

THAMES DITTON TODAY

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THE MAGAZINE OF THE
THAMES DITTON & WESTON GREEN RESIDENTS' ASSOCIATION

AUTUMN 2017

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THAMES DITTON TODAY

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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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A photograph of a group of young children, mostly girls, wearing gold sequined dresses and jewelry. They are smiling and looking towards the camera. The background is a dark red curtain. In the top left corner, there is a logo for 'DanceCraft M&M' with five stars above it. In the top right corner, there is a quote in white text: "We believe that by encouraging our pupils to love dance and enjoy their classes it will not only be exercise for the body but for their hearts and minds too." At the bottom, there is text describing the business as specialists in dance and performance training for pre-school to junior aged children, with classes in Esher and Thames Ditton. Contact information for Mary or Maria is provided, including an email address, telephone number, and website.

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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' Councillors covering the two electoral wards 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, Nick Darby, represents our views at Surrey County Council.

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Conveners of Sub-Committees

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Planning: Rhodri Richards Ditton Cottage, Giggs Hill Road, Thames Ditton	020 8224 5181
Highways, Drainage: Andrew Roberts, 1 Boyle Farm Road, Thames Ditton	020 8786 6882



The Next Residents' Association Open Meetings are

Tuesday 19 September 2017 8pm – Vera Fletcher Hall, Thames Ditton

Guest Speaker: Tim Murphy, Vice Chairman, CPRE Surrey

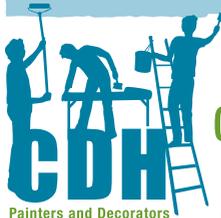
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News from the Residents' Association to end-August



Former Mayor, Cllr Tannia Shipley presenting a cheque to CHEER and ECL

Fantastic fundraising Mayor

When all the monies were added up a staggering £36,647 was raised by Weston Green RA Councillor Tannia Shipley in her year as mayor of Elmbridge. (The forecast we made in our summer article was woefully short!). She had chosen to support two charities during her Mayoral Year: Elmbridge Community Link (ECL) and Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired (CHEER).

In July representatives from the two charities were each delighted to receive a cheque for half the final amount from Tannia. Janis Fletcher, Chairman of CHEER, said they were *“delighted that the community of Elmbridge responded so generously to the*

Mayor’s charity and that older people will benefit directly through our befriending and support services.”

Thames Ditton and the Ride 100

The Prudential Ride 100 has fast become a fixture in the diary. A number of villagers take part in the event and many more turn out to support them.

Having ridden in the race and witnessed what other villages along the route had laid on for supporters of riders (for example



Ride 100 fun on the green

BBQs and bouncy castles) local resident Rob Belton started to think about what could be done in Thames Ditton.

Our lovely Giggs Hill Green is a key focal point on the Prudential Ride 100 cycle route and Rob and a group of local residents saw a great opportunity to bring our community even closer together and to raise money for charity by staging an event for all to enjoy.

A committee was formed and the event took shape. An original plan for a small beer tent and BBQ grew to a funfair, marquees, live music, a DJ bus and many stalls and activities. Great fun was had and riders responded in delight to the Thames Ditton welcome as they were cheered on for the last 15 miles.

Glorious launch

Gloria Cogle, aged 95 and a meals on wheels volunteer for the past 39 years, cut the ribbon to launch the new Voluntary Sector Hub at the Mole Room, Elmbridge Civic Centre, Esher on July 19. Weston Green resident Gloria was also a driver for the Dittons and Weston Green Neighbour Care from its inauguration in 1977.



Gloria Cogle, second from right, at the launch

RA Councillor Ruth Lyon, Elmbridge Cabinet member for Social Affairs, said: *"I am delighted that the council has been able to offer this shop window and information centre free of charge to our voluntary organisations such as Rent Start Elmbridge and CHEER, who do such tremendous work in our local community."*

New Thames Ditton village sign

When looking how to mark recently retired Peter Hickman's sterling service as a Surrey County Councillor the idea of a Thames Ditton village sign was the most popular. The Weston Green sign which was erected at the millennium is a handsome welcome to Weston Green but Thames Ditton has no such sign.



Winning designs

A village sign competition was held at Thames Ditton Junior School and the top three designs have been forwarded to the blacksmith at Shere in Surrey who is going to make it.

Peter Hickman presented the winning design prizes on behalf of the Thames Ditton and Weston Green Residents' Association at the school assembly on July 21. The winners were: 1st Seb Wickenden, 2nd Sophie Glancy, 3rd Bobby Watson

Queens Road Hanging Basket Competition

This year saw the ninth Queens Road Hanging Basket competition kindly sponsored, once again, by Squires Garden Centres and The Albany.

The Best Front Garden was won by Ellen McNiece and the Best Hanging Basket by Alistair Shearly-Sanders and Emma Kirkham.



Best hanging basket

The judges were Penny Snell CBE, vice-president of the National Garden Scheme, Jo Shirley of the RHS and Jim Buttress, judge on BBC2's Great Allotment Challenge and senior RHS show judge.

Thames Ditton in Bloom – update

Thames Ditton in Bloom planters and wheelbarrows on the Station have looked magnificent this year but sadly the hanging baskets in the High Street, erected for the first time this summer, were disappointing. This was owing to factors beyond our control. As a result we will not be paying for this year's display. However, we do plan to install new hanging baskets next summer, once we are assured that all the supply problems have been resolved. Meanwhile, thanks to everyone who has supported us in this initiative.



Blooms on the platform

First aid awareness training

Spend two hours learning how you can save a life in the event of a cardiac arrest on Tuesday October 10 at 7.45-9.45pm or Saturday October 14 at 12.30-2.30 pm.



Hands-on practice

Volunteers from the George Bairstow Trust will be running two first aid awareness sessions giving basic training on the immediate and practical action you can take which might save a life. They will also be demonstrating the use of an AED (Automatic External Defibrillator) such as the one installed by the church hall of All Saints Weston.

Similar sessions in January were not only great fun but highly effective in delivering a practical step by step guide on what to do in an emergency situation. The training provides a real opportunity for people within our community to learn basic life support. Sessions, taking place at All Saints Weston, are free but numbers are limited so please email Chrissie@allsaintsweston.com to book a place.

Elmbridge Local Plan

EBC has issued a Local Plan Position Statement; this can be found on our website residents-association.com and the EBC website. It provides an overview of the feedback received from the Strategic



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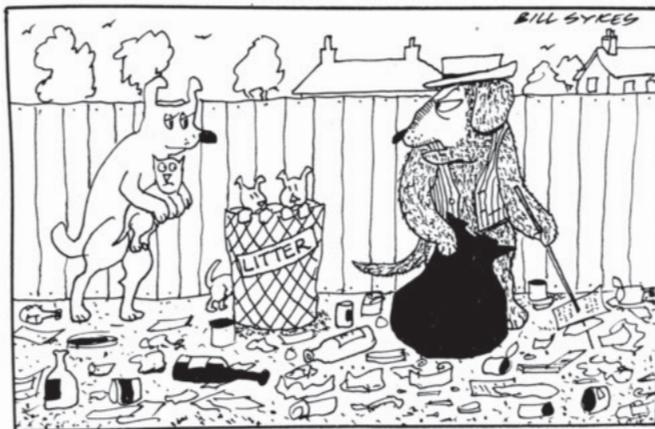
Options consultation as well as an update on wider policy changes announced by central Government that will impact upon development of the local plan. Consequently, consultation on the next iteration of the Elmbridge Local Plan is unlikely before early 2018.

Weston Green notice board

There is a new Residents' Association Notice Board outside the Co-op in Weston Green. Please check it out for updates and information.

