

The Twickenham Times

Twickenham Riverside (not Richmond!)

Francis Terry, the Council's architect for the development of Twickenham Riverside, unveiled his plans for "Richmond Riverside" around midday on 14 December in the Architect's Journal. The London Borough of Richmond's consultation on the Terry options was still in progress, ending at midnight on 16 December. Francis Terry may have jumped the gun providing more fodder for those opposing his proposed block of flats on Twickenham Riverside.

Francis should have remembered that it was his father, Quinlan Terry, who was the architect for Richmond Riverside in the 1980s.

After Quinlan and Francis Terry won the competition for Twickenham Riverside Francis split from his father setting up his own practice and continued to work on the Twickenham project alone.

Francis Terry is a well-respected architect in many circles but both he and his father have been described in the press as practising reactionary pastiche. Unfortunately the picture of Francis' plan for Twickenham which appeared on Twitter was said to look a little like Trumpton Town.

None of this bodes well for Twickenham Riverside in terms of architecture and the use of the Riverside site for leisure pursuits.

To make matters worse, Cllr Fleming who is in charge of the development of Twickenham Riverside, has not released information regarding the number of Terry flats. At a recent Workshop a senior Council officer announced that £6m had been paid for the part of the site that the Council did not own; it was suggested that the Council would like to recoup the £6m.

Apartments with the Terry name would bear a high price tag. The sum generated from the sale of Riverside flats could go a long way to covering deficits in the Council's budget. Residents might well ask whether Twickenham Riverside, which has been fought over for decades, will be sacrificed to finance Council spending.



Contents

- 2 Twickers Foodie Competition
- 3 Arts and Entertainment
- 4 Community Arts Centre
- 5 Varsity Match
- 7 Church St Christmas
- 8 Twickenham Postcards
- 9 SHRA Carols
- Mind through Art
- 10 Hampton Butterflies
- 11 Aircraft Noise
- 12 The Music Article

Contributors

- Erica White
- Cantabrigiensis
- Shona Lyons
- Alan Winter
- Teddington Action Group
- David McGeachie
- Teresa Read
- Berkley Driscoll

Contact

contact@TwickenhamTimes.com
letters@TwickenhamTimes.com
advertise@TwickenhamTimes.com

Published by:
Twickenham Alive and
World Infozone

Twickers Foodie

German Bakery hamper winner

Our lucky winner of the hamper is Mary Ainscough, from Twickenham, who collected her prize from the German Bakery in Water Lane, Twickenham.

All the products are carefully sourced from Germany by local husband and wife team Harpreet and Preeti Singh. www.germanbakery.eu



Special Twickenham Times Offer! Church Street Food Hall



You can **make up your own hamper** or food gift box as an extra special present for a foodie in your life. Colette has kindly offered anyone who **mentions the Twickenham Times a free cup of mulled tea and a mince pie** to enjoy while they select the items for their Christmas gift. She will then gift-wrap it beautifully for you to take away. They are open until and including Christmas Eve. www.churchstreetfoodhall.co.uk

Win a bottle of Prosecco

Identify the location (hint, a riverside pub) of the image shown right for a chance to win a bottle of Prosecco.

See previous and next editions for other images (from the same location). All correct entries will be entered in a draw to take place the week of 26th December 2016, to enable you to collect your bottle in time for New Year.

Send your answer (along with your postcode) to:
win@TwickenhamTimes.com



Arts and Entertainment

by Erica White

This week Dramacube Productions present their end-of-term show, [ELF The Musical JR.](#) to parents, friends and the general public to performances up at Hampton Hill Theatre from Thursday 15 December at 7.30 pm, Friday 16 December at 5.30pm, Saturday 17 at 1.00pm and at 6.15pm. Ticket details from contact@dramacube.co.uk

