doesn't have to be a cold, lonely activity...

Commuting by bicycle

Reducing the volume of traffic on our roads has obvious benefits. Department of Transport statistics show that only 2% of us regularly commute by bicycle. It's neither practical nor safe for everyone to do so – but a lot of people using cars or public transport could be enjoying cycling to work. The Cycle to Work scheme offered by many employers allows tax savings and interest-free repayments on

bike purchases. If you have an old bike in need of a service, take it to a local bike shop. There are a few shops in Kingston, but closer to home is Surbiton Cycles (Thames Ditton Marina, or Surbiton), offering a range of servicing options. They can advise if your current bike can be upgraded to suit the type of riding you want to do.

Getting social

Cycling can sound like a lonely activity; hours riding alone exploring unknown roads. For that reason, it's good to ride with others and possibly join a local club. A recent addition is Dittons Velo, a club born here in Thames Ditton, set up 12 months ago by members of Dittons Skiff & Punting club. Dittons Velo is a relatively informal, inclusive and social cycling group. The club is not about racing, but there are groups of widely differing speeds and levels of ambition!

After just commuting by bike for a few years, three years ago I bought a road bike and in June I joined Dittons Velo – the best thing I've done for my cycling: people to motivate you to get fitter, without taking the fun out of it. I've learned a lot of incredible routes, accessible in a morning's ride.

Dittons Velo meets every Saturday at Café Rouge, Esher at 9.15am. If you're interested in joining us, email: info@dittonsvelo.org.uk or call me on 07968 407739, or Nigel Shipley on 020 8398 5240. Our website is at dittonsvelo.org.uk.

David Marsden



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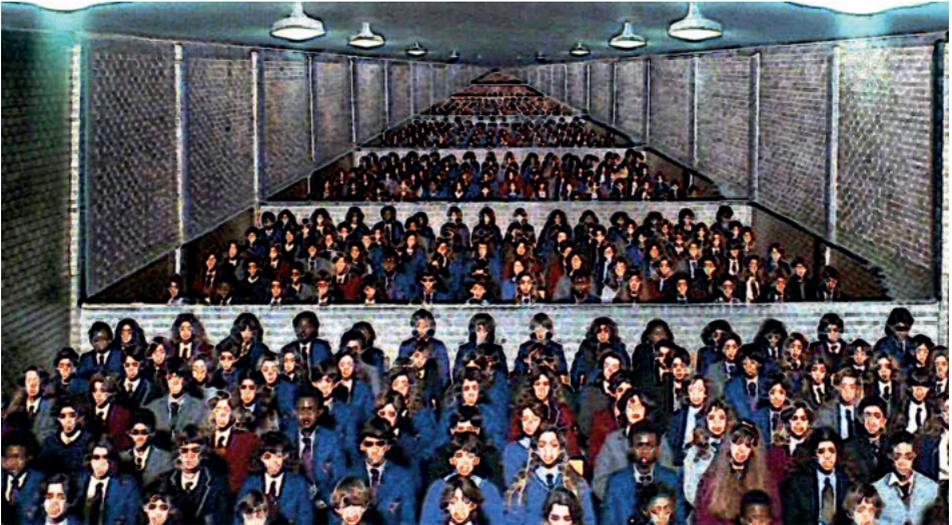
Street Child Africa – a local charity supporting partners in Africa
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&

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Secondary Schools Crunch



where will the County put growing numbers of children in Thames Ditton?

In May this year, a number of concerned parents met to discuss the impending shortfall in secondary school places for Thames Ditton. We heard that some children had been failing to get places at the local Hinchley Wood school and that children in Claygate were undertaking 90-minute trips on public transport to the only available school in Epsom & Ewell – 8 miles away and outside Elmbridge. We were well aware that this trend is set to continue.

We began by writing letters to our local MP and to Education Secretary Michael Gove, highlighting the fact that Thames Ditton children, for whom Hinchley Wood is the only catchment school available, are so far down the

waiting list that those in the corners of the catchment are not being admitted. Hinchley Wood, as an academy, can set its own admissions criteria, and children closer to the school, or with siblings already there, but who live outside the catchment, often much further away, are given preference to those in the ‘corners’ of the catchment, so these children are effectively being ‘lost’ in these gaps. This, together with the rapidly increasing numbers of children, means that those who have grown up in these communities, are being left high and dry – i.e. they are, progressively, falling outside any school catchment area at all.

There are four reasons for this increasing demand: the recession, which

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means children who might previously have gone to private secondary school now cannot afford to; people moving into the area; parents outside the area taking advantage of the 'sibling rule'; and the rising birth rates. In recent years in our district, more and more housing estates and flats have been built, with disquieting rumours of further applications floating around, yet with no supporting sites planned for new schools to accommodate these increases.

Next, we raised a petition on Surrey County Council's (SCC's) website requesting a school for Thames Ditton, since places at Hinchley Wood can no longer be guaranteed and other nearby schools are already struggling to admit children from their own areas let alone consider anyone else. Please sign it at www.petitions.surreycc.gov.uk/TDittonSchool. We raised awareness with articles in the Surrey Advertiser, greatly supported by journalist Kitty Dann. We wrote to Linda Kemeny, SCC's Cabinet Minister for schools, who acknowledged the problem, saying that Esher High School will expand by 2 additional forms in 2015, adding 300 more places in the borough, although 30 of these places will be ring-fenced for Claygate children. She also mentioned new plans for a free school at Cobham, and expansions at Rydens and Heathside, which are hoped to relieve pressure on Hinchley Wood.