Litter Picking – keeping the village tidy

The cartoon below was printed 30 years ago in the 1987 edition of Thames Ditton Today along with an appeal for people to get together and tackle the litter problem. Those readers would be please to know that we now have two local litter picking groups going strong. Weston Green saw a bumper turnout at the last pick including all three ward councillors. **Weston Green Litter Pickers** meet regularly at Marneys pub at 10.30am on the first Saturday in the month. If you would like to join in please telephone or email RA councillor Tannia Shipley (0208 398 2484) tshipley@elmbridge.gov.uk



"And they go on about us fouling the village!"

Thames Ditton Litter Pickers meet on the third Saturday of every month at the George & Dragon at 11am and return at 12 noon. For more details contact RA councillor Tricia Bland tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk

Many hands make light work and anyone who wants to join in will be very welcome.

Planning

The application at **Esher Tyre and Exhaust (2016/1963)** was taken to appeal and dismissed. A new planning application (**2017/2484**) for a detached two-storey building with rooms in roof-space comprising eight flats with bin and cycle store and parking following demolition of existing buildings has been submitted

The EBC Planning Committee refused permission for advertisements to be placed on a large number of roundabouts across Elmbridge, including those on the Hampton Court Way and Scilly Isles. These were proposed as part of a 'sponsorship' deal signed by the previous administration

The RA objected to the plans for the Hampton Court Way roundabout on the basis of the visual impact of the signs on the main approach to Hampton Court Palace and on grounds of highway safety.

The Elmbridge Planning Committee refused the application on both these fronts.

The application for a **cycle rack next to Thames Ditton station (2017/1115)** is still under consideration

The application to build an office block on the edge of **Colets playing fields, land east of 74 to 128 Speer Road (2017/0818)** has been refused

Ashley Road Car Park – four hours free

Don't forget there is free parking in the Ashley Road car park in the centre of Thames Ditton for four hours on Saturdays. **Remember**, you will still need to put a ticket on your car!

Parking proposals

The parking proposals for Surrey, including proposals for St Leonards Road, Station Road, Weston Avenue etc. (see Thames Ditton Today Winter edition page 8) were advertised for consultation on August 18 with a five-week window for responses. Please be aware that no new parking restrictions will be possible as part of this current review. Any new proposals will be considered well into the future.

TD Wins Big Again!

Once again, Thames Ditton has done amazingly well in the Elmbridge Independent Retailer of The Year Awards scooping four out of the six awards. Congratulations to them all!

- Stitchery in the High Street won Best for Gifts, for the second year running.
- Paull's in the High Street won Best Deli or Grocer, for the fourth year running
- Café Noir at Thames Ditton Station won Best Café or Restaurant for the first time.
- Café Noir also won the overall category: Overall Best Independent retailer in Elmbridge, the highest achievement of the Awards.



Award winner – Al Halbooby

Dates for your diary

Farmers' Market

George and Dragon car park from 9-1pm Saturdays; September 23, October 28, November 25

The All Saints,

Weston Green, Late Summer Fair – 'Blasting Off' into outer space on Saturday September 23 12.30-3pm.

High Street Christmas Fair

Sunday December 3 from 3pm-6pm

Making Thames Ditton a plastic bag free zone



Jenny and Tricia with Boomerang Bags

Walk into seven of the most popular independent shops and cafes in Thames Ditton High Street and you will see an assortment of brightly coloured cotton bags featuring a circular logo with the words: Boomerang Thames Ditton Borrow & Bring Back. This is the emblem for a joint initiative between the Thames Ditton High Street Retailers' Association and the Thames Ditton Crafters which is aiming to rid our village of single use plastic bags.

In environmental terms plastic is a huge problem. The amount of plastic bags made each year has passed one trillion and each takes up to 1,000 years to fully decompose. The variety of plastic bags floating and

flying around in fields, parks, rivers and streets is frightening (just ask the Thames Ditton Litter Pickers!). What's more, if we include refuse sacks into this the total it becomes a staggering seven trillion plastic bags. You could call it a plague on our planet.

That's why we decided to do something about it. And we are hoping you will too. A recent survey found 87 per cent of people were concerned by the UK's plastic usage, also revealing that nearly two thirds of us would welcome a charge for single use plastics similar to the one for five pence shopping bags.

But we in Thames Ditton High Street want to go further. Which is why we've created the Thames Ditton Borrow & Bring Back Boomerang Bag. The idea is not new. Jenny Avon, who formed the Thames Ditton Crafters in 2012, found out about it on Google after a chance meeting with a fabric salesman who happened to see the TD Crafters busy sewing and making at the Dittons Library where they meet every Tuesday morning.

"Isik saw us at work, came up to me and asked if I would like some of his fabric samples", explains Jenny. "Then Chris Walker in our crafting group exclaimed 'that's the perfect size for a bag!' It was a eureka moment."

Jenny did some research and came across Boomerang Bags on line. The BB concept started in Australia with communities getting together making bags out of donated, reusable, recycled materials, providing a



Bright selection of bags

free and fun alternative to plastic bags. The idea grew and grew and now Boomerang Bags are being made all over Australia, New Zealand, Canada and many other countries. Here in the UK, Thames Ditton is the first place and the first High Street to pioneer the Boomerang Bag concept.

“I liked the idea of being part of a wider community and the fact that every bag made is counted, so our TDBB’s are part of a global count,” says Jenny. *“Because most plastic bags are single use only each Boomerang Bag over its lifetime replaces 700 plastic bags! A staggering amount!”*

From that moment, ten Thames Ditton Crafters started sewing the bags, then I set out to engage the High Street shops and businesses in sharing our aim of getting rid of plastic bags altogether. We were met mainly with enthusiasm and currently Organic Nest, Stitchery, Secret Garden, Lime Tree, Nice Buns, K Barber and View are all on board.

The initiative launched simultaneously in these shops and at the June 2017 Farmers Market. Each participating shop or business has a quantity of Boomerang Bags to give away to customers who forget to bring their own shopping bag, so they can avoid using single use plastic bags.

The next task was to get more sewing bees on board to keep up with demand and to broaden the community initiative. So far members of the local WI have joined and pupils from Thames Ditton Junior School and our local Guide group will be helping from the Autumn. We are also currently engaging with other community groups and school whilst doing recruitment drives at our monthly Farmers’ Market, so if anyone would like to lend a hand please find

us on the Retailers’ Stall which promotes our High Street shops and businesses.

To make the sewing easy Jenny and her fellow crafters have made ‘sewing kits’ with bags cut to size, handles and logo pinned in place, so they are ready to stitch.

As soon as we have more sewing bees on board we are hoping to extend the initiative to include more High Street shops and businesses. The challenge now is to keep up with demand so if you can help sew, we’d love to hear from you. Thames Ditton Boomerang Bring & Reuse Bags are made from donated, reusable materials and are free to customers – you can return them to participating shops if you no longer need them, so someone else can make use of them. Or you can keep it – all we ask is that you use it over and over so you never have to use a plastic bag ever again!

For further information please contact:
Tricia W. Bland tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk;
Jenny Avon jenny_avon@live.com



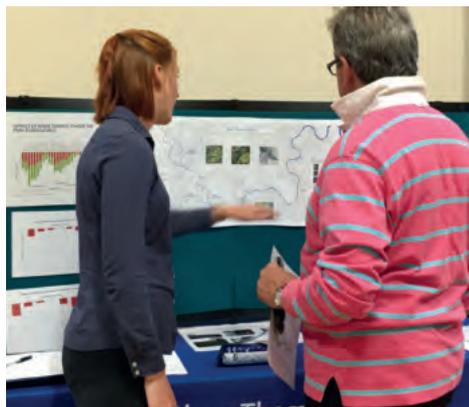
Tricia W. Bland

Flooding in Thames Ditton

– public meetings



Two lively meetings took place in early July to discuss flooding in Thames Ditton and what we can do to prepare for the inevitable next time. Tina Donaldson and colleagues from the Environment Agency were on hand to provide the latest updates on the River Thames Scheme and Tony Thompson from the Residents' Association explained the various activities that he had been undertaking on our behalf and what comes next.