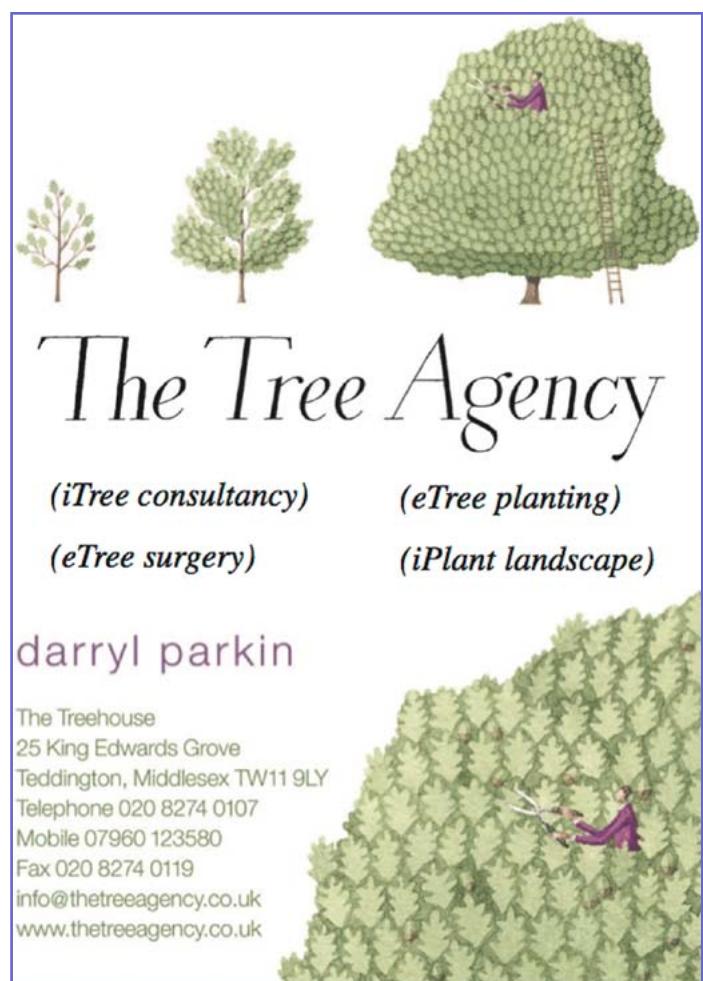
Cantanti Camerati give a [CHRISTMAS CONCERT](#) at St Mary's Parish Church, Twickenham on Saturday, 17 December at 7.30pm Tickets at £15 (under 16 free) from Hillsound Musical Instruments, 24-26 High Street, Hampton Hill, or from Cantanti Camerati on 8898 8020, and on the door.

The ever popular [CAROLS BY CANDLELIGHT](#) at Teddington's Landmark Arts Centre make a festive start to Christmas week. Local choirs, Surrey Brass and YOU combine to make Christmas music, refreshed with mulled wine and mince pies. Saturday 17 December. Tickets £14/£13/£5 under 16s.
info@landmarkartscentre.org or phone 8977 7558.

The ultimate feel-good Christmas film [IT'S A WONDERFUL LIFE](#) will be shown at Arthur's Bistro on the Green, Twickenham on Sunday, 18 December, with a suitably seasonal meal being served at 7.00pm. Information : 8893 3995 or go to www.arthursscreenonthegreen.co.uk

Looking forward, why not get in the mood to welcome in the New Year with stand-up comedian [REG D HUNTER](#). Reg and friends will be at Hampton Hill Theatre on Saturday, 31 December at 7.15pm. Tickets: £14 online from www.outsidetheboxcomedy.co.uk or call 07791 439363.

A Very Merry Christmas to all and enjoy more entertaining in 2017.



The illustration features a large, detailed hedge in the foreground. On the left side of the hedge, there is a small treehouse with a ladder leading up to it. A person in a purple coat is standing on the ground next to the treehouse, looking up at it. On the right side of the hedge, another person in a purple coat is kneeling down, working on the hedge with shears. The background is plain white.