After further detailed examination of facts, figures and projections by parents and SCC, we joined forces with similar groups from Long Ditton and East Molesey, and met with Melanie Harris of

SCC in October where these statistics, trends and plans were discussed.

Melanie explained that she updates her figures regularly from school census numbers. She said there are 4 secondary schools currently in Elmbridge, with Cobham Freeschool planned for 2014. She explained that funding from Central Government is falling, leaving SCC with an expected shortfall of £165m or more over the next 5 years for education (although I have since been advised by Dominic Raab that David Laws plans a funding review in 2015 to address this shortfall).

Next, we looked at SCC's plans for secondary school expansions. SCC plan one extra form entry at Esher High in 2015, one at Heathside and another at Rydens in 2016 (although Rydens, where this year, 15% more children achieved A-C GCSE grades, may not be an option for children from the Dittons by this time since this extra capacity may be allocated to the large scale domestic developments already being built around Rydens). Other options are also being considered, but SCC are truly struggling to find space even for these expansions. They did say they would support local parents in starting up another Freeschool, but admitted that there is no viable land. Other sites they are considering, however, are the Imbercourt Met Police site and Chandlers Field (already a primary school) in East Molesey, but there are issues here too.

Finally, we covered some other points, one being the fact that Hinchley Wood, Rydens, Heathside and Esher High have

agreed to collaborate on re-evaluating their admissions criteria for future years, rather than continuing to work in ‘silos’ as they have previously done. We are expecting the resulting proposed changes for next year to be published for consultation between 1st November 2013 and 1st March 2014.

In conclusion we cannot be complacent. We, as parents, must ensure

that standards continue to rise and that there are sufficient places at good local schools for our children. Surrey and Elmbridge councils, for their parts, must ensure there is no more unsustainable housing development, and the schools must continue to work together.

Louise McDonagh

Thames Ditton Secondary School
Action Group

Cheering Senior Citizens



Local charity Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired (CHEER) relieves social isolation and tackles poverty across our borough. A recent tea party at The Firs in Claygate was a huge success and we hope to repeat events like these in other East Elmbridge sheltered



accommodation schemes. As well as group events we offer one-to-one befriending.

Our small but dedicated group of volunteers regularly meets with housebound older people to provide companionship and support. The number of people who would benefit from this service is rising steadily and CHEER is

all the merrier

urgently looking to expand its volunteer pool to keep up with demand. If you have an hour a week to spare to pop in to see an older person for a cup of tea and a chat, we would love to hear from you. Give CHEER a ring on 01372 879321 and ask for Harry or Charlotte.

Charlotte Atkinson,
Assistant Manager

Milbourne Pond



some of the residents who kindly give their time to pond maintenance

It has been a while since there was an update on the restoration of Milbourne Pond and the reader could be forgiven for thinking that things have ground to a halt. This is not the case, and steady progress is being made – albeit rather slow. The issues are very complicated and it is vital that the right decisions are made to ensure the longevity of the pond for the enjoyment of future generations.

You will remember that Andrew Roberts of the Residents' Association arranged a full hydrological survey of the pond. This was carried out by a global company (E.R.M Foundation) who very generously did the work *pro bono*. The report that they produced was impressive.

Much research and analysis had been undertaken and their final recommendation was that an impermeable artificial liner would be the best solution – a liner that would also have the ability to retain vegetation and encourage wildlife. Some re-profiling of the pond was also recommended as well as a provision for the top-up of the water levels as evidence had shown that there was insufficient runoff from the various inlets already situated around the pond.

It was necessary to get Elmbridge Borough Council to agree to the work and a presentation was made to the Countryside Consultative Group for their consideration.

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- * Before letting, make sure that the property is in good repair and that the furniture and other contents comply with the various product safety legislation

Top Tips for Tenants

- * Be very careful who you share the property with, particularly if you are all signing the same tenancy agreement - by doing this you are making yourself liable for their share of the rent as well as your own, and also for the cost of any damage which they may do to the property. You should only sign a tenancy agreement with people you can trust.
- * Don't sign the tenancy agreement unless you are absolutely certain you want to rent the property. Don't allow yourself to be hassled into signing against your better judgement, and before you have fully thought it through.

And finally.....

Edgars would like to wish everyone a very Happy Christmas



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After due debate it was agreed that the Residents' Association could proceed with a borehole to see if water in the perched aquifer some 5m down was of suitable quality. If so, the Association could go ahead with the rest of the project provided we secured funding.

The total cost of the project (borehole, electricity supply and pump, ground work, installation and cost of the liner) was considerable. Weston Green School raised the magnificent sum of £1000 doing a sponsored walk earlier this year and some of the proceeds from the "Secret Gardens of Weston Green" have also been earmarked for the restoration. Money raised some years ago is also being held in the "Milbourne Pond Appeal Fund". However, the total amount was not sufficient for the whole project and it was therefore agreed that an application for the whole of the funding be made to the SITA UK Trust. All went well, with the various stages being passed with relative ease. Unfortunately the bid failed at the last hurdle – the Board Meeting at which all the bids were considered. It transpired that there had been an inordinate number of bids and Milbourne was rejected.

This has led to a rethink. We are still investigating further funding from another source but meanwhile we feel that it is necessary to have a pro tem solution. We have enough funds for a borehole and electricity supply – two crucial elements without which we cannot proceed. Andrew Roberts consulted a pond expert and Cllr. Ruth Bruce, Andrew and I have met with him, on site, to discuss the various options.