The Environment Agency were on hand to talk through the River Thames Scheme

As Tony explained, we shouldn't assume that the 'authorities' will do it all for us - we need to be prepared to take appropriate action ourselves and prepare our own Community Flood Plan. He asked for local volunteers to form a Residents Association Flooding sub-committee and several people have stepped forward and meetings and planning are under way. Tony is very keen to encourage more volunteers and if you are prepared to help out, then please

email him at aathompson_uk@yahoo.co.uk. No major commitment is required – and if you don't get involved, don't blame us if it all goes pear-shaped next time!

One thing that the sub-committee is going to do is to divide the area into zones approximately related to flood risk based upon property and threshold height. They will also take into account whether properties have been equipped with Property Level Protection (PLP) as part of a previous Environment Agency scheme. If they are equipped, then there will be less need for sand bags and the like in the future.

The Environment Agency has agreed to provide details of its survey data and the provision of PLP to the sub-committee unless individual property owners object. If you do object to this, please send an email to tina.donaldson@environment-agency.gov.uk

The sub-committee is also seeking responses from Surrey County Council and other agencies to around 20 questions that were raised by residents at the open meetings. These ranged from needing to know detailed responsibilities and contact details of agencies involved in flood action, through what can be done to prevent sewers and highway gullies overflowing, to how to get and position the right number of sand bags to each property that needs them.

As flood planning proceeds updates will be provided and further public meetings will be organized as necessary.

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Milbourne Pond update



Over the years Milbourne Pond has increasingly struggled to hold water and presents a sorry picture of a much-loved feature on Weston Green. Our main objective for the pond is to retain year-round water at a depth of at least 750mm and support fresh water invertebrates (dragon fly, damselfly, water boatman, mayfly, frogs, etc.) and visiting birdlife such as ducks and herons. Given the uncertainty of long-term funding any solution needs to have very low on-going maintenance costs.

The current pond has a small volume and relatively large surface area which means that in warm weather the pond dries out. Following a detailed hydrogeological study by the ERM Foundation, we have a good understanding of how the pond functions. The Residents' Association (RA) also commissioned a study which took core samples at nine points across the clay liner into the subsoil and for the last two years has been monitoring water levels using three monitoring holes. From the three monitoring holes we have a detailed understanding of the pond geology and year round water table. Four metres below the pond there is 90 metres of clay upon which the water table meanders towards the Thames.

Following a site meeting with local councillors Tannia Shipley and Janet Turner (Portfolio Holder Leisure and Culture) and Elmbridge officers, the RA commissioned a topographical survey which helped to identify the profile of the pond and surrounding landscape. It also identified the relationship between the current pond and the water table.



Surveying Milbourne Pond

The topographical study will also be used to provide a detailed plan to re-profile the pond to pick up the year round water table.

Pond re-profiling

With the benefit of our monitoring holes we know that the perched water table sits just below (range from 10cm to 50 cm) the current pond floor and that in late autumn to spring the clay liner sits on top of the water table. By removing soil to a depth of 1.5 to 1.7 metres and a radius of 15-18 metres we will have a pond with year-round water at a minimum depth of 70 to 90 cm.

There is sufficient space surrounding the pond to have a safe profile for any gradient to accommodate the removal of this quantity of soil and it is assumed that the spoil will be deposited on the common with a location to be determined by Elmbridge Council.



Andrew Roberts (left) with John from PHB Contractor Ltd

Next steps

We are now waiting for contractor quotes and finalised designs to re-profile the pond. The final step is a CIL application and sign-off by Elmbridge Borough Council.

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Thames Ditton High Street



A secret spot

Sunday June 25, the date of the flower festival at All Saints Church, saw many residents and their friends enjoying a walk or cycle around Weston Green, visiting some or all of the eight gardens opened to the public by their owners. The 3.5 km route took in addresses on both sides of Hampton Court Way and included a variety of styles, from cottage gardens to contemporary spaces as well as a refreshment stop at the church hall.

The build up to the day had been trying for the Secret Gardeners because the heat of the sunny days over an extended dry period posed a different challenge to the

battering dealt by the wind and rain on the days immediately preceding the event. Despite the difficulties, the Gardeners won through, presenting a wide range of plants, colour, expertise, encouragement and design ideas for visitors to take away with them, or ponder on.

The day produced many memorable moments for Secret Gardeners and visitors alike. One gardener with 200+ visitors described the afternoon as a fast-paced party, while residents enjoyed the opportunity to walk the area, catch up with neighbours, make new contacts through a common interest or just soak up

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Admiring the gardens

the convivial atmosphere conjured up in unfamiliar surroundings.

The net proceeds of £1,801 will benefit Weston Green conservation projects. Our particular thanks go to Lisa Tolley, who produced the instantly recognisable

artwork for the maps and posters, the indefatigable volunteers at All Saints Church who filled in the inevitable gaps, and the following local businesses which supported the event, by promoting it and selling over 350 tickets: Esher Tyre & Exhaust, Co-op Hampton Court Way, The Stitchery, Secret Garden Floral Designs, and Marney's Village Inn.

Finally, the Secret Gardeners deserve a special thank-you for their hard work and willingness to put their gardens on the line, as do Weston Green families and their friends for helping, actively and constructively, to invest in and build our community.

Nigel Haig-Brown and Tannia Shipley

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Heathrow expansion and Elmbridge



The Government has identified a need for more airport capacity in the South East and has chosen to build a third runway at Heathrow. Hinchley Wood and Weston Green Residents' Association Councillor Nigel Haig-Brown is part of an Elmbridge Borough Council (EBC) task group set up to assess the impact of this proposal on the borough. Here he provides an update.

The new runway will be at least 3,500 metres long with a minimum capacity for up to 260,000 aircraft movements per annum (say 22 take offs and 22 landings per hour for 16.5 hours each day), compared

with the current maximum capacity of 520,000 aircraft movements on the existing runways. During a recent study of the likely effects on its residents, EBC identified noise and air pollution, traffic volumes, economic gains and demand for housing as potential sources of significant impacts.

Will expansion result in more flights over Elmbridge?

The impact is hard to assess because 'in' and 'outbound' routings have yet to be determined. Safety constraints suggest that overflying of Elmbridge by departures from

the third runway will be limited because flight paths would have to cross traffic using the existing runways. Arrivals, though, could join the approach pattern from any one of a number of holding stacks around Heathrow, so, depending on operating conditions, the third runway could result in more overflying.

Modern aircraft are supposed to be quieter, so can we expect a reduction in aircraft noise?

This is a complicated area because it depends on a number of factors. First, whilst modern aircraft are indeed quieter, there are more of them responsible for individual noise events. Second, the onset of “significant annoyance” occurs at a level lower than thought previously, with “disturbance” greater in areas enjoying lower levels of background noise. In other words, occasional noise events are more annoying than predictable, higher volumes of noise. Aircraft are exempt from noise nuisance claims, so Government policy is to “*limit and, where possible, reduce aviation noise impacts*”. The operators of a new third runway at Heathrow will be required to adhere to legally binding targets, periods of predictable respite and a 6 1/2-hour ban on night flights.

Third, the design and use of UK airspace has remained largely unchanged since the 1950s. The current airspace system is inefficient and, as a consequence, congested. Decisions to change flightpaths and practises enshrined in law are not easy to implement. For example, 60+ years’ worth of technological gains enables modern aircraft to approach on a steeper glide slope and depart using more rapid rates of climb. They cannot do so currently because departing aircraft have to remain



below statutory positions at which aircraft stack in the vicinity of airports. Similarly, modern “precision navigation systems” enable aircraft to track over the ground more predictably, enabling traffic controllers to concentrate movements or provide respite for overflowed communities. Changes that reduce noise for most people will not do so for all, and given the importance of the number of noise events as a trigger for annoyance, the effect of concentrating flight paths may increase significant annoyance for those blighted by the policy.