The Tree Agency

(iTTree consultancy) *(eTree planting)*
(eTree surgery) *(iPlant landscape)*

darryl parkin

The Treehouse
25 King Edwards Grove
Teddington, Middlesex TW11 9LY
Telephone 020 8274 0107
Mobile 07960 123580
Fax 020 8274 0119
info@thetreeagency.co.uk
www.thetreeagency.co.uk

Community Arts Centre - Brewery Wharf

In the second edition of The Twickenham Times there was a letter from a Twickenham resident enquiring about the community arts centre, opposite Twickenham Station, due to open last Spring, which the writer said resembled a white elephant or an ocean liner - fated never to arrive at its destination.

The building is in fact proposed as a Cultural Centre for Twickenham, built by St James on the former Royal Mail sorting office site where the property developers gained planning permission for a number of flats and houses.

Hailed by the only vocal Twickenham Riverside councillor, Cllr Susan Chappell, as a high-class community facility for Twickenham, the town waits for this empty building to spring into life.



Some time ago Cllr Chappell organised a community consultation to find a name for the building but this also seems to be a mystery.

The Cultural Centre is said to house a theatre with seats for 320 people for theatrical performances, cinema and conferences. We are told that there are also multi-purpose rooms for meetings, community use and sports activities.

Various community groups have wanted to book the theatre for Christmas plays and film screenings but it is not known if anyone has been appointed to run the Centre; telephone enquiries to the Council and Brewery Wharf lead nowhere. As the 2015 link to the Council Press Release for Brewery Wharf says "Sorry, this page could not be found".

HOT OFF THE PRESS

Rumours emanating from the Council today suggest that the Community Arts Centre is to be taken over by St Mary's University (Strawberry Hill); it appears, as due to expansion, St Mary's have run out of teaching space.

At this stage it is not known how much of the proposed Community Arts Centre will be used by St Mary's and the extent of any community use.

Oxford University vs Cambridge University

by Cantabrigiensis

The annual Varsity Match at The Stadium may be a minor fixture in the world of Rugby Football, but it is a big day for the many of the alumni of those universities who congregate to watch, enjoy and take refreshment.

I first attended in 1956, when I had a spare day between entrance examination papers, and have gone on most occasions since then. This 60 year span has led me to recall some of the changes I have seen in the Town, the Stadium and the game itself.

There were no houses in Water Lane, but there was a car park on the left, with a precarious slope on which I once got stuck. I used to park my car there, and walk up to the Stadium. I could also have left the car in the middle of King Street, where there was a row of parking places. Sometimes I caught one of the “Specials” from Waterloo. There were always numbers of ticket touts surrounding Twickenham station, offering to buy spare tickets to sell on at vastly inflated prices.

The Stadium was a pretty uncomfortable place in those days; many of the spectators were not under cover. The first dozen or so rows made up “The Ring”, and the entire North Stand was open to the elements (and “Stand” meant “stand”!). The roof was supported by pillars (unlike the present cantilevered structure) that obstructed the view in some seats. The latter were excruciatingly uncomfortable, made bearable for the requisite 90 minutes only by the hire for 6d of leather cushions. The individual stands were not joined up, so the wind whistled in at all four corners, forming vortices around the goal posts. This made place kicking extremely problematical.

The rules of the game, and the scoring system, were very different from those of today. The ball was made of leather, and in wet weather became extremely heavy and slippery. It is fair to say Rugby is much more entertaining game to watch now than it was then.

I was amazed to hear while watching the most recent match (December 8th) live on television that one of the players was winning his sixth Blue: in earlier times every team member was an undergraduate, so could only have been capped a maximum of three times. However, some players were already Internationals or shortly to become so; Rugby was an amateur game then, and the University teams competed on equal terms at the highest levels. I recall watching Cambridge beating the touring Wallabies in November 1957 (the tourists were also defeated by Oxford), a result totally unthinkable these days. The Varsity Match is not always a great game (the most recent one being an exception), but the occasion is more than a mere sporting event. It is a day for meeting old friends, and for reminiscing.