A pond survey was undertaken on 11th October to ascertain the quality and depth of the existing clay. If there is a sufficient depth of clay that is of good quality, it may be possible to mechanically re-puddle the clay once again. This, together with the installation of a borehole to provide the necessary top-up of water, would hopefully result in a pond that holds water, albeit perhaps only temporarily. The water levels would then be monitored for a season to see what transpires. It must be acknowledged however, that in order to provide a pond that is completely sustainable, and capable of supporting wildlife the pond will have to be re-profiled. The present 'saucer' shape means that the water evaporates very quickly. The success of Marney's Pond is partly attributable to the fact that it is deeper than Milbourne.

Meanwhile, regular maintenance of the area is vital, and EBC does this periodically. However, resources are limited and we therefore had an extremely successful and enjoyable 'community day' on Sunday 27th October. Several local residents turned out in wellies, armed with secateurs and tree pruners, to clear all the overgrown vegetation around the pond. This was organised by Peter Dodge – a Weston Green resident who has documented the history of the pond and spent hours caring for it over many years. I'm sure that all Weston Green residents would wish to thank Peter and all the volunteers for their excellent work.

**Residents' Councillor Tannia Shipley
Weston Green**

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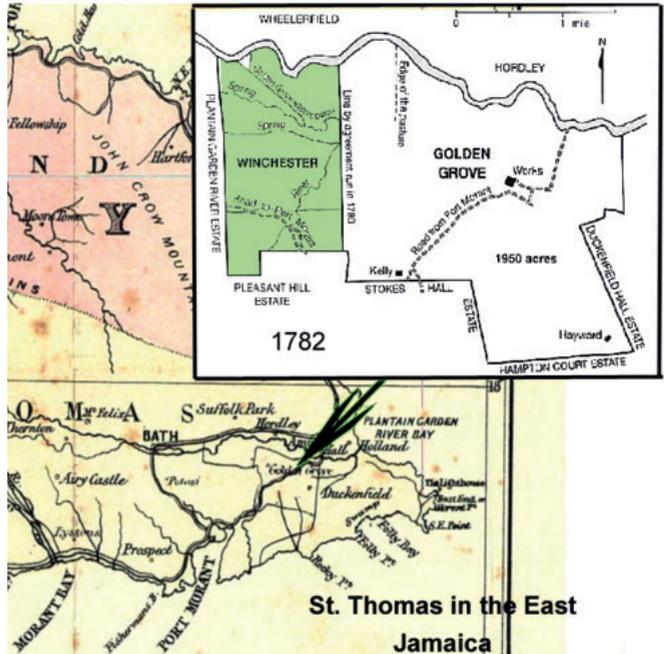
Thames Ditton's Taint of Slavery

part II



From Thames Ditton, or more precisely Weston Green, we can get glimpses of slavery on West Indian plantations. For as well as letters between Robert Taylor, the slave-trading owner of Ember Court and his cousin Simon Taylor, the immensely rich attorney and plantation owner in Jamaica, which have been well studied, there is surviving correspondence of the Lambert family in Weston Green with their agents in Jamaica. These letters had been sitting unstudied in an old copy-book until I came across them.

The Lamberts' ancestors had been French Huguenot merchants, growing rich in the 1600s. I do not know precisely what was their area of merchanting. The odds are on trade with the West Indies in view of deep and abiding family connections with, in particular, Jamaica and its plantocracy. In the mid-1700s there is a firmer trace of Capt. Robert Lambert's father, Sir John Lambert the second Baronet, as a Paris-based financier



the Winchester Estate (green) in eastern Jamaica which Catherine Lambert inherited. Note that at bottom right of the inset we have a Hampton Court Estate

of the *Société pour la Rivière de Sierralionne*, whose objective was to procure slaves for the French plantations in Guadeloupe and Saint Domingue (present-day Haiti). At least 7,500 slaves were procured and shipped for this company, with payments being made through Sir John.

Capt. Robert Lambert had to earn his own living and joined the Royal Navy. He married 16-year-old Catherine

Byndloss in 1768. She was born in Jamaica, in St. Catherine's parish, and later came to the UK where it seems likely that she was living with the Morant family in Hampshire. The Byndloss and the Morant families were part of the Jamaican plantocracy from the earliest days of British settlement on that island. When Capt. Lambert retired from the Navy on a pension of £200 a year, plus interest of about £750 p.a. from savings, he had seven children to provide for. It must have come as a welcome development that in 1796 Catherine's uncle, Thomas Cussans – from another planting family of long standing in Jamaica – left her his plantation producing sugar and rum at Westminster Estate, plus Hopewell Hall Pen (livestock), on the south bank of the Plantain Garden River in the eastern part of the island.

The inheritance was not without problems. There were disputes in Chancery concerning whether Cussans' mother had had the right to bequeath the estate to him to dispose of to Catherine or whether there were entailments; there were mortgage and other claims. There were long-running disputes over water and territory with Chaloner Arcedekne, the owner of the adjacent Golden Grove plantation, for whom Simon Taylor acted. The boundary dispute was not settled until 1826, by which time Capt. Robert Lambert was long dead and Catherine had taken upon herself alone the responsibility of administering the estate through direct correspondence with her agent in Jamaica and via Maitlands in London, who handled the shipping, insurance and sales of sugar and rum.