In a consultation, which closed on May 25 last, the Government sought views on an update to UK airspace policy to meet the needs of passengers, communities, the aviation sector and the wider economy. The feedback received is under assessment.

What restrictions are there on the number of flights at night or early morning?

Recommended night noise levels around major airports are exceeded regularly and by a wide margin. The Government, in an effort to balance the economic benefits of night flights with the social impacts, consults on the rules every five years. One such consultation ended in May. The outcome of this latest review is to maintain the status quo whilst encouraging the use of quieter aircraft. A Ministerial statement adds “*night flights from Heathrow will continue until the airport is expanded*” whilst making no reference to what might happen thereafter.

Whereas there are no departures scheduled between 23:00 and 06:00, Heathrow has a quota of 5,800 take-offs and/or landings a year between 23:30 and 06:00, Barring emergencies, these 16 per day are arrivals, scheduled to land between 04:30 and 06:00. Within the quota there is leeway for departures delayed by late running, in bound aircraft.

Can we expect an improvement in air quality?

There is lots of evidence to suggest that with more aircraft, pollution levels will rise. After Central London, the area around Heathrow is the major hotspot for nitrous oxide (NO₂) with breaches of legally enforceable limits having been recorded for many years. Initial arguments – *technology would result in lower emissions for aircraft* – have been discredited with some “solutions” not yet on the drawing board and one 2012 study reporting ‘*strong evidence that there has been no change in aircraft (NO₂) emissions at Heathrow Airport over*

the past 11 years.’ Similarly, improvements predicted for road vehicles were found ‘*not to be taking place as quickly as the models had assumed*’. The Government continues to drag its heels by refusing to allow an independent body to monitor air quality around Heathrow.

There was a public consultation that ended in May 2017. How will the government respond?

The Government’s approach is to develop an “Airports National Policy Statement”, which, having passed through parliament, cannot be contested. The recent General Election has disrupted the original timetable with the result that the start of the Transport Select Committee enquiry has had to be rescheduled and Parliamentary debate pushed back until the middle of 2018.

We are told that the third runway will not generate increases in vehicle movements above those of 2016 or add to pressures on local housing. Do you believe this?

The 2016 levels of vehicle movements are constraining residents’ and visitors’ enjoyment of Elmbridge. Bridges over the Thames and related feeder routes are already at capacity without rush-hour problems on the M25, so infrastructure improvements are essential. Will the roads benefit from such investment? I suspect not, as the Surface Access Strategy concentrates on the provision of high quality, efficient and reliable public transport systems to link travel hubs. New, direct rail links from Heathrow to the Midlands and the North, Westwards to Wales and the South West via Reading, plus a route to London Waterloo will increase seat capacity to a maximum of 15,000 passengers per hour. Combined with

improvements to bus and coach services, public transport is forecast to account for 30m passenger movements per year. Do I believe the beguiling argument “*Canary Wharf is within an hour by public transport, so there is no need to move house or drive*”? No. Do I believe delivery of the Surface Access Strategy will take pressure off Elmbridge’s roads and avoid additional demand for housing? No.

What is the latest information regarding a rail link from Heathrow to Waterloo?

Despite Surrey being the end point for 6% of all 2011 passengers terminating a journey at Heathrow (9% for Gatwick), there are no realistic prospects for any rail links through Elmbridge such as to Heathrow/Gatwick or for a connection to the Woking/Waterloo line.

All of this sounds negative for Elmbridge. Are there any upsides?

For the South East region, the economic gains are forecast to be considerable. There is significant potential to increase some job prospects, but less so amongst higher paid positions. The difficulties of travelling to Heathrow from many areas within Elmbridge suggest that the benefits of working locally, or in London, will prevail. With respect to air travel, which Elmbridge residents are well placed to take advantage of, for either business or pleasure, future benefits will include more direct flights to more destinations. There may also be local investment by foreign companies. EBC will be working hard to attract regional head offices and businesses able to capitalise on steering professional



Nigel Haig-Brown, Cllr Hinchley Wood and Weston Green

services and low weight/ high value goods (electronic components, pharmaceuticals, precious stones) through Heathrow.

What is the EBC stance on expansion of Heathrow?

A number of local authorities around Heathrow have accepted funding deals in exchange for their support of the third runway. The EBC Task & Finish Group, established to “identify the likely impacts on Elmbridge”, recommended maintaining its position of “not in favour of expansion”. This was largely because the group felt it was impossible to be in favour of expansion if arrival and departure patterns were not known and because of the likely impacts on air quality, given that current limits remain breached.

Sandra Dennis and Nigel Haig-Brown

Two new blue plaques



It is six years since the Residents' Association mounted seven blue plaques to commemorate some of the many significant names and places in Thames Ditton and Weston Green, a full two years after the initial decision to launch the scheme to mark the RA's 75th anniversary. The reason for the delay was the planning process – as many of the buildings were listed. For once the RA was on the other end of the process, as an applicant!

The magnificent seven included Picton House, to celebrate notable resident Cesar Picton, and Stag's Court, Thames Ditton's oldest secular building in the High Street, engineers Peter Willans and Mark Robinson at Ferry Works, together with Cox & Sons who cast bronze statuary

at the Foundry, both in Summer Road, plus Hannibal Speer Lord of the Manor of Weston in Station Road, and distinguished residents Jacob Hansler and General Sir John Lambert in Weston Green.

Ever since their installation the blue plaques have been a source of pleasure and interest for both residents and visitors to Thames Ditton and Weston Green alike, giving a fascinating insight into the history of both villages.

Fast forward to the summer of 2017 and the Association has decided to unveil two new blue plaques, both in Thames Ditton High Street. Recent months have seen a hive of activity here with an exciting new development of four cottages and three

flats on the site occupied by Hawkes & Co, the famous Ginger Beer Factory. This was originally established in about 1865 when Thomas Hawkes founded his business which grew from a cottage industry to a focal point in the High Street in a century of family ownership.

Further up the High Street, on the site now occupied by Secret Garden florists and Paull's greengrocer, was the head office for AC Cars, another now legendary business. Auto-Carriers, later Amazing Cars, was a celebrated British car manufacturer which flourished in Thames Ditton for 75 years, finally closing its doors in 1986. The factory was opposite occupying the area now known as Harvest Lane.

The RA's blue plaques is an on-going project so if you believe there is another place which should be marked in this way, perhaps because of the historic nature of the site or the person who lived here please contact us. Eventually the Association would like to establish a blue plaque trail, winding through the villages, offering a delightful walk and a fascinating insight into the people and places which have made Thames Ditton and Weston Green so unique.

For further information on our blue plaques contact Tricia: tdwgra@the-blands.co.uk

Tricia W. Bland



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Come and Sing



St Nicholas' Church services are supported by a mixed choir who sing at all the 10am Sunday services. The choir meets for rehearsal most weeks on a Wednesday evening from 7pm to 8pm to prepare for the following Sunday's service. There are about eight regular singers: sopranos, altos and basses and an occasional tenor if we are lucky!

