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The Magazine of the



THAMES DITTON TODAY

Published quarterly since 1970

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Cover photo credit: RHS Flower Show by RHS / Georgi Mabee

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 village Christmas trees. The subscription is only £3 per household. If you can contribute more, please do so. Subscriptions can be paid via our website www. residents-association.com; subscriptions (in an envelope please) may be left at Boots Pharmacy, 14 High Street, Thames Ditton or Thorkhill Road Pharmacy, 94 Thorkhill Road, Thames Ditton. Or mail to Membership Secretary Peter Haynes at 6 Onslow Gardens, Thames Ditton KT7 0JJ. Thank you.

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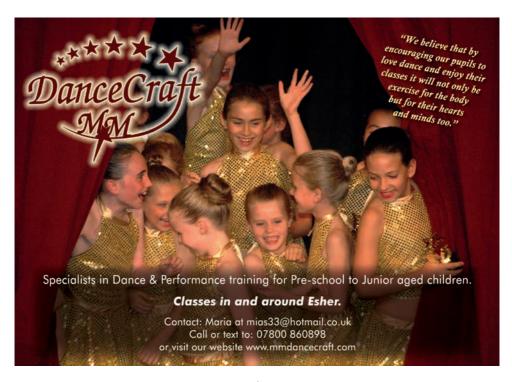
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THAMES DITTON AND WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

About the Association

Founded in 1934 our Association is a strong, locally based non-party-political organisation concerned with protecting the amenities and furthering the interests of residents. 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 six Residents' Association Councillors covering the two electoral wards we have a strong voice on Elmbridge Borough Council working with other Residents' Association 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, Nick Darby, represents our views at Surrey County Council.

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Caroline James,

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Thames Ditton 07970 672723

Karen Randolph,

Deepfield, Giggs Hill Road,

Thames Ditton 020 8398 5005

Hinchley Wood & Weston Green Borough Councillors

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Janet Turner, 2 Montgomery Ave,

Hinchley Wood 020 8398 1565

Nigel Haig-Brown

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Willow End, River Bank, Thames Ditton 07736 677671



The Next Residents' Association Open Meetings are

June 19 8pm – All Saints, Weston Green September 25 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall, Thames Ditton All who live or work locally are welcome



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News from the Residents' Association to end-May



Borough elections

Congratulations to both our Residents' Association candidates, Caroline James (Thames Ditton ward) and Nigel Haig-Brown (Hinchley Wood & Weston Green ward) who won with substantial majorities.

You can find out a bit more about both councillors on pages 13 and 14.

Elsewhere in Elmbridge, the Residents' Group - Liberal Democrat coalition lost four seats and gained one. The net three-seat loss meant that Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) was under no overall control, with the RA - Lib Dem coalition on 24 seats and the Conservatives also on 24 seats.

The Conservatives will return to run the Administration of EBC as the largest single party. They inherit a Borough in much better shape than they left it. Among other things, the RA - Lib Dem coalition has:

- instigated a programme of infrastructure improvements to car parks, Halls and Day Centres
- made a significant start to tackling the lack of affordable and social housing through setting up an arm's-length Housing Company and acquiring properties in Elmbridge
- delivered the lowest Council Tax increase in all of Surrey, without any cuts to public services.

Your RA councillors, with their Liberal Democrat colleagues, will continue to serve the best interests of Elmbridge and to hold the administration to account.

Thank you party

More than 100 volunteers are involved in distributing Thames Ditton Today and in March we held the annual 'Thank You Party' at the Vera Fletcher Hall, which was organised by RA stalwarts Mary Blythe and Hilary Hepburn.

After many years and much work Mary and Hilary are retiring from the role and we say a big thank you for all their work. If you would like get involved with the RA and help organise the annual thank you party please let us know at *editor@residents-association.com* or contact our Hon. Secretary on 020 8224 2880

Train timetable consultation

Following the RA's campaign for improvements to the timetable for the Hampton Court branch, South Western Railway has agreed to include the 19:23 fast evening service from Waterloo to Thames Ditton and Hampton Court in its proposal. Thank you to all who responded to the consultation.

Finally, work to start on Milbourne Pond

Work on Milbourne Pond is planned to take place in August/September this year subject to any unseasonal rain. The work involves re-profiling the pond and surrounding banks to pick up the permanent water table which currently sits at roughly 30 cm below the floor of the current pond. The aim is to have permanent water, ecology and vegetation.

Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association Privacy Policy - Summary

(in accordance with the General Data Protection Regulation, 25 May 2018)

Please note that we will never pass on any of your data to a third party.

What data do we hold? The personal data you give when you subscribe and any RA specific roles. Note that we do <u>not</u> hold any credit/debit card data used in online subscriptions.

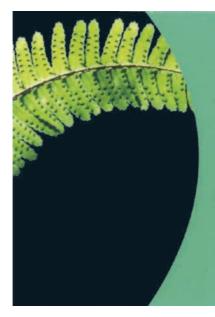
How do we store your data? Electronically, with security to prevent third party access. Also, paper subscription forms are retained for five years.

How do we use your data? To notify you of matters of local interest and RA activities.

How long do we keep your data? As long you subscribe to the Association, unless you request that it be deleted. If membership lapses and no advice is given, we will delete it after five years.

Can you access your data? You have the right to know what information we hold on you, and to have it deleted.

How to contact us? Officers' details can be found on page 5 and on our website at *https://www.residents-association.com*. Full details of our data protection policy can also be found on our website. Write to the Secretary if you would like a paper copy.



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Milbourne Pond May 2018

The work will cost £13,000 and funding has been secured from a number of sources. The Elmbridge Community Infrastructure Levy provided £8,000 towards the project. The local community has raised the additional £5,000 from The Secret Gardens of Weston Green, various community donations, Weston Green School children, local residents and the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association.

The work follows a long period of investigation which started with a detailed consultancy exercise undertaken by ERM Foundation and a series of monitoring holes three years ago which gave us a good understanding of the water table in relation to the pond.

This will be the culmination of a great deal of effort by RA Highways & Drainage convener Andrew Roberts and local RA Councillor Tannia Shipley who both said "It will be good to see work finally completing to put water back in Milbourne Pond!!"

Privacy policy

The RA has been reviewing it privacy policy and the details are summarised opposite.

Planning

There is no decision yet regarding applications to build **Northwest of**

the Spinney on Weston Green Road (2017/3414) next to the tennis club and on the plot of **7 Embercourt Road and neighbouring gardens** (2017/4062).

Permission was granted at appeal for the building of a two storey office building to replace an existing garage block on land **East of 74 to 128 Speer Road**. (2017/0818) on the edge of Old Paulines' playing fields.

Tagg's Boatyard. (2014/1600) Local residents have made planning officers aware that the development is not proceeding according to the submitted plans. The ridge height is higher, windows are bigger, and it is set closer to the river than was set out in the planning permission. Local RA Councillor Karen Randolph arranged a meeting between the Enforcement Team and the local residents. The developers have agreed to meet with local councillors and representative residents to directly discuss concerns about the build. We very much hope that an agreement can be made for the breaches to be rectified.