From the correspondence it is abundantly clear that a slave plantation was not, by this period, an unmitigated financial or other blessing. In fact it was a succession of real headaches. Correspondence and the transport of goods by sailing vessels was disrupted by war and storm. Market prices were volatile. Even when their agent on the island was a family friend, the Lamberts were clearly concerned that they might be diddled, for in many years the plantation's expenses were more than the income it produced. Indeed, in every other letter there are admonishments and pleas. For instance:

“the Bills already drawn amount to above £2000 Sterling, the supplies sent out will be as much, the annuities amounting to nearly as much must be paid, besides freight, Taxes, Insurance & Commission &c., all this forms a considerable sum more than the produce of the Estate can pay this year, which with my large family to maintain obliges me to be as circumspect as I possibly can,” wrote Capt. Lambert in December 1799. And two months later, after remonstrating about expenses and the unauthorized purchase of mules and cattle:

“Messrs. Maitland have inform'd me they are already several thousand pounds in advance for the Estate; judge then what a disappointment to me who has a horror of being in Debt to find that it must be considerably increased by the sums laid out in Jamaica this year... You must Dear Sir be sensible how mortifying it is so large and good a property should, so far from yielding me a shilling, lead me considerably into Debt.”



cutting sugar cane

There were also headaches with staff the Lamberts recruited and sent out: a book-keeper from Scotland (*“thinking the young Men in general better qualified for that purpose that come from that country”*), and a carpenter and family who fell out with the overseer and absconded from the estate. Financial strains led the Lamberts to let their (second London) house at Cavendish Square and base themselves principally at Weston Green. At the beginning of 1800 Capt. L. wrote: *“We are now settled here, the country is delightful and I have already found a considerable Improvement in my Health.”*

But what of the slaves themselves? Over 380 human lives were entered in

the books along with livestock. There are abundant references in the correspondence to the Lamberts’ desire that they should be well treated. Extracts:

“I am glad to hear the Negroes appear satisfied and that you have discharged the Overseer Mr. Maxwell from Winchester if you disapproved of his Measures, and that by his Conduct he contributed to render them dissatisfied. If the Negroes you mention as wishing to buy their Freedom belong to Winchester, I beg you to do as you judge proper about it. It would certainly be better to purchase two new Negroes, than to keep those who are able and willing to alter their situation.”

“I am sorry to observe charges for Runaway Negroes, you do not assign the

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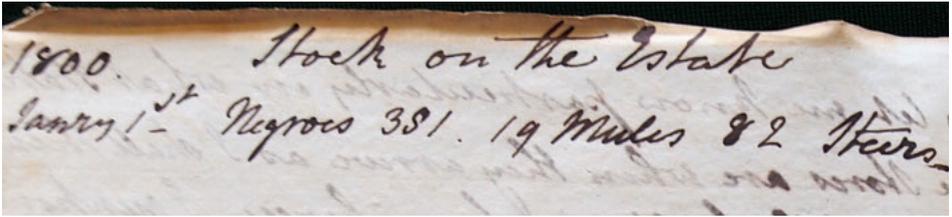
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Capt. Lambert's copybook: 381 Negroes numbered with mules and steers as Stock on the Estate

cause of their discontent, but am sure Dear Sir, your Humanity will lead you to give directions to those that are over them, that they may be treated with as little harshness as their situation will admit of; I have desired Messrs Maitland to send out some Blankets and Shawl handkerchiefs for the Women and will thank you to have them distributed from us as a Reward to those who best deserve it or Encouragement to others."

On health: "I hope the Negroes in general are in good Condition"... "I hope the Negroes will soon recover from the loathsome disorder you mention" (yaws). And when production was down because of bad weather plus 40 slaves under inoculation at crop time: "I shall be very glad to hear they have got well over the Smallpox."

"I was concerned to hear of the disaster which has happened to one of the Trash Houses being consumed by Fire; you do not mention if you have discovered by what accident it happened... hope it could not have been purposely done by any Evil minded Person... perfectly agree with you that those Negroes who exerted themselves to extinguish it should be properly rewarded."

The correspondence continued in similar vein when, with Capt. Robert

suffering from gout and spasms from kidney stones, a year away from death, Catherine took on the task. When she died in 1832, their eldest son Admiral Robert Lambert took over, again from Weston House, although his was just one share of the estate among the siblings. He was among those in the country lobbying for "the Preservation of the British West India Colonies," while at the same time a member of the Vestry in Thames Ditton, where St. Nicholas was among many parishes throughout the country that petitioned the House of Lords for the abolition of slavery in the colonies. At the end of August 1833 abolition was finally enacted. The settlement that was negotiated with the plantocratic lobby, strongly represented in Parliament, bound the newly "freed" slaves to indentured labour for a few more years. £20 million in compensation was paid from public funds to former slave-owners. University College London has recently put details online in a publicly accessible database entitled "Legacy of British Slavery". In it I found Vice Admiral Robert Stuart Lambert, awarded £5,125 15s 3d in compensation for 275 slaves at the Winchester Estate.

Now much has been made of Britain's involvement with slavery, and it is clearly uncomfortable to the idealist

conscience that slave owners were compensated by the British taxpayer, and that a transitional period of indenture or “apprenticeship” was enforced without redress on the slaves being emancipated. But it is quite remarkable that with such vested interests at stake, and with trade from the plantations being a very significant contribution to the economy, Parliament acted to end it, and in a fairly orderly manner. Just as 26 years earlier, it had been Britain that ended the slave trade and then set the Navy to catch and punish offenders. These worthy acts were not imposed on this country, but stemmed from liberal conscience within it, given force and focus by William Wilberforce, an Independent Member of Parliament, who died shortly before his Bill was enacted under the Whigs and whose distant relative, Martin Wilberforce (a Vice-Chairman of the Residents’ Association) lives here in Thames Ditton.