Dramacube
PRODUCTIONS

Auditions
11th January

Disney

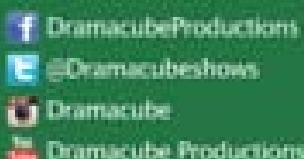
Peter Pan JR

Musical Theatre Productions For 7-16yrs
Join the cast and perform live on stage
at Hampton Hill in April 2017!

Hampton Hill Cast Rehearsals:
Wednesday afternoons
January - April 2017

Twickenham Cast Rehearsals:
Saturday afternoons
January - April 2017

To book your audition call 020 8408 0245
or email contact@dramacube.co.uk
www.dramacubeproductions.co.uk
Production Fees Apply



Credits: Music and Lyrics by Samirah Cahro, Samirah Fain, Michael Turner, Xavier Alfonso, George Burns, Jash Lawrence, Frank Churchill, Winston Hibler, Ted Sears, Oliver Wallace & Ray Kelty Music Adapted and Arranged and Additional Lyrics by Eric Segerstad Book and Additional Lyrics by David Zeffreli Based on the play by J.M. Barrie and the 1953 Disney Film

PROUD TO SUPPORT



Church Street at Christmas

by Shona Lyons

We have had some really well supported Christmas Markets in Church Street this December, with the Festival of Lights on the 2nd and the French on the 10th and 11th. Lots of fun was had by everyone, and they definitely provided a warm and welcoming environment for people to meet and mingle and also buy their Christmas presents and other produce. Stall holders came from all over the borough for the Festival of Lights and from France for the French Market, & Church Street regular businesses were out in force with fantastic gift ideas & offers to tempt our shoppers.

Amongst other entertainment we have also been able to support some great local bands including Saxonova, the Richmond Music Trust, Kneller Hall Corps of Army Music, Shelle Luscombe, & we have even had the delightful local Children's choir from St Jame's School.



Last but not least is our Italian Market this weekend Saturday and Sunday the 17th and 18th of December. We will have a wide range of stalls offering authentic Italian Street Food, and Produce. It will be from 11am until 6pm on both days. Many of the participants are local Italians in the food business, and others are coming from as far away as Bristol! On Saturday there will also be the fantastic Elastic (Brass) Band in the street from 12 until 1pm & from 2pm until 4pm, they will be followed by the Richmond Music Trust. On Sunday Shelle Luscombe will be singing popular Christmas songs and carols from 12 till 1.30 and then Roger Perin will be coming with a local band from 2pm onwards.

Please come and support your street in their last bash before Christmas (then we can go & hang up our Christmas Stockings...😊 We put on these kind of events for our cherished local community without which we wouldn't exist and whose custom we are very grateful for. We hope we have all been able to create a great destination for everyone to enjoy in the run up to Christmas.

CrusaderTravel Escapology Experts



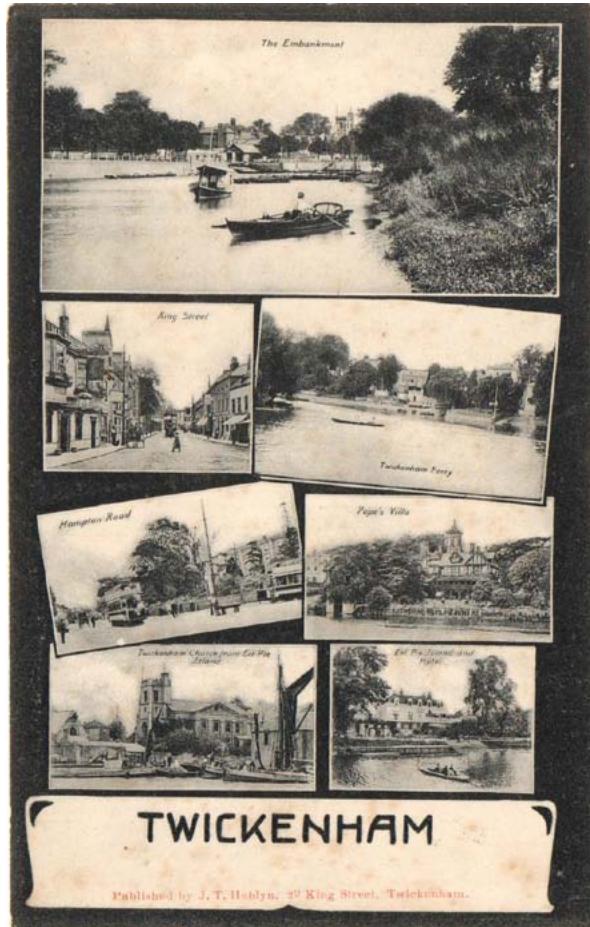
We have many coastal Villas and apartments available in this much loved Seaside Resort