The application for a change of use at the former Mehra's/Wine Rack at **12 High Street in Thames Ditton** (2018/0061), to allow for a Costa Coffee café and shop has been permitted.

Tackling Pennywort in the Ember

Michele Cooper from the Environment Agency (EA) has reported that "the lowering of water levels during the freezing temperatures did have the desired effect of largely killing off the pennywort and therefore we were able to return levels for boaters to be able to use the boat roller tunnel". The EA Field Team are now scheduled to spend at least a week a month scouring the Ember for fresh growth.

There may be further tweaks in the levels this year as works are needed on both Island Barn (upstream) and Molember sluices.

Flooding News

The Residents Association Flood Group is working towards adding a Flooding section to our web site which will provide more detailed information relevant to Thames Ditton. It is also working on a Flood Information leaflet to be distributed to 'at risk' residents later in the year.

Thames Ditton In Bloom

Thames Ditton Station is celebrating the centenary of women getting the vote with a

riot of flowers and herbs in the suffragette colours of purple (for loyalty), white (for purity) and green (for hope) in planters and wheelbarrows. Thames Ditton In Bloom volunteers and station staff planted them out. Bunting, handmade by Thames Ditton Crafters, completes the theme.

See what the team has been doing to help the honeybee on page 21.

The Dittons Fair

The Dittons Fair held on May 13 was a great day out for all. Many local residents were out enjoying this popular annual event in the sunshine.

A spokesman from The Dittons Scout Group said "This is the only fundraiser we undertake ... we are indebted to our families for running their stalls so brilliantly, to many local businesses, small and large, and to our local community in general, who support us year in, year out". For information on how you can get involved with the Dittons Scout Group or for enquiries about next year's fair contact dittonsfair@gmail.com



The Dittons Fair May 2018

Albany Reach

Following problems identified last summer caused by unauthorised camping and excessive and unhygienic litter (possibly made worse by an influx of people fishing) on Albany Reach we are looking for volunteers to help monitor the situation. If you are able to get involved please contact RA Cllr. Karen Randolph *Krandolph@elmbridge.gov.uk*

Dates for your diary



Treasure Hunt in the High St

Saturday July 7 Entry Forms from Stitchery and Little Foray

Esher and Molesey Garden Society

Annual flower show St Nicholas Church Hall 19 August

Farmers' Market

George and Dragon car park 9.30am-1.30pm Saturdays; June 23, July 28, August 26

Weston Green Litter Pickers

Meet at Marneys pub on the first Saturday in the month at 10.30am

Thames Ditton Litter Pickers

Meet on the third Saturday of the month at the George & Dragon at 11am

Bereavement Café

All Saints Church Hall from 10.30-12.00 first Tuesday of the month. Just drop in



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Introducing Caroline James - our new RA Councillor for Thames Ditton



The Residents' Association feels that it is very important that local Councillors come from the areas they represent - and you could not get more local than our newly elected Councillor for Thames Ditton ward, Caroline James

Caroline knows Thames Ditton well. You may remember her helping out her parents who ran the village bakery in the High Street in the '80s and '90s. She and her husband Stuart have lived in Thames Ditton for 24 years, first in Summer Road and now in the High Street. Her two children grew up here and went to local schools: Thames Ditton infants, Thames Ditton Juniors and Hinchley Wood School. She runs her own recruitment company and, like many of us, commutes from the local station.

In 2012 she, Tricia Bland (now also an RA Councillor) and Jeremy Hamilton from Stitchery ran a fund-raising campaign to put up the first set of Christmas lights on the lime tree in Thames Ditton village centre, as part of the campaign to Keep the Heart in Thames Ditton. She has kept the fund-raising going and she and fellow TD resident Andy Anderson organise the biannual Secret Gardens of Thames Ditton (this year 17 June, 2-5.30pm).

Caroline has served for a number of years on the Thames Ditton Conservation Area advisory committee, which is committed to preserving our heritage. She said "I know Thames Ditton well, but I also know East Molesey as my husband used to run an antiques business in Bridge Road. I am keen to learn as much as possible about the whole Thames Ditton ward".



Caroline James RA Councillor Thames Ditton ward

[Since the boundary changes in 2016 the ward includes a number of households in East Molesey - Ed].

In any spare time she keeps fit at the local bootcamp on Giggs Hill Green and enjoys running in our local parks.

Caroline was elected following the retirement of RA Councillor Ruth Lyon, who represented the ward for more than 45 years. Her first words when the count was in were: "I am honoured and delighted to have been elected, I know I have big shoes to fill!"

Come and meet Caroline and our other RA Councillors at our Residents' Association Open meetings.

Nigel Haig-Brown re-elected RA councillor for Hinchley Wood & Weston Green



Nigel Haig-Brown was re-elected as Residents' Association Councillor for Hinchley Wood and Weston Green, receiving 70.3% of the ward vote, the highest level of any party candidate in the Borough.

Nigel was first elected to Elmbridge Borough Council in 2014 to represent Hinchley Wood and was re-elected in 2016 to serve the newly created ward of Hinchley Wood and Weston Green. Since then he has thrown himself into getting to know Weston Green.

"Being involved in the Secret Gardens event was a great way to get to know Weston Green village. I have really enjoyed meeting residents and I am delighted to have been re-elected. The support of so many from across the ward is both gratifying and inspirational."

Whilst on the council Nigel has served on a number of committees including the East Area Planning Subcommittee which covers the Dittons, Weston Green, Hinchley Wood, and Esher. When talking about the committee work he said "my background in accountancy and business has been invaluable on the Overview & Scrutiny, as well as the Audit & Standards, Committees".

During this next municipal year, as chair of the Overview & Scrutiny Committee Nigel will sit on the shareholder committee of the Company formed by the Council to speed up delivery of the type of housing and tenures, so desperately needed in the Borough.



Nigel Haig-Brown RA Councillor Hinchley Wood and Weston Green

Nigel lives in the ward and is married, with three daughters and five grandchildren. In addition to his role as a councillor, Nigel is a Trustee of the Princess Alice Hospice and sits on their Finance and General Purposes Committee. Any free time he has is spent long-distance walking, skiing, sunny holidays and tending his allotment.

Come and meet Nigel and our other RA Councillors at our Residents' Association Open meetings.

Update from Nick Darby, our Surrey County Councillor



First, many thanks for voting for me 12 months ago. It has been a fascinating time learning more day by day about the people and issues of Thames Ditton and Weston Green. As I have said before, a steep learning curve at County Hall!

When I was elected, I recall being given two pieces of advice. First, to get on with the officers, second, not to assume that members of the other parties will never listen. Officers are there to implement decisions, and to listen to and respond to questions. Having a good relationship can make a difference. Much the same applies to discussion with other members, whether they be queries raised with me by residents, or policy matters which arise for a Surrey decision.

Perhaps the most obvious item I have been involved with is the £6000 each councillor had last year for good causes. In Thames Ditton, that meant getting the defibrillator outside the Mercer Close Library, and therefore available 24/7, also money towards the Christmas fair, with a balance to support underprivileged children in Surrey, very similar for Long Ditton. This year the allowance is reduced to £5000. I have some thoughts but would very much like to hear from you with other ideas - it is definitely not too late! Please email or call, or have a word at the Farmers' Market, I usually attend.