The choir is increased for the Christmas services by a large number of singers, many of whom come along to the regular Wednesday practices throughout November



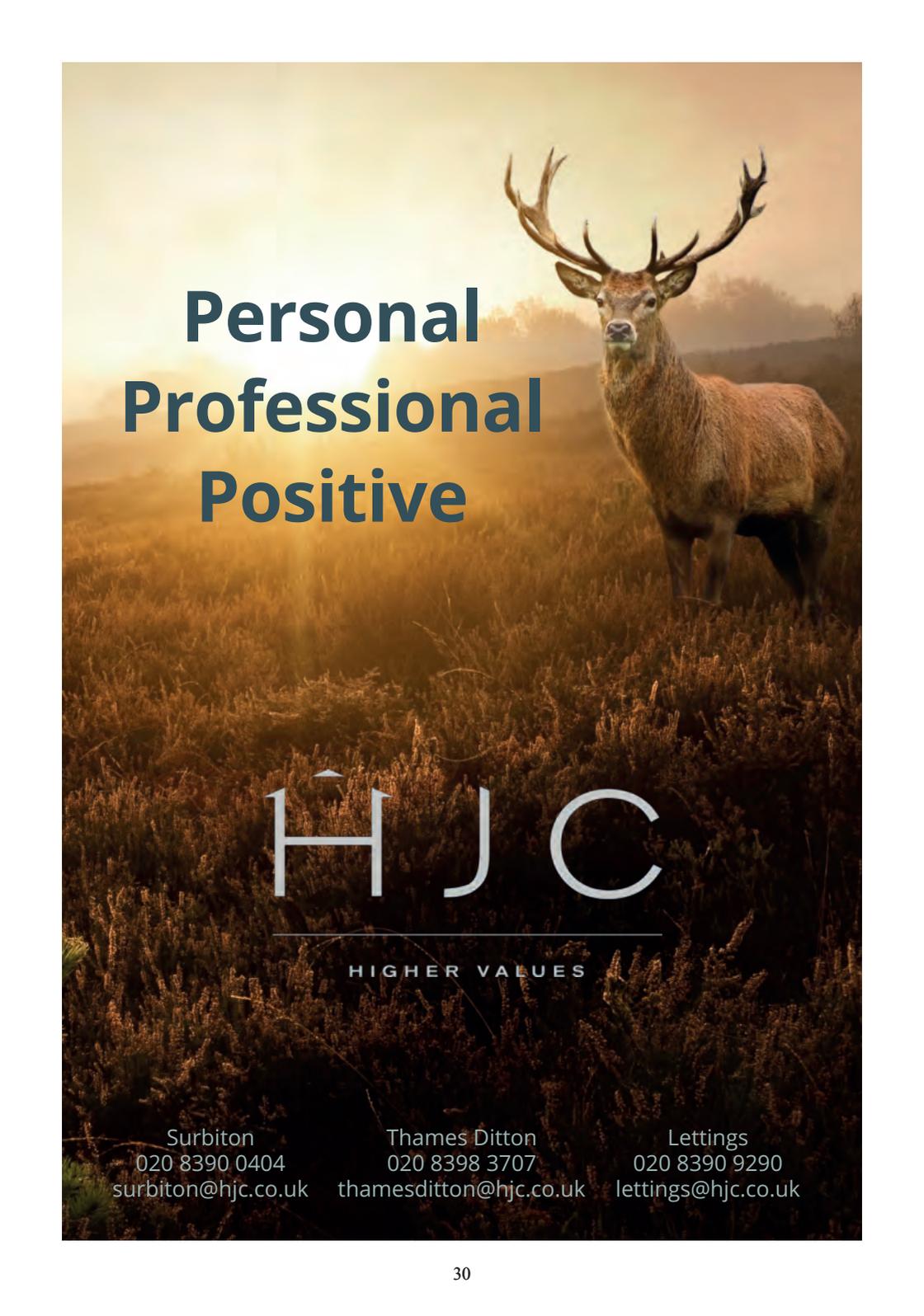
Muir Coburn - Musical Director

and December. The culmination of this work is the Festival of Nine Lessons & Carols, which is always a much-anticipated event both within the Parish and beyond. In addition the choir sings special anthems at certain festal services such as Easter and at weddings and funerals, if requested.

We are now looking for extra singers to swell our ranks. The ability to read music is definitely an advantage but it is quite possible to join in without this skill and, in any case, we could perhaps help you to master basic music-reading!

If you are interested in taking part in this very rewarding activity, please contact the Church Office on 020 8398 9641 or just turn up at St Nicholas' Church at 7pm on a Wednesday evening or at one of the 10am Sunday services – you are assured of an enthusiastic welcome!

Alex Dunne

A photograph of a stag with large, dark antlers standing in a field of tall, golden-brown grass. The sun is low on the horizon, creating a warm, golden glow and a soft lens flare effect. The background shows a hazy landscape with trees and hills.

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All aboard for a living history experience



Tucked away in a corner of rural Thames Ditton is the Malden and District Society of Model Engineers. Established in a park in New Malden in 1937, it moved to its present site on Claygate Lane ten years later, and has been known as the Thames Ditton Miniature Railway ever since. It's a real asset to our community, offering great days out for all the family, volunteering opportunities across the generations, and a place for its members to share their common passion for modelling anything from trains to penny farthings.

Everything on site replicates the romanticism of train travel before the electric age, making it an unparalleled living history experience.

From Easter each year, come rain or shine, the site is open at 2pm on every first Sunday of the month and bank holiday Mondays, starting with Easter Sunday through to the first Sunday in October, with the last train running at 5.30pm.

For free, one can simply enjoy the meadow, cafe or picnic area and listen to the sounds of the trains (many of which are steam). If you want to ride the trains a single miniature ride costs as little as the price of a cup of coffee or – for around £25 – a family of four can ride between six and eight different trains during the afternoon. Hot food and ice creams are also available.

Visiting the on-site cafe is an experience in itself, being full of nostalgic artefacts and



Modelling unites all generations

paraphernalia such as railway signage, and steam train prints by Terence Cuneo.

Every December there is Christmas magic when children take the train to the North Pole and visit Santa in his grotto to receive their specially tailored gift.

Celebrating its 80th anniversary this year, the miniature railway's success and authenticity is largely down to the dedication and expert knowledge of its 160 full members and 120 associate members – almost a third of members are women and there is a growing number of younger people of 18 – 30 years old. They come



Young members are involved in the club

a barrister for the Queens Council, and the land (previously farmland) was provided by another member who gave the society a 100 year tenure, all in trust.

The members are particularly proud of their 40 year association with Mencap, when they annually host a special day for disabled children, their families and carers. The children get to enjoy the site without the pressure of the queues and all the income from that day is donated to Mencap.

For further information visit www.malden-dsme.co.uk or better still the site itself!



Julie Royce

Modern pilgrims' progress to Canterbury



On June 8 almost 100 people from the Thames Ditton area went to Canterbury to visit the Cathedral. They were part of a tradition that started over 1,400 years ago with believers going to visit St Augustine's church there. This church was the first English Christian church and it is venerated as such. However, the idea of a pilgrimage to Canterbury really took hold after Thomas à Becket's murder in 1170. Many people then took to the Pilgrim's Way to visit Becket's shrine and to pray for healing and other miracles. Many devout people also used this trip as the beginning of their pilgrimage to Santiago de Compostela in Spain, another well-known place of pilgrimage. Geoffrey Chaucer's lively story, *The Canterbury Tales*, relates the fortunes of various Mediaeval pilgrims as they make their way to Canterbury.

The trip was organised by the Churches Together in the Dittons (CTD) as part of the 500th anniversary celebrations of the



Pilgrims at the gate

Protestant Reformation. The pilgrims – members and friends of the six churches in CTD (the Speer Road United Reformed Church, Our Lady of Lourdes Roman Catholic Church and the four Anglican churches, All Saints Weston Green, St Christopher's Hinchley Wood, St Mary's Long Ditton and St Nicholas Thames Ditton) – enjoyed guided tours of the Cathedral, which is undergoing massive renovations, lunch in the Lodge and a short service in the Crypt.