The Winchester estate itself passed to Admiral Robert Lambert’s surviving brothers. By the time General Sir John Lambert, who had married a Morant, died at Weston House it had been sold on and his will refers to an annuity of £1000 a year entailed upon it.

Reading and researching the correspondence made me reflect deeply. In the Lamberts of Weston Green we have an upright and engaging family with many virtues. They fought for this country, repeatedly, and one was killed in action, another wounded, the husband of another died at Waterloo. They were not poor, but neither were they stinking rich. From Catherine’s diaries, at home they were a close, loving family,

sympathetic, charitable, churchgoing, good sorts, kind to their many friends, intelligent, well-informed, lovers of gardens and gardening, and supporters of progressive thinking (Capt. Robert Lambert campaigned for the Whigs). And yet here they were, the owners of slaves. They didn’t sell Catherine’s inheritance or question its dependence on slavery, a status accepted in the Bible’s Old Testament. They took a benevolent view of ownership, and they remained at a distance from the brutal realities of bondage. The Lamberts were friends with the slave-owning and trading Taylors of Ember Court, with Charles Ellis at Claremont and with a host of planter families in this neighbourhood and London. Clearly the circles in which they moved took slavery for granted, a fact of life; probably thought “negroes” suited to the condition, despite the gathering conscience of the nation.

Today, we all find that slavery was and is abhorrent, and recoil from it. I wonder what things we do in the present time that will be regarded with horror by our descendants? Owning a second home while so many go homeless? Using precious water on the lawn? From a convenient distance exploiting the sweatshops of Bangladesh via our cheap clothing chains, all glass and chrome and profit? Buying a yacht for recreation while others starve to death? Or will it be something else?

Something that now *we* all take for granted.

Keith Evetts

The Suppository of Wisdom and other laxities



To misspell a word might be an accidental slip, but increasingly I see words and phrases parroted or transposed where clearly the author has no idea of their origin and their meaning. This is a serious matter. The language, enfeebled by sloppy use, is losing its teeth. Small wonder that the OECD ranked Britain's youngsters 21st out of 24 developed nations for literacy. We are setting them a bad example.

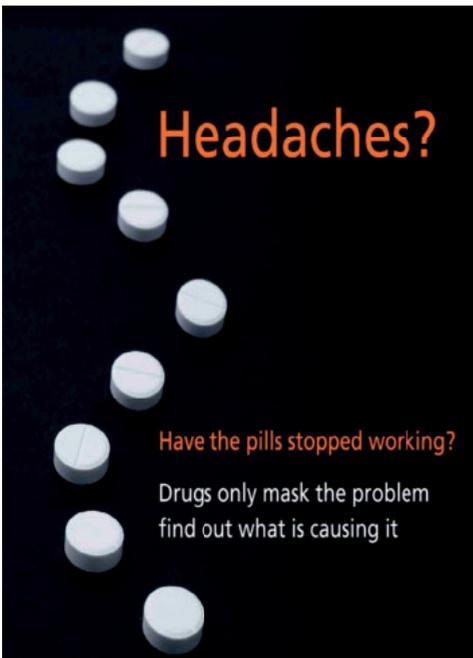
I don't just mean those deadening clichés: you know, the *eye-watering elephant in the room kicking the can down the road going forward*. Nor the mangled metaphors of Jeremy Warner, assistant editor of the Daily Telegraph: "*Britain is caught in the cross-hairs of these agonised birth pangs.*" Enough to make anyone pant as they pull the trigger. Nor the overuse by advertising copywriters of gushing modifiers such as "*incredibly*" or "*fantastic*" to describe something which is most certainly not credible, and most definitely fantasy. Accurate, I suppose, but not as they intended.

Nor those classic ambiguous howlers lately in the newspapers: "*Victim found strangled to death by police officers in house in Milton Keynes*" (Daily Mail), or in the Guardian, by Stephanie Merritt: "*When I was a teenager, I thought of killing myself. Now there's help.*"



wisdom used to come as pearls, but now...

What I have in mind are maladroit words or phrases, repeated without understanding or unthinkingly spelt from the wrong root, and other laughable idiocies and juxtapositions. That, to quote one unwitting journalist, "*follow the heard.*" Yet they can bring merriment to one's day, and provoke zany contemplation. "*Anyone can mussel in,*" a Guardian commentator wrote, quite unshellfishly. When you read the remarks on the accidental death of a bottlenose dolphin by a marine conservation officer: "*These creatures are insanely intelligent. They are not like wild animals with little intelligence*" – you are driven to reflect