Potholes, related Highway issues, and parking have come high up the list of my email and phone bag. One of the Surrey issues remains the lack of funding provided by Central Government for Highway repair.

Government is due to consider "Fairer Funding" arrangements in the next 18 months



or so. Writing to our MP Dominic Raab to bring pressure will undoubtedly assist. In the meantime, please keep reporting potholes to me, to pass on for action. There may soon be progress with more visible work to some local roads. In this context one of my frustrations is the time it takes for Surrey to make decisions, and even then the time taken to implement.

To finish the pothole issue, I must question the wisdom of spending multi-billions on HS2, without first using a fraction of that money in getting UK plc highways sorted. I would be interested to hear views on that.

Aspects of the parking review have been difficult. New yellow lines in the affected areas should be painted imminently, though in view of what I have said already, I write that with fingers crossed. There is a huge issue between the understandable wish to park as closely as possible to one's home, and safety. For me, the safety aspect must come first, the most obvious example being the dangerous pavement driving on Station Road.

I have also taken a keen interest in the Local Plan progression, parking issues in relation to new development (not easy for either Elmbridge or Surrey) fly tipping and the turning off of street lights. At County Hall I took part in a three member Task Group scrutinising the Surrey/NHS England consultation for particular services in Surrey.

To finish, as I have typed this, the sun is shining, and Thames Ditton won their first cricket League match convincingly last Saturday on Giggs Hill Green. As my fellow umpire and I lost concentration towards the end, I reminded myself with the sun sinking, what a beautiful area we live in. Have a great summer!

Nick Darby

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Thames Ditton Remembered



It's half-past four on a soggy February day in my little Lincolnshire village, where I sit staring at my computer screen. Like many long-retired people with too many miles on the clock, my thoughts have been turning to past times and remembering the 'olden days'! I have been researching my family history (albeit very spasmodically) and have been surprised to discover how closely my family is linked to Thames Ditton; my maternal grandmother, and my mother, lived in Alexandra Road, my father lodged in Wolsey Avenue and worked locally, and I had my first real job at Winters Bridge in 1956.

My grandmother Annie HENDRA (nee GILBERT) was a tough little Cornish-born lady who moved with Henry, her engineer husband, to London. We next meet Annie as a widow in 1934, living at 24 Alexandra Terrace, Thames Ditton, with her daughter, my mother, Beatrice Kathleen BROOKS (nee Hendra). Beatrice has two daughters from her marriage to Len Brooks, and I suspect the girls were both living with my mother and grandmother, in Alexandra Terrace. The Electoral Registers show Annie and Beatrice as still residing at Alexandra Terrace in 1936 and 1937.

Then in 1938 we find Annie living at 55 Alexandra Road with Samuel Charles GILBERT, presumably a relation, but there is no sign of Beatrice. In 1939 Annie is still residing at 55 Alexandra Road, but this time she has her son Arthur HENDRA and his wife Mary, living with her – again there is no sign of Beatrice.

One of my mother's sisters, Amelia Kate HENDRA, married a Herbert Samuel RAINBOW in July 1914 and the marriage certificate shows Amelia living at 11, Kings Road, Ditton Hill and her husband, a farm labourer, came from 6 Rectory Lane, Long Ditton. In the Electoral Register for 1937, I discover my own father, Harold ORMIAN, lodging at 4 Wolsey Avenue with Sidney and Lily Robinson, and Elizabeth Allen.

Like many fathers, Harold never said much about his life but I do remember him mentioning that for a time he worked as a French polisher at Rola Celestion, which I believe was a local company manufacturing loudspeakers and wireless sets.

At some point he went into partnership with Reginald Cheek, and they ran 'The Highfield Press' a small print works, in Alexandra Road. As jobbing printers they printed wedding invitations, Christmas cards, programmes of all sorts, and letterheads and invoices for local companies.

I was probably eleven years of age when I became 'big enough' to travel on my own to visit my Dad at work (getting out from under my Mum's feet, she would say!). I would take the bus from my home in Chessington into Surbiton, and then transfer to the wonderfully silent No. 602 trolleybus to Winters Bridge terminus.

From the terminus I would amble (as only boys can), down St. Leonard's Road, and the High Street, and into Summer Road. As I walked, there was on the right just before The Swan, a high wall into which was set a mysterious and ancient wooden door with a spyhole grill. As a kid I was scared stiff of this doorway, which I think was actually a seldomused entrance into the Home of Compassion!



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The Trolleybus Terminal on Portsmouth Road in the 1950s



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The walk down the High Street to the Swan in the 1950s

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Around the corner on the left was a huge set of wooden doors to the foundry, which when open, gave onto a great workshop, where sweating men poured molten metal from glowing pots into moulds. I would spend ages just 'standing and staring' – the sights, sounds, and smells left me transfixed!

Talking of smells reminds me of my father's workplace in Alexandra Road; in the centre of the print shop was a large 'potbelly' stove that seemed to consume huge quantities of acrid-smelling coke. Mixed with this was the smell of gelatine being heated up to re-coat the ink rollers on the machines. Add to that the smell of machine oil, printing ink, and large quantities of paper – once smelt, never forgotten!

In the days before computers, all print jobs were set letter by letter, using a compositor's stick – a really skilled job as you worked from right to left, and I seem to remember, upside down! One of my jobs was to collate the pages of brochures and pamphlets by taking one page from each pile, stacking them together and stapling them. I also learned to 'fan' the paper before putting it in the printing press – and I still use the same technique today when loading my printer at home.



There used to be a print shop on Alexandra Rd

I was the dogsbody for the day – fetching and carrying, tea-making and nipping to the corner shop for cakes. However, my best job was being allowed to use the huge guillotine to slice reams of paper to size. It's a good job that 'Health & Safety' hadn't been invented then, because it would have been quite easy to lose a finger or two in the process.

My second encounter with Thames Ditton happened in 1956 when, as a 16 year-old lad straight from school, I landed a job as a trainee travel clerk at the Surrey Travel Service, based in a little shop on the Winters Bridge Parade. I can't remember if it was in the kitchen shop or the delicatessen.

The owner was a lovely man by the name of Alfred George Ernest Dench. Mr. Dench had been a railwayman for most of his life, and I recall that his last job was station master at Corfe Castle in Dorset.

I couldn't have wished for a nicer boss – he treated me like a son and taught me well. What I learned with Mr Dench stood me in good stead for what was to be a long career in the industry.

Because of his railway background we were accredited ticket agents for British Railways which formed much of our core business. The Milk Marketing Board gave us a lot of business and I remember the Chairman's personal secretary, the super-efficient Miss Lenehan, phoning for tickets and seat reservations for the senior executives. She would often say "I will send Gutteridge down to collect the tickets". Mr Gutteridge was the chauffeur – all very Downton Abbey!

Seared into my memory is Surrey Travel's telephone number, which was Emberbrook 3436. As I recall, the telephone exchange was just around the corner and, as it was in the days before Subscriber Trunk Dialling, anything other than local calls had to be requested from the exchange operators.