Taking in the cathedral atmosphere

There was also time for a quick look around the centre of Canterbury. It was a lovely sunny day and the company convivial. Some of us pilgrims knew each

other beforehand, many did not and it was a great way for various people in our community to get to know each other.

Churches Together in the Dittons has been working in our area for many years to promote Christian unity. The churches hold services together, they opened their doors to

the whole community during Holy Week so that visitors could view the Stations of the Cross which were displayed in them, there was a Good Friday service on Gigs Hill Green and they have arranged a number of visits to Wintershall to see the productions of 'The Life of Christ' and 'The Nativity'.

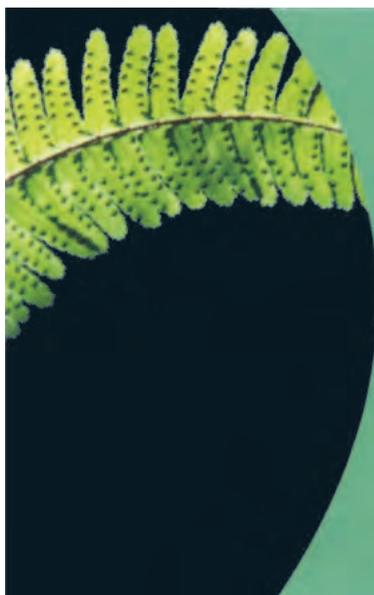
There is now talk of another 'pilgrimage' next year to another well-known church. These trips are open to all – whether you are a church member or Christian or not.

Finally, there will be a talk on The Protestant Reformation on the 5th of October at 7.30pm in the Speer Road URC. It will be given by a leading URC historian, David Cornick. This is free and open to all. Do come and join us.



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Vera's volunteers



The theatre season at the Vera Fletcher Hall simply wouldn't happen were it not for the team of volunteers who turn out at each show to help behind the bar and front of house. We are always happy to welcome new faces and there are very many aspects of the running of the Hall that people can help with.

One of our newest volunteers is Hermione Delamare who moved from Epsom to Thames Ditton in July of 2015. Hermione joined the team behind the bar last season and has been getting to grips with the coffee and biscuit side of operations. Hermione came to the Hall through a friend of hers, Linda Rowley, who was already a regular volunteer. She had already attended events as an audience member so she was aware of the role the Hall plays in the community.

I asked Hermione to choose a highlight from among the events she had attended and she immediately selected Charles Court Opera's most recent pantomime, Pinocchio. She said she particularly liked the opera bias and was looking for something a little bit different to which she could take her 11-year-old grandson.

Hermione's previous career saw her working in TV and radio, alongside David Frost as his PA. After a short career



Claire Evans (left) with volunteer Hermione Delamare

break she re-trained and, for many years, worked as a Curriculum Manager in Adult Education Skills for Life and then latterly as Welfare Manager for a local charity for the disabled.

In retirement, Hermione has taken on volunteering roles at the Princess Alice Hospice as a Hospice Neighbour, visiting people in their homes, and is a member of the Princess Alice Hospice Community Choir, along with supporting the Vera Fletcher Hall's theatre programme.

If you fancy joining the friendly group of people working to keep the Vera Fletcher Hall at the heart of the Thames Ditton Community, come along to one of our shows in the Autumn, take a look at our website www.verafletcherhall.co.uk or contact Gilda on enquiries@verafletcherhall.co.uk.

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The Speers and the Sandys - a Dynasty of Taxmen. Part 2



Weston Manor, by Hassell, 1827 – now known as Weston Grange: the seat of William Speer as Lord of the Manor of Weston.

The initial article in this series dealt primarily with the first William Speer to arrive in Thames Ditton, ending with his death in late 1805. Although he had acquired a good deal of property in the area commencing with the purchase of Manor Farm in 1778, he does not appear to have spent much time in the parish, where he was listed as an occupier rather than solely an owner from 1787 onwards. I deduce that

he was primarily resident at his properties in Westminster within a short walk of the Treasury.

Further research over the past two months confirms that William senior was very well regarded at the Treasury. Official records show that as early as 1779 he was paid an annual salary of £700, substantially more than the other Clerks, with an uplift since 1761 of £160, personal to him, “in

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consideration of his particular merit". He ran two of the Treasury departments, and by 1779 was the most senior Revenue Clerk and described as the Chief Clerk. He was frequently examined by the Houses of Commons and the Lords on aspects of Treasury accounts, from which we can see that he was still in office until at least 1792, by when he was aged about 75. It is therefore unsurprising that this busy official is scarcely mentioned in local Thames Ditton records until that time, when I would estimate he retired. Part of his lack of engagement with the parish might conceivably have had to do with the untimely death and burial here of his wife Katherine in 1780.

The sole indication of local engagement apart from Land Taxes is William as one of the signatories of the Society for Protection Against Felons set up at Ye Olde Harrow inn in 1792 – a mutual insurance society (**not** "vigilantes", note) to meet the expenses of prosecuting felons, that extended to signatories over a wide area in adjacent parishes – William owning two farms in Thames Ditton and a large part of Garson's Farm at West End, Esher. Apart from expenses concerning the burial of Katherine Speer, it is not until 1801 that we find William Speer senior and/or junior substantively attending a Vestry meeting here.

When William Speer senior died in late November 1805, by which time he seems to have been residing on Weston Green Road, he was buried in the graveyard of St. Nicholas Thames Ditton, where his wife had been buried, on 2 December. I have not been able to find a Will of William sr., but it seems most likely that his son William jr simply inherited all his property as the sole surviving male heir.

William Speer jr: professional life

The younger William in many ways took on where his father left off. I now know that he was born on 24 October 1764 and baptised on 6 December at St. Margaret's, Westminster, the third child of William Sr and Katherine. Their probable first, Elizabeth Speer born 1758, named after Katherine's sister, died in 1827 (buried St Martin in the Fields). The second, their first son named William after his father, was born 18 January 1760, baptised 5 February 1761 and died later that year, being buried on 6 Aug 1761 in St Margaret's. Honor Katherine Speer, named Honor after Katherine's deceased mother, was born 18 October 1762 and buried 5 June 1763, St Margaret's. William jr. – the second attempt at an heir named after his father – survived and thrived. A further son, Wilson Speer (named after his mother's maiden name) was born probably 20 October 1768 and buried at Thames Ditton in 1795; and lastly Francis Townley Speer, was born on 25 August 1771 and buried on 17 October that year at St Margaret's.

As a younger man William lived with his father predominantly at Westminster, as we can see from the Land Tax occupancies of the Queen Street properties. He started work in the Treasury when he was 18: we know from the record of William jr.'s retirement in 1833, aged 69, that he had 51 years of service there (a former civil servant myself, I find that a mind-numbingly long period). His career prospered under his father, the senior Clerk in the Treasury, and by the time his father retired he was a Revenue Clerk, eventually rising to the heights of Chief Clerk and an Auditor of Treasury Accounts (from 1808, on a salary of £1080 rising to £1200, and later £1700). Until 1805 the Chief Clerks, varying over the centuries from 4 to 6 in number, ranked after the Joint

Secretaries of the Treasury and in addition to their own particular responsibilities acted in a general advisory capacity to the Board of the Treasury. In 1805 they were displaced from their position as the senior members of the permanent staff by the Assistant Secretary. At that time they were given specific responsibilities for the divisions of business, one being assigned to each of the first two divisions, one to the third and fourth and one to the fifth and sixth.

In those capacities we find many references to William in Parliamentary proceedings, having authorised or being authorised to meet a range of government expenditures: from the Home Secret Service – £10,000 in 1815 – through, that same year, the settlement of “*Bills drawn by the Duke of Wellington, towards the purchase of a House at Paris, for the residence of His Majesty’s Ambassador Matthew Martin, Esq. & towards the Expense of carrying into effect a plan for enquiring into the state of the Mendicity of the Metropolis.*” To his appearance in 1822 to testify at enthralling length before the Parliamentary Select Committee on Printing and Stationery, from which evidence we know that William was by that time the senior Clerk in the Treasury with direct responsibility for two Departments, the fifth and sixth Department; and that the quantity of paper issued to Treasury departments in the year ending 1 October 1821 cost £62. I will spare you the detail.