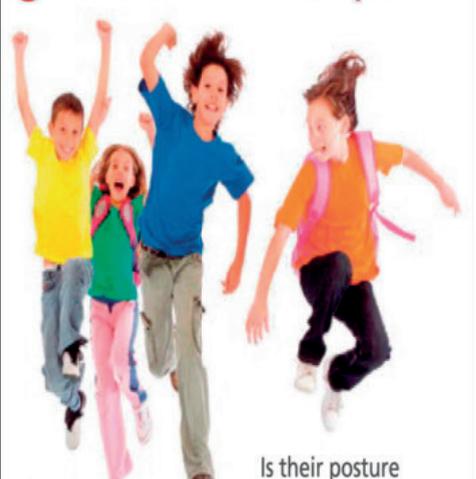


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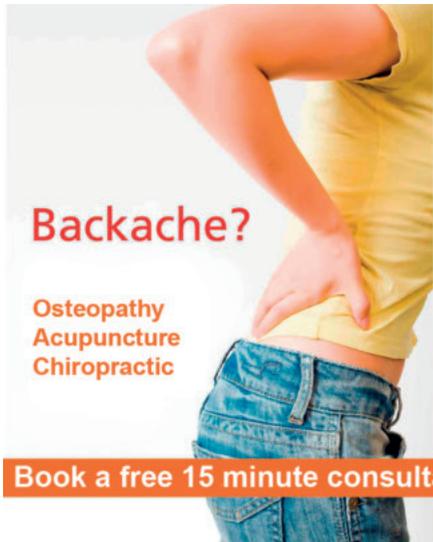
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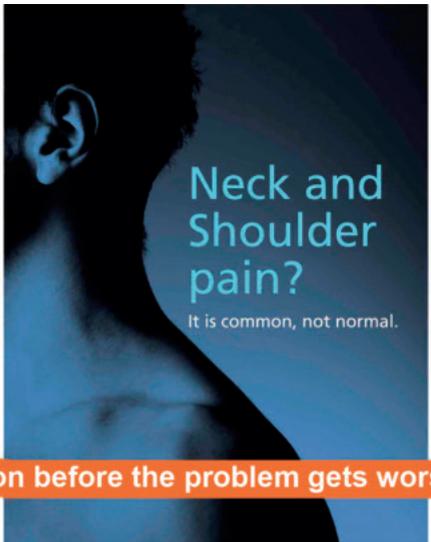


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that insanity is just one letter away from inanity.

Politics and economics yield more than their share. An analyst at Berenberg commented delphically about “*certain uncertainties*” surrounding the euro, while at Hargreaves Lansdown, investors were waiting “*with baited breath*” – something smells fishy there. Laughter abated, my eyes were moist as I read of “*a two-teared strategy*” for economic growth. I noted, with a taxpayer’s righteous outrage, a Telegraph reference to “*the Chancellor’s immoral soul*” (they ought to know), and that “*the time has past for Cypriot politicians to get some steal in their veins.*” And Jeremy Warner again, about the debt ceiling fiasco in Washington: “*The US is wrecklessly throwing away its future.*” Frankly, it looked more like a wreck to me. Even Reuters wrote with reckless inattention in a headline: “*Spain widely seen as a taste case for Europe’s economic policy.*” Perhaps this was, as one commentator put it beautifully, “*reverting to tripe.*” He might have been “*a Member of the Bored*” – Telegraph Business section again.

I must try not to be lax myself. Australia’s new Prime Minister attacked his predecessor during elections thus: “*No one, however smart, however well-educated, however experienced, is the suppository of all wisdom.*” A gaffe which made him the butt, shall we say, of humour worldwide. A suppository of wisdom conceivably leads to platitudinous diarrhoea, or, in Australia, to an unusual reptile, the “*croc of shit*” cited by an illiterate commentator; one of

many who, like cyclists, “*pedal their abuse.*” For sceptics like me, who peddle only the purest truth, Rightmove’s property pages had just the thing at a cottage in rural Ireland: “*a sceptic tank.*”

Discharging the scatological and the septic, now turning to inadvertent sexual themes, another Telegraph commentator writes of “*running the gamete*” – something one tried to do every weekend as a student. Two gametes make a zygote, as I recall, if you don’t take precautions. The full gamut of newspaper illiteracy even runs to “*more honoured in the breech*” – a phrase which brings to mind several former colleagues of ambivalent orientation. Shakespeare would have guffawed.

I hope that our beloved language has one last roll of the dice “*in the throws of death.*” Meanwhile I fret that I may never get to find the location of the “*werewolf*,” about which I have so often read (in throes of laughter). To my joy as a conservator of the increasingly rare werewolf, there is actually a clothing company called “*Wearwolf*” – perhaps for a “*wolf in cheap clothing*” to wear once in a blue moon.

Our schools should read this article and act. Get pupils to look things up on their smartphones. Teachers too. It’s time they were educated. Now **that** would be, as yet another Telegraph commentator wrote, “*a turnip for the books.*”

Malcolm A. Propos

Visiting Professor of Etymological
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and SATURDAY £36 including 3 course dinner
in aid of Thames Ditton Hospital Appeal
from Karen Randolph 020 8398 5005

Friday 14 February 7.30 pm

Mike Leigh's musical drama film

TOPSY TURVY

with Jim Broadbent, Timothy Spall and Lesley Manville
In partnership with Thames Ditton United Reform
Church, the award winning film telling the story of
W.S. Gilbert and Arthur Sullivan's creative conflict
during the writing of "The Mikado"

TICKETS £6

Tuesday 25 February 8.00 pm

Royston Pike Lecture

SECRET CLASSROOMS:

A Window on the Cold War

John Lyon, former Intelligence Corps officer, on the
political, military and personal aspects of how
Britain tried to remedy our intelligence deficiencies
early in the Cold War.

TICKETS £2 at the door Bar open 7.30 pm

Friday 28 February 8.00 pm

COLIN STONE (piano) & SAGI HARTOV (cello)

Two world class musicians from the London Mozart
Trio play Mendelssohn's Cello Sonata No. 2 in D
major and Grieg's Cello Sonata

TICKETS £12.50 (under 16 years free)

Saturday 15 March 7.30 pm

The Rosemary Branch Theatre presents

JANE EYRE

Orphaned Jane Eyre emerges from charity school to
seek her fortune as governess to the ward of the
enigmatic Mr. Rochester. "the gothic world of
Charlotte Bronte's novel in this piece of fringe
theatre at its best" – The Stage

TICKETS £12.50 For ages 11 years up

Sunday 30 March 7.30 pm Strictly Sunday

JAZZ ON A SPRING EVENING

Jake Fryer – Ronnie Scotts and the London Jazz
Festival and his top line-up of trumpet, saxophone,
trombone, full rhythm section and guest vocalist play
classics by Duke Ellington, Cole Porter, Gershwin...