In 1956 - Surrey Travel Services were here at Winters Bridge

We were also agents for Victoria Coach Station and customers travelled all over the UK with companies like Royal Blue, Southdown, Midland Red, East Kent Roadcar Company, and Scottish Motor Traction. We also booked London theatre tickets and I remember selling tickets for The Mousetrap when it first opened!

Travel abroad was developing in the postwar years and I was booking clients on the iconic Cunard liners, the Queen Mary and Queen Elizabeth, Union Castle Line, and the great Peninsular & Orient Liners to the Far East and Australia.

Some customers stick in the memory, like Colonel Butters, a brewery representative who travelled on complicated circular rail tickets around the UK in plus-fours and tartan socks, selling his wares to publicans.

Or the distinguished lady who rode a 'situp-and-beg' bicycle, with a wicker basket on the front that contained two or three miniature dogs, with bows on their topknots. She had an enormous bosom that she rested on the counter whilst transacting her business – more than a little disconcerting for a young man!

Mrs Dench opened a little record shop in Thorkhill Road and I would sometimes relieve her at lunchtimes. Most of the stock was of the 78rpm variety, stacked vertically on the shelves in colourful sleeves. Names like Decca and HMV come to mind – what more could a young man want, playing records for a living!

My trip down memory lane has awakened many happy thoughts, so maybe I will come back again to Thames Ditton to do my walk one last time. If I have stirred your memories and you would like to share them with me, please get in touch. You can email me at *bexpop75.plus.com* or call on 01673 828 718. Thanks for letting me share my memories with you.

Mike Ormian

Planting Thames Ditton Station to help the honeybee





Residents of all ages planting Thames Ditton Station for the bees (and the commuters!)

The sun was shining when the Thames Ditton In Bloom volunteers gathered at Thames Ditton Station on Sunday 8 April to greet the team from the Bee Friendly Trust for the latest phase of their gardening initiative at Thames Ditton Station.

For many months Thames Ditton In Bloom has been working on plans to install a number of large Bee Friendly Trust planters, constructed from sustainably sourced railway sleepers, filling them with a range of nectar and pollen rich plants. Sited alongside platform two, these will utilise existing transport lines to form pollinator corridors, creating an interconnected network of flowering habitats for a world where honeybees can thrive.

While the planter builders set to work constructing the three bee friendly planters

on platform two, the Thames Ditton In Bloom volunteers and station staff set about clearing the banks for other planting and preparing the waste ground area at the entrance to platform one, in readiness for the creation of a wildflower meadow area. When laid, the Men In Sheds community group will install a number of bug hotels they are making especially for the project to encourage insects, butterflies and birds, providing homes and food for many of the creatures than enrich our lives.

Says Thames Ditton In Bloom Organiser Tricia W. Bland, 'recent research shows that over the last few decades the UK has lost 97% of its wildflower meadows, making food scarce for our bees. Through the installation of planters filled with bee friendly plants and a wildflower meadow

area, we can help create a rich harvest of flowers to help our precious honeybees survive and thrive.'



Collaborating for the bees

The Thames Ditton in Bloom collaboration with the Bee Friendly Trust is receiving support from the RHS National Garden Scheme via its Elspeth Thompson Bursary which encourages community gardening projects aimed at bringing the community

together by the sharing and acquiring of horticultural knowledge and skills and by inspiring a love of gardening across all age groups.

Thames Ditton Station's wildflower meadow area will be in situ within weeks.

In May, the Thames Ditton In Bloom volunteers returned to plant the 23 railing and floor standing planters plus 12 wheelbarrows with summer flowers.

If you would like to donate money or plants to Thames Ditton In Bloom at Thames Ditton Station there is a collecting tin at Café Noir on platform one or you can donate via the Thames Ditton Foundation (for details contact tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk). All donations gratefully received to ensure this initiative continues to bloom.

Thames Ditton in Bloom

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Thank you Ruth Lyon

45 years of service to Thames Ditton and Elmbridge



The recent local government election saw the retirement of local Residents' Association Councillor for Thames Ditton, Ruth Lyon. This marked the end of a staggering 45 years of service on Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC).

Ruth moved to Thames Ditton in 1963 and was galvanized to join the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association (RA) when a plan was mooted to demolish

a large part of the High Street and build a shopping precinct. The community rallied against the proposal and the RA led a vigorous campaign which saved our historic village centre - and gained a new Minutes Secretary in Ruth. She went on to serve as Honorary Secretary before standing for election in 1973 to the new Elmbridge Borough Council which was created following the amalgamation of



1973 Ruth Lyon (with tyre) and workgroup clearing Marneys pond

Esher Urban District Council with Walton and Weybridge Urban District Council.

She has served on all the Council's main committees and decision-making bodies in the subsequent years, from Planning committees to the Overview and Scrutiny Committee. She was the Chairman of the Policy and Resources Committee and Leader of the Council from 1993 – 95. Most recently she was the Cabinet Member for Social Affairs from 2016 until she retired. In April she hosted a cross-government team that was looking to learn more about innovative ways to combat loneliness, as EBC is seen as a 'trailblazer' in this area.

It is a great testament to Ruth's vision and determination across the years that Thames Ditton looks the way it does today, has the facilities and services it does today and has the connectedness and community spirit enjoyed by so many local residents."

Over the years Ruth has championed many causes. As a councillor she was instrumental in helping ensure that our local sports clubs have been able to stay in the village including securing the long-term headquarters on the Thames for the AJAX sea scouts; securing the clubhouse on the Thames for the Dittons Skiff and Punt Club and retaining the Thames Ditton Lawn Tennis club (the oldest lawn tennis club still on its original site).

Ruth has been a member of the Thames Ditton Conservation Area Advisory Committee since 1974 and was a leading member of the campaign to prevent the building of a Tesco superstore on edge of



The Mayor of Elmbridge makes a presentation to Ruth at her last council meeting

Giggs Hill Green in the 1990s. She also led the battle for a 40mph limit on the Hampton Court Way - you may be surprised to hear it used to be 60mph.

Ruth and the RA were instrumental in saving the Victorian village hall on Embercourt Road when it faced demolition in the 1980s. She led the restoration committee and £500,000 was raised to restore the hall that we now know as the Vera Fletcher Hall, with the fabulous Theatre in Thames Ditton and local classes for the community.

She also took a leading part in the successful campaign to save to save the then Thames Ditton Youth Centre from being sold by Surrey County Council for development. Elmbridge Borough Council eventually purchased the site which is now the vibrant Thames Ditton Community Centre.

A Borough Councillor works on behalf of the whole Borough and Ruth has identified three landmarks that the Borough has achieved in her time as a councillor; the restoration of Painshill Park in Cobham in the 1970s, the setting up of the Brooklands Museum Trust in the 1980s and the Thames Landscape Strategy in the 1990s.

Painshill Park was bought by the Council in 1975 with a vision led by Alan Charlton, then Mayor. It is managed by the Painshill Trust and is considered one of the finest examples of an 18th century landscape park which is enjoyed by many across the Borough.

The Brooklands Museum Trust was set up by the Council in 1986 (Ruth was a founder Trustee). It defeated plans to build over the historic finishing straight and saved the Pratts Pagoda and Campbell Circuit pits, which have now been restored and are part of a thriving and popular museum.