Among many other Treasury functions we also find William nominated by HMG as one of the two Treasury Auditors for Charles Babbage’s First Difference Engine, which was, in effect, to be the very first computer using digital programming. This was a protracted project for which government subsidies had been made available, beset with cost overruns and administrative

problems. Now, I confess I have not read the Auditors’ reports, but quote from a 1990 paper by CJD Roberts, who has done so:

“...*After the Engine had been formally declared public property [in February 1830] the Treasury adopted a system of having the accounts formally reviewed by their own auditors, Messrs William Speer and Stamp Brooksbank. These two appear in the story told in the surviving Mss as a pair of veritable bureaucratic ‘Rosencrantz and Guildensterns’. They seemed to have quibbled every penny spent by Babbage on the Engine, insisting on stamped and signed receipts etc...*”

Private life

On 26 January 1784 William Speer jr. married Mary Jellico at St. Martin in the Fields, Westminster. Mary had been baptised on 6 November 1763 at Holborn. I am grateful to one of Mary’s brother’s descendants, who now lives in Australia, for some of the genealogical details pertaining to Mary’s family. Mary, one of six children, had inherited some £900 from her mother (Mary nee Brownjohn) who died aged 37 when Mary was just twelve years old, press reports attributing her mother’s death to “*a fright she received in her carriage some few weeks ago.*”

The marriage was prolific. Writing in St Nicholas parish magazine in January 1959, local historian C R S Sanders stated that William had “*nineteen children, several of whom died in infancy*” – which number immediately became part of modern Thames Ditton folklore. With my Australian interlocutor we have identified them, probably. Nine or ten appear to have died in infancy or childhood, including two sons named William. That still left many youngsters to bring up. It was as well that William inherited from his father several

houses close together in Westminster, as well as the house at Fulham; and also at least three large houses in Thames Ditton along Weston Green Road not counting the tenanted farms.

Aggrandisement

William Speer Jr. proceeded to expand the family landholdings in Thames Ditton, Esher and Epsom until, we know from the title apportionment shortly before his eventual death, he owned nearly a quarter of the parish. Remember, at that time Thames Ditton included what are today Weston Green, Hinchley Wood, and Claygate. But the Speers were still clerks, however senior, and with scant hope of ennoblement. It is abundantly evident that William wanted more by way of status and respect.

At the turn of the century he was very well placed in the Treasury, not to mention the influence of his retired father as former Chief Clerk of that august department of state, both to understand and take advantage of an abstruse Act of parliament passed in 1798 to consolidate Land Tax, at a time when the King and the government needed to raise funds for defence against the French. One of the controversial things the Treasury was looking at was the sale of residual “wastes” or commons in manors still held by the King freehold. On 12 January 1801, William obtained a certified copy of a Parliamentary Survey of the manor of Weston, that had been carried out in 1650. Then in May that year he bought from the Crown estates via the Treasury Commissioners the absolute title forever to the manor, all its commons, woods, grounds, waters, sporting rights, rents, and the rights to hold courts baron and courts leet. The Surveyor-General of Crown lands, John Fordyce, signed the deed. Although the younger William was now the owner of

the freehold of the manor of Weston, it was still in the leasehold occupation of Robert Taylor, also Lord of the Manor of Imworth/Imber at Ember Court. I'll take up that story in the next article in this series.

In 1810, William Speer became a Fellow of the Royal Society – although I cannot find any evidence of scientific or philosophical work or interests. With his continued rise in the Treasury, his land, and now his freehold title of Lord of the Manor of Weston in prospect when the lease expired, William Speer secured nomination (by the Lords of the Council at the Exchequer – his superiors) for Sheriff of Surrey, an onerous ceremonial post with substantial expenses, and served his year as Sheriff in 1819. William was also made a Justice of the Peace and from late 1822 served as one of 23 members of the county's Grand Jury. He appeared at Conservative dinners in Kingston.

On Weston Green Road, in the early 1800s William Speer extended his house that we know today as Weston Grange, which started life almost a century before as two cottages knocked together. He added an imposing portico and a façade which, as local architectural historian Roger Armstrong perceptively observes, is grander than the earlier part of the house would warrant. For William was to be Lord of the Manor of Weston, and he meant to show it.

Next time I'll examine how and why it seems the second William Speer got up the noses of bigwigs in the parish, and set the scene for a devastating and divisive denouement when he levered his alcoholic son Rev. Wilfred into the incumbency of St. Nicholas Thames Ditton and St. Mary Molesey.

Keith Evetts

Solution to the Summer Crossword

by Michael Jackson



I	N	S	T	A	N	T		E	R	A	S	M	U	S
N		O		G		W		M		N		E		A
C	O	M	M	O	D	O	R	E		C	H	I	L	L
H		A		R		T		R		H		S		T
		L	E	A	M	I	N	G	T	O	N	S	P	A
O		I				M		E		R		E		R
B	L	A	K	E	N	E	Y		P	A	W	N	E	E
F				X		R		S		G				L
U	N	S	E	E	N		D	I	H	E	D	R	A	L
S		A		R		C		R				O		O
C	O	C	K	T	A	I	L	P	A	R	T	Y		
A		K		I		R		E		O		A		I
T	A	B	O	O		C	A	T	A	P	U	L	T	S
E		U		N		U		E		E		T		L
D	E	T	E	S	T	S		R	E	S	T	Y	L	E

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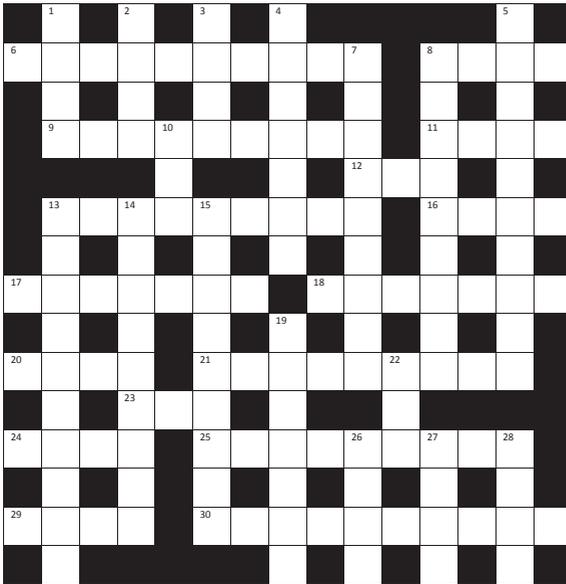
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Autumn Crossword



We have no crossword compiler for our autumn and spring editions, so here is a re-run of one from 30 years ago ...is it easier or harder?