TICKETS £11 (under 16 years free)

YOUNG PEOPLE'S THEATRE

Tuesday 14 January 1.30 pm

Wednesday 15 January 10.00 am & 1.30 pm

Proteus Theatre presents

ALICE IN WONDERLAND

Lewis Carroll's classic tale of Alice's adventures
brought to life in a magical production fusing circus,
puppetry and music.

TICKETS £6

Saturday 8 February 2.30 pm

Noisy Oyster presents

DANGEROUS DAVE

Dangerous Dave and side-kick puppet "Herbert
Lemon" present some of the most mind-bendingly
zany stunts ever performed. Marvel at the fearless
inhuman Canon Ball.. Inimitable street theatre.

For 4 - 10 years.

TICKETS £6 Carpet / £8 Seat

Saturday 8 March 11.30 am & 2.30 pm

Little Angel Theatre present

SLEEPING BEAUTY IN THE WOODS

The Brothers Grimm fairy tale of the wicked fairy's
spell cast at the baby princess' christening –
dreamlike fantasy of palaces and forests, ogres and
fairies, princes and babes. With puppets, film and
music. "Witty, ingenious and romantic" – Time Out.

For 3 - 6 years

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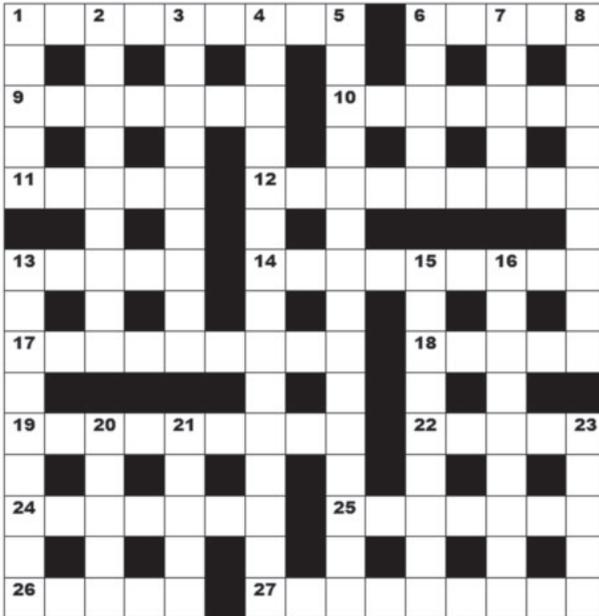
Pre-Prep and Nursery	2½ - 7 year olds
Prep	7 - 11 year olds
Senior	11 - 18 year olds

For further information about Open Mornings or to arrange an appointment please tel: **01372 473624** or email: **info@claremont.surrey.sch.uk**



Winter Crossword

By Michael Jackson



The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 7 February 2014 will win a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

Please send the completed puzzle (or photocopy) enclosing your name and address, with the envelope clearly marked 'Crossword Competition', to:

Thames Ditton Today
Crossword Competition
6 Church Walk
Thames Ditton
KT7 0NW

ACROSS

1. Pleasure: flying my Jet, none better (9)
6. A stiffener (5)
9. Captivate (7)
10. Bantu's throwing spear (7)
11. Yucatan's fibre and port (5)
12. You can see the horizon starts, but then there is (2,3,2,2)
13. A unit of weight (5)
14. Teach in the glen for a change (9)
17. Time for tan, one hopes it's sunny (9)
18. Lady using branch for 4 down? (5)
19. Letters marked C.O.D. sets P.O. problems? – no, but these do help (9)
22. Printer's daggers (5)
24. Site of the Alhambra (7)
25. King's daughter a get-out for amazed Theseus (7)
26. Student's formal leave of absence (5)
27. We're on a roll at Esher (9)

DOWN

1. These odds aren't odd (5)
2. He could eat no fat (4,5)
3. Book at 'Early Rate' for use 12 months hence (4,5)
4. For friendly understanding we need tolerance; it does help (7,8)
5. The strategy will come after Hempstead's canal conversion (6,9)
6. ...and founded on river beds a good standard will be maintained (5)
7. There's always trouble in ragbag groupies (5)
8. State of being (9)
13. Change map to locate sparkling region (9)
15. 'Rocker', to find oil, gets go ahead to start drilling (9)
16. Charlie was one on a Wellington, Halifax et. al. (4-5)
20. Bond's request – not to stir (5)
21. A hundred on a float see a boat (5)
23. Recipe of Delia can be perfect (5)

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Solution to the Autumn Crossword

by Maureen Willcox



Congratulations to the sole winner who receives a £5 voucher:

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SERVICES, CLUBS, SOCIETIES AND GROUPS

SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Harry Livesey	01372 879321
Dittons and Weston Green Neighbourcare	Avril Ashworth	020 8398 7521
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services		
Thames Ditton Centre for Retired People	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 5921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	020 8398 3772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride,	ask for service at central	
Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	switchboard	01372 474474
Homesupport Elmbridge	Pam Howard (Manager)	01932 252204
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 463587
Surrey Youth and Adult Education Service	Elmbridge Area	020 8979 8334