The Thames Landscape Strategy was set up by riverside councils in 1994 to preserve



Ruth was Mayor of Elmbridge 1987 /1988

and enhance the River Thames from Kew to Hampton and subsequently to Weybridge, a stretch of historic houses, gardens, views and meadows. Ruth was its Chairman from 2009 - 2011.

Ruth served as Mayor of Elmbridge in 1987-88. Among the charities she supported were the Brooklands Museum, the Thames Ditton Village Hall restoration, the Princess Alice Hospice and (after the 1987 hurricane) the Mayor's 1,000 Tree Appeal.

Ruth has done so much for the local community and the Borough in her 45 years as a local councillor. There is not space here to document it all. She is clear that "without councillors on the Council committees where decisions are made a Residents' Association is toothless." She is testimony to the impact that RA Councillors can have and to the fact that individuals can make a difference.

Ruth may be retired but she will still be passionately involved in local issues dear to her heart.

\$

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Help for families surviving alcoholism



I was so interested to read the article in the spring edition, 'Dying for a drink', which highlighted the work of Alcoholics Anonymous. I felt that I must write to let you know that there is also support for the families and friends of problem drinkers. My life was changed when I found Al-Anon Family groups, which were established specifically to support families and friends of alcoholics.

I have read that for every alcoholic there are at least seven people deeply affected by his or her drinking and I can believe it. My children, as well as me, were deeply affected by my husband's drinking.

It's easy to see what alcohol is doing to the drinker, but can you see what it is doing to you?

Not for nothing is alcoholism called a family disease, and I was very good at keeping it in the family. But coping with our chaotic home life and a husband who put drinking in the pub above everything else was very stressful. As time went on I became more and more lonely and angry. There is great shame associated with alcoholism and I kept it hidden. I thought I was the only person going through this kind of experience -everyone else seemed to have a perfect life.

I had seen details about Al-Anon in my local GPs surgery years before I finally contacted them. When I attended my first family meeting the biggest feeling was relief to find that I was not alone and that other people knew and understood what I was going through. I cannot begin to describe what a difference it made to know there were other people who knew what it was like to live with an alcoholic.

Al-Anon Family Groups provide a safe, caring environment where members can learn to regain some peace of mind, emotional health and happiness, whether the alcoholic is still drinking or not. It helps those affected by someone else's drinking to realise that it is possible to improve the quality of their own lives. They did not cause their loved one's drink problem, neither can they control or cure it.

Listening to the experience of others and benefitting from their shared wisdom really helped me to focus on me and what I could do rather than feel helpless at what I could not do. One member has said that Al-anon is like the safety briefing on an aeroplane – put your own mask on first before attempting to help anyone else. It has changed my life and many years after attending my first meeting, I carry on going to meetings to share my experience, strength and hope for that is how we help one another in Al-Anon. My teenage children also attended an Alateen programme specifically to provide support for teens affected by alcoholism.

If you are worried about someone's drinking call the confidential helpline 020 7403 0888 or visit www.al-anonuk.org.uk

Al-Anon is:

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A Thames Ditton Today reader

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Gardening – so much more than a regular chore





Esher and Molesey Garden Society best in show Flower and Vegetable Box 2017

Many of us take up gardening later in life, as work and the pace of keeping on top of things may get in the way of doing much more than mowing the lawn to keep it tidy. But with local fever rising in light of the recent good weather and the forthcoming Hampton Court Flower Show, our thoughts turn increasingly to the garden.

Significant studies demonstrate many benefits to our wellbeing through gardening. Benefits range from A - Z, from soothing people with Alzheimers or other dementia to providing a Zoo for insects under a log. Locally, there are many opportunities for individuals and communities to enjoy the benefits of gardening.

Jean Billett, the new chair of the Esher and Molesey Garden Society, is keen to encourage new members. "You don't need a garden of your own to join and it's not just for older people who are retired with lots of time. Younger people move home and get a garden but often don't know what to do with it. We're not all experts here. Gardening is not about perfection.

By joining us you will have access to friendly people with whom you can talk about gardening, whether that be introducing wildlife into your garden, growing things that are easy to look after or how to involve your children to nurture their natural affinity with the outdoors. For the modest cost of £5 for annual membership you will also be able to take advantage of talks from experts, annual outings and excellent discounts on garden supplies."



The annual flower show in St Nicholas Church Hall

The society organises the annual flower show held at St Nicholas Church Hall in Thames Ditton – this year on 19 August. It's a great way to find out more about the pleasures and challenges of gardening over a cup of tea. The flower show displays produce from local allotments and awards prizes, such as for the best runner beans or carrots or the largest pumpkin. Bring the children and they'll learn where the food they eat comes from at the same time. The society is also participating in the Molesey Carnival on 9 June and welcomes people to come to their stall to find out more.

Last year the society celebrated its centenary and as part of this it participated in the Hampton Court Flower Show box gardens, for which the society won a Gold Medal and received the honour of being 'best in show' in the class entered. Jean Billett said: "It was a steep learning curve, but we're ready to do it again this year and put all our new knowledge into practice. We're planning to do a box garden in partnership with the Neuro Foundation charity which

supports people diagnosed with a genetic condition called Neurofibramatosis. We'd love more people to get involved. It's a great experience and you'll work as part of a team to produce a wonderful creation that visitors to the Hampton Court Flower Show can enjoy and be inspired by".

The society's flower box will represent an English Cottage Garden where seeds and plants would have been passed between friends and neighbours. With its informal planting and seating amongst the flowers it will be a place where one can enjoy the tranquillity of the garden and the wildlife.

On a bigger scale, the Royal Horticultural Society is showcasing a large community garden at this year's Hampton Court Flower Show, led by top designer Jon Wheatley. Jon is passionate about horticulture and its health effects, whether that be in relation to food and health or its inspiration for wellbeing. Jon referred to his experience of working with women in prison and told me, "They found they could speak through flowers. Sowing seeds is something that knows no boundaries worldwide". The RHS Growing Community Garden will feature sections on food growing, flowers and wildlife and conservation, and will include a series of demonstrations on how to do it.



The winning haul from 2017

The site will also include a mini shop so people can see how they can raise money through selling their produce – all of it has a value (even the ugly shaped ones).

Communities participating will be able to take away the high quality garden materials at the end of the show.

Jon is keen to get local community groups involved in gardening, "It only takes one really keen leader to galvanise the rest. Communities who grow together – GROW - they make things happen".

Now that the season is turning, why don't you take your old ideas about gardening

out of the potting shed, and either visit the Esher and Molesey Garden Society at one of their events, or get involved by seeking further information? For more information on membership or if you wish to participate in helping with the RHS Hampton Court Flower Show Flower Box garden you can either email *jeanbillett.emgs@gmail.com* or write to Mr Tony Speller, 11 Riverside Avenue, East Molesey KT8 0AE.