*Call us now on 020 8744 0474
www.crusadertravel.com*

TWICKENHAM PICTURE POSTCARDS – A HISTORY

by Alan Winter

It is 122 years since British picture postcards (that could be published by private firms, sold commercially and sent with an adhesive stamp) first appeared on our streets. This sparked a golden age that embraced the later years of Queen Victoria, all of the reign of King Edward VII and the early years of King George V.



Picture Postcards changed the way we communicated, both by speed and distance and became our prime method of contact with anyone that we couldn't talk to over the garden hedge. Remember, there were no mobile phones or emails in those days.

The pictures used were many and varied with subjects covering everything under the sun. For over 60 years since their first appearance in the 1890's, published postcards had a standard size of 140 x 89mm.

Prior to the first World War, the vast majority of the countless millions of cards produced were printed in Saxony in Germany. It wasn't long however before British photographers and stationers started producing 'Real Photographic' postcards of their local town or village. They were often published in very small quantities and were living social history items often showing key events of the day and were on the streets for sale faster than newspapers. As such they are now valued as important windows on the past by researchers, local history societies and museums etc. Plus of course they are fun to collect.

Most Edwardian households kept a postcard album or two and the collection of these cards became a popular activity of the day.

So that's the general background. The postcard illustrated was published by J.T. Hoblyn of 29 King Street and is of a Twickenham multi – view. It was posted in January 1906 to a Miss Goff in Kingston on Thames wishing her many happy returns of the day.

The first ever recorded picture postcard posted in Twickenham was sent on 10th September 1899 but that doesn't mean there isn't an earlier example sitting in a loft somewhere!

Today the postcard enthusiast is well served by a monthly magazine – Picture Postcard Monthly which lists the number of postcard fairs taking place in the UK each week. www.picturepostcardmagazine.co.uk

There is also the West London Postcard Club which meets monthly at Chiswick Town Hall.

Our next local postcard fair is at Kempton Park this Saturday 17th December. Open between 10.00-4.00, admission is free, there is a refreshment area, massive car parking and easy public transport access.

I shall have my stall there with a large stock of picture postcards from the local areas. Why not come and say hello and have a browse through the stocks of up to 25 or so dealers.

In my next article we shall look in greater detail at postcards of Twickenham through the decades. Meanwhile, if you have any postcards to dispose of or any questions on the subject, please drop me a line on alanwinter192@hotmail.com

POSTCARDS WANTED

Cash paid for Old Postcards

& postally franked envelopes.

Required by local collector / dealer.

Please ring Alan to discuss on

07875 578398

Strawberry Hill Residents Association - Christmas Carols

Last Friday evening the Committee of the Strawberry Hill Residents Association organised a Christmas get together for local residents. In previous years carol singing has taken place in the village near Strawberry Hill Station and although Radnor Gardens was a new venue for Christmas it proved to be extremely successful with over a hundred residents taking part.

David Cornwall, the relatively new Chair of the Association, led the singing accompanied by a brass trio of cornet, trombone and tenor horn. Carol singers were supported by the Teddington Choir in renditions of Silent Night, Ding Dong Merrily on High and more.



Marcus who runs the café made everyone welcome, cheerfully serving mulled wine and hot mince pies on behalf of the Strawberry Hill Residents Association Committee.

This was the second community event outside the Radnor Gardens Café organised by the Strawberry Hill Residents Association. A few months earlier another successful social occasion took place where residents had the opportunity to talk to one another over a glass of wine.