GROUPS

Girl Guiding in TD & WG	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
1st Thames Ditton Brownies	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
3rd Thames Ditton Brownies	Deborah Daoud	020 8398 5521
2nd Thames Ditton Rainbows	Nicki Sutherland	020 8398 4202
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Alan Nolan-Davies	0844 414 2826
1st Weston Green Guides (All Saints)	Mrs. Louise Lewis	020 8398 4843
2nd Thames Ditton Guides	Mrs. Bronach Hughes	020 8398 1628
1st Weston Green Brownies (All Saints)	Mrs K Williams	020 8398 1300
2nd Weston Green Brownies	Mrs J Epps	020 8395 0595
1st Weston Green Rainbows	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Laura Clarke	020 8398 3447
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mrs. Adrienne Nealing	020 8398 5582
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	020 8398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: Pat Farmiloe	020 8398 2787
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Nick Pattenden	Nick@FSLimited.com

CLUBS

Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784 466651
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
Claremont PROBUS Club	Mr. P. Collins	020 8398 3125
Claygate Bridge Club	Hon. Secretary	020 8398 1710
Colets Health & Fitness	Giordano Orsini	020 8398 7108
Dittons Skiff and Punting Club	Hon Secretary	07710 139417
Dittons & Hinchley Wood Royal British Legion	Hon Secretary	020 8398 6263
Ember Players (Drama) Ember Sports Club	Anne Segall	020 8941 4528
Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	020 8398 7038

Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701
Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	020 8786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
Esher Camera Club	Billy Buchanan	020 8398 3169
Esher 41 and Ex-Round Tablers' Club	Dr. R. Tudor-Williams	020 8398 0108
Folk Dance Club	Pam Phillips	01372 373745
Hinchley Wood / Dittons PROBUS Club	Geoff Francis	01932 867771
Long Ditton Cricket Club	Nigel Hardy	020 8398 8361
Long Ditton Garden Club	Heather Harvey	020 8398 2642
Model Railway Society (Hampton Court)	Secretary	01932 241224
Mothers Union (All Saints)	Jill Cotter	020 8398 4598
Old Cranleigh Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleigh Hockey Club	Eds Copleston (Men)	07775 940703
	Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07771 557900
River Club (BMYC)	David Walker	0870 460 3586
Rotary Club, Esher	Geoff Morris	01932 868454
Rubber Bridge TD Lawn Tennis Club	Val	020 8399 9972
Surbiton Croquet Club	Alec Thomas	020 8398 2391
Surbiton Golf Club	Secretary	020 8398 3101
Surbiton Hockey Club	Secretary	020 8398 2401
Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis Club	Chris Lewis	07770 562569
Thames Ditton & Esher Golf Club	Mark Rodbard	020 8398 1551
Thames Ditton Squash Club (Colets)	Dave Peck	020 8398 7108
Thames Ditton Cricket Club	Howard Frish (Secretary)	07947 561449
Thames Ditton Marquetry Group	Jasmine Berry	020 8398 4358

SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS

Ember Choral Society	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Chris Walker (Sec)	020 8398 6651
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	020 8398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Louise Flaig	020 8398 7704
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
Soroptimist International (Kingston District)	Secretary: Pat Harman	020 8390 3507
Thames Ditton Women's Institute (W.I.)	Secretary	020 8398 8615

OTHER

Cancer Research UK	Mrs. Vivienne Harris	020 8398 6787
Elmbridge Fairtrade Network	Judy Porter	020 8398 6401
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Helen Mason	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings



By Hook or Crook



Some 1700 years ago German monks played a game throwing stones at a club until they knocked it over. The club or *kegel*, which is said to have represented temptation, developed into the “kittle-pins,” or skittles, that became an immensely popular diversion in the ale-houses of England. So much so that it distracted citizens from obligatory archery practice. This led Edward III to ban the game in 1366, a ban extended by Richard II (1388), Edward IV (1477) and Henry VIII in 1511, 1535 and yet again in his 1541: “*Bill for the maintaining Artillery, and the Debarring of unlawful games.*” Henry, however, had a private bowling alley built for himself at Whitehall Palace. In 1728 and 1745, additional laws against skittles were passed by George II.

Records of the Surrey Quarter Sessions reveal a letter by William Hatton from Molesey, 15 July 1718, on behalf of his friend and neighbour, inn-keeper Henry Lee, indicted for keeping nine pins. Hatton argued that this was merely a malicious prosecution: “*’tis an angry prosecution by reason all ale house keepers have nine pins in our hundred.*”

In 1773 A. Jones in “The Art of Playing Skittles” urged all publicans to “*adorn their grounds with every requisite advantage in order to encourage as much as possible this useful and salutary game.*” Indeed skittles again became a popular game in pubs in the vicinity of



skittles represented temptation to early monks

London, where the pins were larger and heavier than elsewhere. Many skittle clubs were established along the Thames including, in Thames Ditton, at the Angel.

Now I have no proof of the provenance of the impressive old nine pins (photo) in the possession of Dittons Scouts, and an enquiry of the Scouts drew a blank; but a distinct possibility is that they came from the Angel. When, is not known – but Rome Attwell who founded scouting in Thames Ditton, had a butcher shop on Thorkill Road, and lived with his mother at 21 Angel Road, might be a contender for the link?

Keith Evetts



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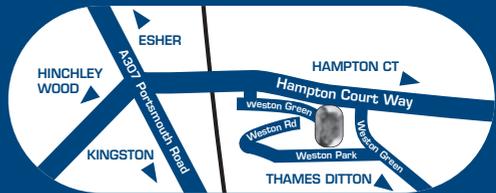
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