For more information on the RHS Hampton Court Palace Flower Show 2018 please visit www.rhs.org.uk/shows-events/rhs-hampton-court-palace-flower-show

Julie Royce



The Chris Evans Taste Garden. Designed by Jon Wheatley 2017 Credit RHS and Sarah Cuttle



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Surrey Community Action – for affordable housing





Residents helped complete the work on Bristol CLT's first 12-home project (photo: Bristol CLT)

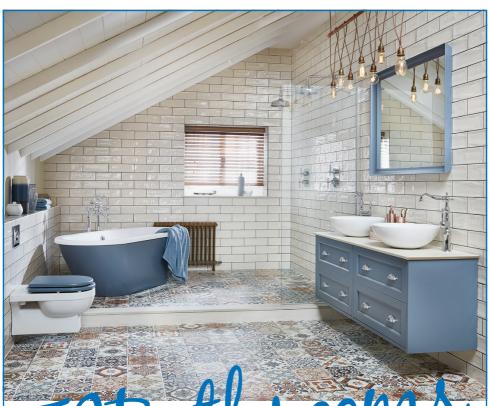
It's no longer news that housing is becoming unaffordable for so many people. The National Housing Federation's figures reveal that the average house price in Elmbridge is 18.8 times the average salary and the average private rent is just over £1800 a month. But a growing number of communities throughout the UK are planning and carrying out their own housing developments. Community-led housing is increasingly enabling more people to buy or rent homes they can afford.

In South London a group called RUSS (Rural Urban Synthesis Society) is preparing to develop 33 homes on land owned by Lewisham Council. In the village of Wickham, Hampshire, the community developed 8 homes for villagers and in Bristol, the community group Bristol CLT is working on its second project to

provide 49 homes having completed its first 12-home development.

Surrey Community Action, a local charity, is now providing support and advice for people who are interested in forming or joining a group to develop their own housing in Elmbridge and seven other boroughs and districts in Surrey.

Although community-led housing is just emerging in Surrey, there are already groups showing a keen interest in exploring the benefits. Haslemere CLT is a "Community Land Trust" which is controlled by its members and whose purpose is to develop affordable housing for people in and around Haslemere. They've commissioned a "Housing Needs Survey" to assess the views and housing needs of people in the area and are working to secure their first development site.



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But not only is housing expensive, often what's available to buy doesn't fit people's needs. One form of community-led housing that's becoming particularly popular amongst older people is "co-housing". This is where a group of people develop private homes close together so they can form their own safe, supportive community. Suitable accommodation for older people who want to downsize can be hard to come by yet there is a particularly good example of a co-housing project in High Barnet called 'Older Women's Co-Housing' or OWCH (owch.org.uk).

Over the last few years community groups have built over 800 affordable homes in England and Wales and nearly 6000 more are expected over the next few years. Usually, these homes are described as permanently affordable and for local people. This means that they cost less to rent or buy than other homes on the market, priority is given to local people and the discounted

cost remains in place however many people move in and out of the homes.

There is some funding available both to help groups get started and, in view of the sector's growing success, the government has committed to providing further funding for the next four years to help communities buy sites and develop homes.

Surrey Community Action can help groups to secure funding as well as clarify their goals, access expert advice and find suitable development sites.

David Cowan Surrey Community Action

David Cowan, Surrey Community Action's Community Housing Project Manager will be giving a presentation at a forthcoming Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association meeting but in the meantime, to get involved or find out more, visit surreychp.org or email info@surreychp.org.



Older Women's Co-housing, High Barnet (photo: Tim Crocker for Architects Pollard Thomas Edwards)



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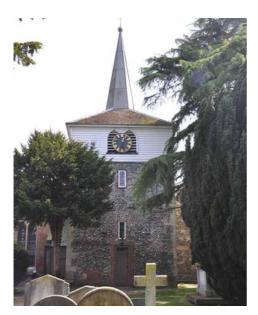


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The Speers and the Sandys – a Dynasty of Taxmen. Part 5





William Speer is buried at Nicholas church credit Andrew Eccleston

As the life of William Speer, Lord of the Manor of Weston, drew to a close he would have had plenty on which to ruminate. Like his father before him he'd had a successful career at H M Treasury, rising from Revenue Clerk to the rank of Chief Clerk. He had gone further in acquiring the trappings of social standing: buying the residual Manor of Weston with the rights of Lordship (over several noteworthy local tenants); by virtue of that becoming a Justice of the Peace; standing a year as Sheriff of Surrey. He had added significantly to his father's landholdings within the extensive parish of St. Nicholas which then encompassed Thames Ditton, Weston Green, Claygate, and what was to become Hinchley Wood. Indeed he owned nearly a quarter of the parish. He owned lands in Esher, including Garson's Farm, and commons down to Epsom. He had inherited and retained properties in Fulham, and at the heart of Westminster a stone's throw from Parliament and the Treasury. He had properties in Scotland, Ireland and Dorset. He had acquired the right of presentation to the churches in Thames Ditton, East Molesey, and Epsom, and installed his son Revd. Wilfred Speer as the incumbent at Thames Ditton and Molesey.

There had however been a social cost. Since 1835, when he had asserted forthright control of the manor, and inserted his son as vicar, he had thrown his weight around, engaged in litigation with other residents, disagreed with them over the development of their church, and had become embroiled in the case in the ecclesiastical court against his son, who had turned to drink. The village was divided imagine the scene when Wilfred's backers hawked a petition house by house around Thames Ditton calling for support for him. Half the village, including the houses of the Fitzgeralds/de Ros at Boyle Farm, the Taylors of Imber Court, and the Lamberts of Weston House, the landlord of the Swan, and the head of the school, had been against the Speers. Half, including the widow of the former vicar, a prominent doctor, and several tenants of William Speer, had been for them. The church was split. A new church with a separate benefice - so that Wilfred would not officiate there - had been built in Claygate. If vestry meetings at St. Nicholas continued at all, then the parish clerk simply stopped recording them. Wilfred was suspended in a most public manner with the proclamation

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nailed to the church door. He did not attempt subsequent rehabilitation (for which there was provision in the judgment) yet remained the nominal "perpetual curate" for the rest of his life, unable to officiate. Temporary curates had to be hired by the parish. What a mess.

Appraisal

I have the strong impression that William Speer the second, the dominant figure in the story of the Speers and the Sandys, was a controlling, overbearing personality. He also seems to have been a stickler for rules, from accounts to litigation to managing the manor that he bought. He took astute advantage of his privileged position and was not averse to going to court to acquire ownership of local lands mortgaged to others. Through his close relationship with Revd. Ellis and family he took opportunity to secure the one-time patronage of the living just before Ellis died. There were times, as with that coup, when he seems to have strayed close to the edge of legality, but I do not think he went beyond the law.

William was a complex fellow, with some good sides. He socialised and dined with Tories but voted for Reformers. He wanted to preserve the character of the church building. When his wife's brother Robert died, Robert noted in his will that he had deliberately not remembered any of his relatives except for Mr & Mrs Speer who had been kind to him. And although I have not gone to the Parliamentary archives to dig out a petition from parishioners of Thames Ditton to abolish slavery, I wouldn't mind betting that William Speer was among the signatories (I note that his local antagonists included the slave-owning Taylors, Sullivans and Lamberts).