The mind explored through art

Mental health issues are being sensitively explored in a moving exhibition launched at Orleans House Gallery.

The exhibition aims to promote an understanding of those who suffer from mental health problems and was compiled by Malaysian Artist, Oi Nuen Sprunt. It is a rich and highly textural mixed media collaboration and will be displayed in the Stables Gallery until 5 February 2017.

Incorporating Sumi-e, a Japanese brush technique, Oi Neun's work is imprinted on Kinwashi, which is a highly textured Japanese linen paper, and includes copper and aluminium leaf work, plaster, light, sound and videography.

Oi Nuen, said:

"Many people came to me with lots of personal mental health problems as part of this exhibition. Basically some could cope really well with very serious issues and others, with seemingly less serious problems, just fall apart."

"So that confused me. I sensed was fear. It made me think about thought. It made me think about the mind and how powerful our minds can be."

"I started exploring what 'thought' I go through and portrayed this process through a Japanese brush technique. I ask questions about where our thoughts come from."



For more information contact Oi Nuen Sprunt at www.shoutcryroom.com or Sarah Hacking-Brian at svahb@hotmail.co.uk

Hampton aflutter

The eggs of an elusive butterfly that spends most of its time either high in the canopy of trees or hiding in hedgegrows has been spotted in Hampton North.

So rare is the Brown Hairstreak butterfly, it mainly exists in mid-west Ireland and the South West of England. The Brown Hairstreak has disappeared from many regions of the UK and numbers have been in decline since the 1970s. The butterfly hasn't been found anywhere in Hertfordshire or former Middlesex and for the past 100 years has not been at all common. For these reasons it is easy to see why butterfly experts were so excited when the eggs of a Brown Hairstreak were found in hedgegrow in Hampton North last week.



Female Brown Hairstreak (Thecla betulae)

The precious find was made by a member of Butterfly Conservation, a national charity devoted to saving butterflies, moths and their habitats throughout the UK. Butterfly Conservation volunteers have been tracking its spread northwards across the country.

Butterfly Conservation's Butterfly Recorder for Richmond and surrounding areas, Andrew Wood, said:

"We knew the Brown Hairstreak was advancing northwards through Surrey, but for one to make it across the Thames is fantastic news. It's fascinating to see evidence of this butterfly moving from the countryside into more urban areas, which I think is down to more sympathetic management of our city parks and allowing them to benefit our wildlife a bit more."

"Allowing plants and hedges like Blackthorn bushes to grow out instead of being cut back, is what helps this butterfly make it through winter. We would love to see the Brown Hairstreak become more established in this part of London, so we hope that finding these eggs is a sign of things to come."



Brown Hairstreak (Thecla betulae)



Female Brown Hairstreak (Thecla betulae)

© Charlesjsharp

IS AIRCRAFT NOISE A NUISANCE? ABSOLUTELY!

by Teddington Action Group



If you're affected by aircraft noise email noise@heathrow.com or call Heathrow noise line 0800344844



On the 30th November, Twickenham MP, Dr Tania Mathias, read her Bill in Parliament to propose making aircraft noise a statutory nuisance. She receives more complaints about this than any other topic and, as a physician, knows only too well the negative physical and mental impact on her constituents. Many people will be surprised that the law cannot protect them from aviation noise and wonder why this is so.

In the 1920's when the aviation industry was just beginning, the government of the day exempted aviation noise from legislation as a way of helping the new industry. Since those early days, the public has had no legal protection despite a massive increase in the numbers of aircraft in the sky. Millions of people are disturbed by aircraft noise* yet we have the extraordinary situation where model aircraft are covered by noise legislation but the enormous jumbo jets that wreck our sleep, are not.

On the first reading of her Bill, Dr Mathias pointed out that some constituents can't hear their television or radio when the noisier planes go over - some registering 83 decibels, which is louder than a food mixer. In our area, aircraft noise wakes babies, frightens pets and causes a nuisance by most people's standards, and so far, MPs agree. There has been cross party support for the first stage of this bill and the second reading will take place on the 20th January 2017. Let us hope that good sense prevails and this loophole in the law will be closed to protect us from unreasonable and unsafe levels of aircraft noise.