The first three correct entries randomly opened after the closing date 10 October 2017 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:

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Crossword Competition
24 High Street
Thames Ditton KT7 0RY

ACROSS CLUES

6. Hangers-on (10)
8. Cut down moorland (4)
9. Brave man (3, 6)
11. Torn-up lease (4)
12. Delve like American (3)
13. Put logs in ovens for romantic output (4, 5)
16. "– and out" says Roger (4)
17. LR roses? No! Other plants (7)
18. Men of letters (7)
20. Small house south east of M.I. (4)
21. Blamed for N.E CND demo alteration (9)
23. & 22 Down. One who looks round (3, 3)
24. I'm in different skirt (4)
25. Old coat in Scotland (9)
29. Domestic animals step backwards (4)
30. No room at the inn! Old N's going out (2, 8)

DOWN CLUES

1. Back of right ear (4)
2. Repel fiend – not! (4)
3. Original garden (4)
4. Flagging standards (7)
5. It's only fair to call its owner this (6, 4)
7. One stands solid as rock (9)
8. Pro got ten and has overlooked the whole (9)
10. That is about a hundred for skating (3)
13. Bad connections so we lose RI certainly (5,5)
14. If I put into verses, it puts into verse (9)
15. Pick one on choice (9)
19. Levin returns in a ship and shows signs of a cold (7)
22. See 23. Across
26. Five hundred in a French street are rough (4)
27. Nice picture contains heroic poem (4)
28. Herb is a wise man (4)

SERVICES, GROUPS, CLUBS, AND SOCIETIES

SERVICES

Cheer (Concern and Help for East Elmbridge Retired)	Harry Livesey	01372 879321
Dittons & Weston Green NeighbourCare	Frankie Bell	07790 472993
Elmbridge Borough Council Community Support Services		
Thames Ditton Centre for the community	Mon & Thurs	020 8398 5921
Thames Ditton Children's Centre	Tues, Weds, Fri	020 8398 3772
Meals on Wheels, Community Transport, Dial-a-Ride, Alarm & Telecare services, Relief Carers	ask for service at central switchboard	01372 474552
Homesupport Elmbridge	Pam Howard (Manager)	01932 267128
Esher and District Stroke Club	Ann Pollock	020 8398 6132
Voluntary Action Elmbridge	Sally Dubery	01372 46358
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	Mrs Helen Hill	020 8398 3135
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	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: 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	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	Simon Marshall (Men)	07801 737695
	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	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

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 Association	Gill Vickers	www.lynwoodallotments.btck.co.uk 020 8398 4870
Molesey and District Antiques Society	Linda Lambert	020 8398 1476
NADFAS (Decorative & Fine Arts) Kingston	Mrs. Valerie Windsor	020 8549 9967
Oxshott & Cobham Music Society	Cherry Eddy (Membership)	0208 398 4377 cherryeddy102@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
Elmbridge Fairtrade Network	Judy Porter	020 8398 6401
University of the Third Age (U3A)	Hon Sec Anne Brown	01932 881633
Vera Fletcher Hall	Lettings: Fiona Evers	08456 528 529
	Membership: Sue Morris	020 8224 0980

Please contact the Editor to amend these listings

Autumn 2017 Season Opens with Opera

Join us for an exciting season of events in the Theatre at the Vera Fletcher Hall. Further details and tickets available online at www.verafletcherhall.co.uk or by telephone on 08456 528529



Saturday 14 October 7.30 pm

Popup Opera presents HANSEL AND GRETEL

by Humperdinck Innovative touring opera company Popup Opera brings us this magical and dark operatic fairy tale.

www.popupopera.co.uk Tickets: £18 (Under 16s free)

Saturday 21 October 7.30 pm

Kick to the Head presents MY DOG'S GOT NO NOSE –

A comedy by Ron Aldridge Giles Shenton (last seen at the VFH in 5 star Old Herbaceous) returns in a new comedy life as comedian.

Tickets: £14.00



For Families with children – Saturday 4th November 2.30 pm Image Musical Theatre presents Hansel and Gretel

As one of the great European fairy tales 'Hansel and Gretel' is as relevant today as it was for previous generations. Children have the opportunity to participate in the singing and some will get to be part of the action on stage.
www.imagemusicaltheatre.co.uk Tickets: £8.00 Age 4+

Friday 10th November 7.30 pm

Abraxas Ensemble

Formed in 1999 by graduates from the Royal College of Music and the Guildhall School of Music & Drama, Abraxas string quartet perform their joyous programme of classical works and interpretations of contemporary music. www.abraxasensemble.com Tickets £15.00 (Under 16s free)



Saturday 18th November 7.30 pm

Another Way Theatre presents RECITAL – a one-act comedy play

followed by a soiree of Musical Theatre favourites

Trevor and Gillian have been on the road for what seems like an eternity – he the trusty pianist and she a fading musical theatre star. With their recital looming tensions rise to boiling point, can the show go on? In the second half of this delightful evening, a wealth of popular shows from the shows

www.anotherwaytheatre.co.uk Tickets: £12.50



Friday 24th November 7.30 pm

VFH FILM NIGHT presents The Happiest Days of Your Life

1950 classic British comedy starring Alastair Sim and Margaret Rutherford as two head teachers trying to cope with the chaos that ensues when St Swithin's Girls School is accidentally billeted at Nutbourne College for boys.

Tickets: £7.00 entrance includes a complimentary drink



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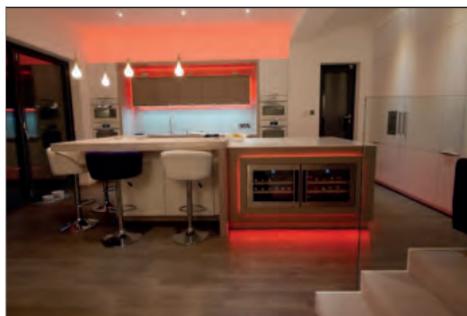
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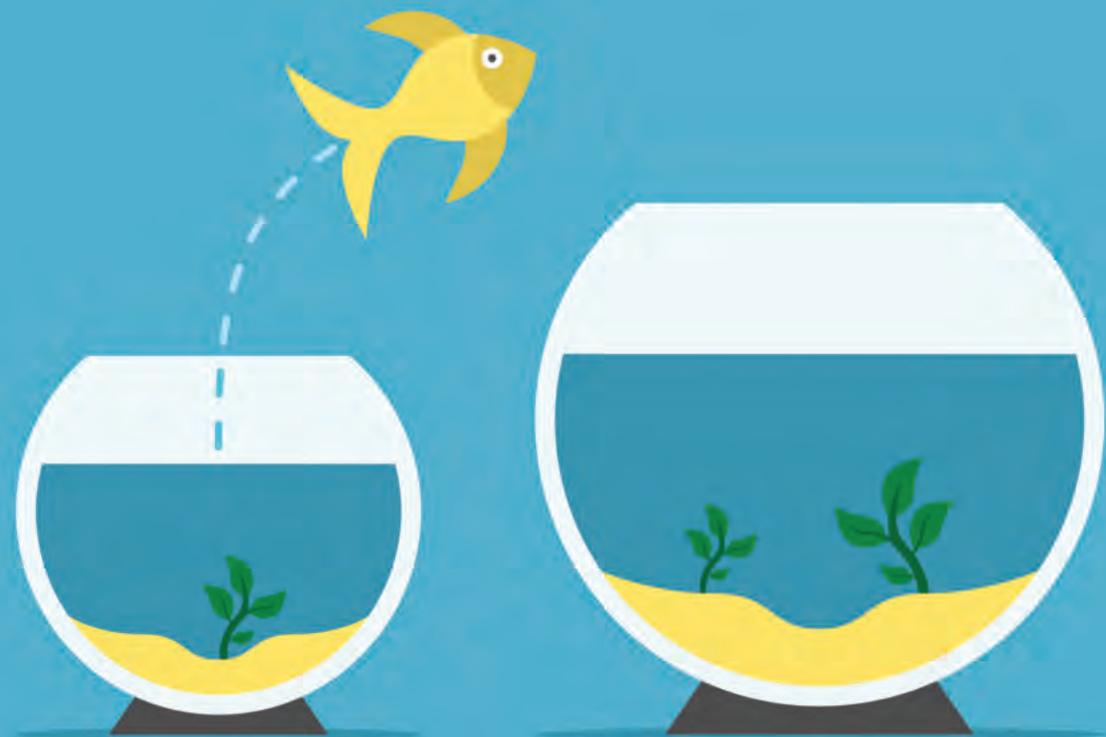
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