Controlling the succession

William Speer's wife Mary died in 1837. He followed in April 1844 and was buried at St. Nicholas on 19th of that month. Temporary curate Henry Pollard officiated. You would

think that siring nineteen children would have ensured succession for all time, but as we shall see, things did not go according to expectations. At his death he had three surviving sons -Edward, the eldest, unmarried, for whom he had secured a post as Clerk in the Treasury; Revd. Wilfred, married to cousin Sarah Speer with two surviving sons thereby ensuring at least one further generation of male Speers; and Wilhelm, an army captain in the 71st. Regiment, unmarried at that stage. William also had a married daughter, Cecilia (by then the widow of bankrupt Hannibal Sandys II with two teenage sons), and five unmarried daughters, Eliza Katherine, Maria, Frances and Eleanor (who would marry William Dancer, a draper, in later life) - and the unfortunate Constance who spent time in a lunatic asylum. Given the substantial property in the family, you may well wonder why so many were single or poorly matched.

William's will set up a very complicated trust for his extensive properties the revenues of which would benefit primarily, in tail male, his son Wilfred and heirs, and enable his unmarried daughters to remain in and use family houses in Weston Green and Westminster. There was provision for income also to support Edward and his other offspring during their lifetimes, and William tried to cover every conceivable eventuality after his death such as Edward unexpectedly marrying and producing male heirs (which didn't happen). However in 1853 the third surviving son, Capt. Wilhelm, aged about 47, did finally marry the woman twenty years younger, Mary Taylor, who was recorded under the same roof in London Road, Bexley, in the 1851 census. He died childless four years later.

Revd. Wilfred as Lord of the Manor

A month after William's death his solicitor, steward and neighbour George Streater Kempson conducted a court leet (administrative court) for Weston Manor, then

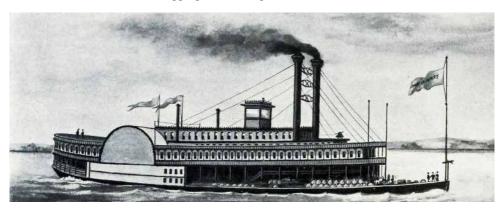
Revd. Wilfred Speer held his first court the following year, on 17 September 1845. Strictly speaking, I suppose, the Lordship was held in trust along with William's other assets in the bequest (hence the initial appearance of lawyer Kempson in the chair). But for all practical purposes Wilfred became Lord of the Manor of Weston, and thereby his house which William had acquired for him at some point in the late 1830s, West End Lodge on Hoe Lane, became the Manor House in lieu of Weston Grange.

In 1837 William Speer had organised the sale of part of the commons of Ditton Marsh to the London and Southampton Railway Company, with the proceeds invested in government stocks in trust for himself and the tenants and copyholders of the manor who had residual commoners' rights. This facilitated the building of the main line from London to Woking, and the station built here was named Ditton Marsh (now Esher station). In 1849 Wilfred Speer sold a rather larger chunk of the Speer estates to the London and South Western Railway Company, paid in annual stock dividends to himself. This enabled the railway spur to Hampton Court which crossed several parts of Speer landholdings especially lands belonging to the manor farm, and the building of a convenient station in 1851-52 at Thames Ditton on Hoe Lane, which then became Station Road. So it would be appropriate for

all who use the train today, and benefit from enhanced property values, to raise a glass to Revd. Wilfred. He might appreciate such a fitting tribute.

Capt. Wilfred Dakin Speer

Wilfred's own death on 25 October 1856 freed the incumbency so that King's College Cambridge, which owned - and still owns the advowson of St. Nicholas Church, could appoint a new vicar. The first, in 1857, was Revd. William Talman whose short incumbency saw the vicarage built after mortgaging some of the church lands. Then Rev. Edward H Rogers, a Fellow of King's College, took office in 1860. Wilfred's eldest son Wilfred Dakin Speer was 22 when Wilfred died, his second son William Speer a year younger. In 1858 we find Wilfred Dakin Speer appearing in the records of Weston Manor as Lord of the Manor. He lived still in West End Lodge (as given in manorial records) which perforce remained the Manor House of the time. An army captain and keen huntsman, Wilfred Dakin Speer was frequently away from Thames Ditton and enjoyed both postings and travel. In his absences the Manor was run by steward and lawyer for the manor and the trust, George Streater Kempson, the last such occasion being 5 June 1867, two days before Capt. Wilfred was killed by an American sentry on the paddle-steamer Octavia, while en route to the



fur trapping station of Fort Benton, Montana during a sporting vacation in the United States. It was still a wild and woolly place two years after the end of the civil war, the waters of the Missouri were treacherous, and there was 'gold in them thar hills,. The Montana Herald, reporting Capt. Wilfred's death, noted that he was "An English gentleman of great wealth..... he had an abundance of means, of which 25-30,000 dollars was deposited in the various banks of the United States for the purpose alone of defraying his travelling expenses."

Capt. Wilfred's murder - or accidental death? - has been very well covered by local historian T. S. Mercer in his papers available in Dittons Library and in his book "More Thames Ditton Tales and Scandals" (1965,1970). I have nothing new to add - although my interpretation would tend more towards a US army cover-up of a possible murder, than Mercer's generous absolution of a sentry firing in an impulsive panic and ever more regretting it.

The path to Hannibal

Capt. Wilfred's younger brother William Speer was now admitted before George Streater Kempson, Steward, as Lord of Weston Manor on 5 Nov 1867. Less than six months later, on 5 April 1868, he too was dead. Meanwhile his uncles, the other sons of William Speer the second, had also died: Capt Wilhelm Speer in 1857 and Edward Speer in 1859. And so there were no male Speers left in line. As to the distaff side, Eliza Katherine Speer had died in 1859, Frances in 1863 and Constance, no longer in an asylum, in 1865. Cecilia Sandys née Speer had died in 1861, leaving her sons Hannibal III ("our" Hannibal) and Edward Frederick working at H M Treasury, in possession of the Fulham house and when in Thames Ditton living on Weston Green Road with their maiden aunt Maria Speer. Eleanor Dancer née Speer was still alive but, having married aged 44, remained without children.

And so we find the subsequent courts of the

Manor of Weston under the trust were held before William Trollope, a new Steward, by "Maria Speer Spinster and Hannibal Sandys and Edward Frederick Sandys Lady and Lords of the said manor." Maria had been Lady of the Manor for about three years when she died on 5 October 1871. Hannibal was next in line for the trust, and applied to change his surname to Speer. The London Gazette reported on 2 Jan 1872 that H M The Queen "has been pleased to give and grant unto Hannibal Sandys of The Grove....Fulham.... Her Royal licence... that he and his issue may (in compliance with a proviso contained in the last will and testament of the said William Speer), henceforth take and use the surname of Speer only, and bear the arms of Speer....with his own family arms of Sandys...."

Hannibal Speer's activities and relatives thereafter will form the last part of this series, next time.

Keith Evetts



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Solution to the Spring Crossword



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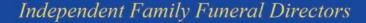
Congratulations to the senders of the first three correct entries opened in the shuffle. Each wins a £5 voucher to spend in local shops.

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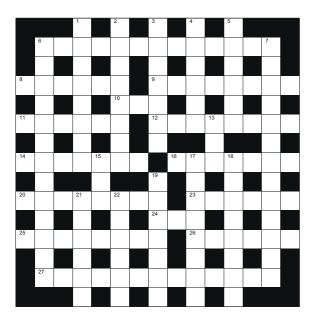
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Summer Crossword by Michael Jackson





The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date of 5 August 2018 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 24 High Street Thames Ditton KT7 0RY

ACROSS CLUES

- 6. Council help provided for those at home (9.4)
- 8. County in Northern Ireland (6)
- 9. Cardboard discs under the glasses (4.4)
- 10. A period of time (3)
- 11. A Chinese Port (6)
- 12. Mexican hat with wide brim (8)
- 14. Sign on back of cheque as a payee (7)
- 16. Large insects, the male drones (7)
- 20,23 Fictional place reached by Jim with map to find booty (8.6)
- 24. Donkey (3)
- 25, 26 Detective shocks Rome! He'll have to change his name (8.6)
- 27. Card that motorists get from machine from time to time (7.6)

DOWN CLUES

- 1. Italian liqueur with almond flavour (8)
- Becomes greater in number, amount or strength (8)
- 3. Military planes operate from it (3.4)
- 4. Aristotle's school, concert hall (6)
- 5. Not cooler (6)
- 6. Large transporter at sea (9.4)
- 7. Amusement from men at Internet (13)
- 13. Abbreviation for 'Auntie' (1.1.1)
- 15. Abbreviation for gardeners society (1.1.1)
- 17. A lively old folk dance (5.3)
- 18. Like peas in a pod (3.5)
- 19. Accidental escape of oil, gas, etc (7)
- 21. Atmospheric phenomenon in green, red and yellow (6)
- 22. Imaginary island representing the perfect society (6)

Services, Clubs, Societies and Groups

SERVICES		
Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Mark Michelmore	01372 879321
Dittons & Weston Green NeighbourCare	Frankie Bell	07790 472993
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support So	ervices	
Thames Ditton Centre for the community	Mon & Thurs	0208 3985921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	0208 3983772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride,		
Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Homesupport Elmbridge	Thomasina Breslin	01932 267128
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	0208398 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	Alexandra Lyall	07779 616463
1st Weston Green (All Saints) Scout Group	Carole Needham	07975 842423
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	Larisa Strickland westongreenrain	bows@gmail.com
4th Thames Ditton Ajax Sea Scouts	Alison Derrick	020 8398 0041
Dittons Scout Group	Aileen Widdowson	07783 449666
Coffee and chat (United Reformed Church)	Mrs. E. Barker	01372 467491
Emberbrook Trefoil Guild	Mary Bowen	020 8398 6857
Friends of Bushey and Home Parks	Jean Smith	020 8977 9391
Friends of Walsingham Care	Miss Valerie Chicken	0208 398 2932
Molesey and Dittons Neighbourhood Watch	Chairman: John Haberfield	020 8398 5256
Parents and Toddlers(St Nicholas church)	Information	020 8398 7211
Ripieno Choir	Nick Harris	020 8399 7231
Surrey Bell-ringers	Giles Andre	020 8979 1994
CLUBS		
Albany Motor Yacht Club	Secretary	01784466651
Arts and Heritage Club	Carol Butcher	01932 867511
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	Elaine Sesemann	07801 943392
Ember Sports Club	Zenda Hedges	07717 304146
Ember Sports Club: Bowls	Sylvia Jones	01932 788701

Ember Sports Club: Croquet	Dr. David Cooke	01932 862841
Ember Sports Club: Tennis	Annabel Duncan	0208 786 6318
Esher Bowling Club	Roger Cooper	01372 468109
Esher Bridge Centre	Paul Whicker	01372 460157
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	0208 398 4598
Old Cranleighan Rugby Club	Tony Price	07801 837129
Old Cranleighan Hockey Club	Simon Marshall (Men) Helen Hawes (Ladies)	07801 737695 07771 557900
Probus Club, Hinchley Wood/Dittons	Edmund Woolley	020 8398 3581
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	0208 398 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
SOCIETIES AND ASSOCIATIONS		
Civil Service Pensioners' Alliance	Mrs Brenda Denby	0208 398 6054.
Ember Choral	Linda Bridges	020 8399 5402
Esher Recorded Music Society	Miss S. M. Garrat	020 8398 8541
Esher and Molesey Garden Society	Chris Walker (Sec)	0208 398 6651
Esher and District Amnesty International	Cherry Eddy (Campaigns)	0208398 4377
Hampton Court Way Allotment Association	Lettings: Piotr Hennig	020 8398 5358
Long Ditton Youth Club	Toni Izard	07749 633973
Lynwood Allotment Society	Gill Vickers	020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
		0208 398 4377
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership	cherryed dy 102@gmail.com
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
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Amelia Crafts Membership: Sue Morris	08456 528 529 020 8224 0980
DI 4 441 T	7.714 / 7.77 71 /1	

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings

Chairman's Address to the AGM



Chairman Graham Cooke opened with a reminder of the RA's objectives: to protect local amenities and further the interests of residents; to encourage community spirit; to foster shared activities. In his first year as Chairman he said that he had been struck by the huge number of people who worked to support the Association; councillors, officers and many other volunteers.

Graham stressed the importance of involving as many people in the community as possible, especially young people and those new to our area. Those residents who were formally in the East Molesey Ward before boundary changes are underrepresented in the Association and he said it was important to include them.

Particular mention was given as follows -

- Thanks were expressed to Libby Macintyre and Sandra Dennis for editing and producing Thames Ditton Today
- The Residents Association website has been overhauled thanks to the efforts of Peter Haynes and Mark Charlesworth
- Our Surrey County Cllr. Nick Darby was elected 12 months ago and his work on many issues was appreciated.
- In Weston Green, the three ward Cllrs, Tannia Shipley, Janet Turner and Nigel Haig-Brown have worked tirelessly and helped foster a close working relationship following the boundary changes in 2016
- We continue to scrutinise planning applications and provide residents with advice and assistance

- Litter-picking groups meet regularly in Thames Ditton and Weston Green
- Thames Ditton in Bloom, draws together many volunteers including the Men in Sheds to provide magnificent floral displays at Thames Ditton station
- The Secret Gardens of Weston Green was a great success.
- Regular bulb planting across the villages
- Work on the recovery of Milbourne Pond at Weston Green
- Christmas lights on Weston Green and in Thames Ditton High Street
- The annual Christmas Fair in Thames Ditton, helping to drive footfall to the High Street

Cllr. Tricia Bland's work re-vitalising Thames Ditton High Street was recognised as were the important roles undertaken by Cllrs Ruth Lyon and Karen Randolph in their cabinet roles on the council.

Finally, Graham concluded by telling the meeting that after almost 45 years as a councillor, Ruth Lyon would be stepping down at the May election. Graham said that it was "quite impossible in this short review to even start to detail what Ruth has achieved in public office and in the voluntary community". The meeting acknowledged Ruth's work with a well-deserved round of applause, after which Ruth encouraged everyone to give backing to Caroline James who was proposed to stand at the forthcoming election.

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