If you want to help, please email: info@teddingtonactiongroup.com or just follow TAG on Twitter [@TeddingtonTAG](#) or facebook.com/TeddingtonActionGroup www.teddingtonactiongroup.com
* 28% of all European Union people disturbed by aircraft noise are under Heathrow flight paths.

The music article

by David McGeachie

Hello and welcome again to my music column. This week we interview a 'face' on the local scene and we shine the spotlight on a top young local band.



INTERVIEW: Mike Rivers of the 'Crawdaddy Club', Richmond

Mr Mike Rivers runs the 'Crawdaddy Club Richmond', promoting gigs at Richmond Athletic Ground, in the exact same room the Rolling Stones played in back in '63 when the original home in the town centre became too busy. He has become well known on the local music scene in the last few years. Easy recognisable from his ever present hat and 'tache, he is an affable and gregarious chap, obviously in it through a personal love of music and gallantly putting his money and time where his mouth is to bring excellent artists to the Club, to which all are welcome and whose details we will give you later. Here we go:

Mike, thank you for giving up your time to do this for the Twickenham Times. I've seen you around for a few years now and am looking forward to finding out all about the club and you. Firstly, a quick word about current activity at the Crawdaddy Club at Richmond Athletic Ground, which is how most locals will know you. How often do you have gigs there and what is the format there? What are the upcoming gigs you would like to tell us about?

Thanks Dave. We do regular monthly gigs, usually on a Friday evening with one band only, although we have played around with a support band on a couple of occasions. I'd love to do more, but it doesn't work for the musicians financially. We open doors at 8 pm with the music starting around 8.30-8.45. Unfortunately we don't have our own set up, so bands usually bring their own, although for some of the better known touring bands I have been fortunate to be supported by Knight Sound and Light in Hanwell to supply PA and lights. We are one of the rare venues with plentiful free parking and are also only a few minutes' walk from Richmond Station. The 490 bus also goes to Pools on The Park which is adjacent to us. I am particularly excited by our first gig of 2017 on 20 Jan with Will Johns and Friends. Will is the nephew of Eric Clapton, who of course played here with The Yardbirds in '63. The "Friends" include Guy Pratt, who has played with everyone from Madonna to Michael Jackson, Pink Floyd / David Gilmour, (through the 80s and 90s) Jasmine Rodgers (daughter of Paul Rodgers), Malcolm Bruce (son of Jack Bruce of Cream). One difficulty we have is that due to our history we have several requests a week from acts who want to perform here, but we are unable to satisfy for a number of reasons. We have to keep quality of our music high, we only do 11 gigs a year and we try to be loyal to the bands who have supported us in the past 5 years, however we also fit in one or two new acts if we can. Tickets in advance are usually available on wegottickets.com via a link on our website otherwise on the door. Entry prices will range from £10 depending on the act.

That's brilliant. I know Will, he used to play at our Jam. He kept it quiet about Eric but we did hope he would come along for a play one day! And yes Guy is up there with Pino as the UK's top session bass man I think. We will go back to the Crawdaddy history shortly, but firstly, as already mentioned, most people, including me know your music activities but not a lot about you in general. So may I ask, where did you grow up, how and when did you get into music, what kind of work did you do, did you always live around here? Where do you live now, and how long have you been in the area?

I have somewhat of a complicated background having come to the UK from Hungary as a child following the '56 Revolution. We initially stayed with a wonderful family in a very upmarket part of Kent where Mrs. Thatcher's house was on my paper round. I ended up at a local boarding school which had a strong show biz connection, so at one time I shared a room with Anthony Bygraves (son of Max) and Malcolm McDowell (Clockwork Orange, If etc.). I was always fond of music from the time I first heard some jazz as a child in Hungary, and as soon as I was old enough and had some money I started frequenting music clubs in the West End, from the 2 I's coffee shop to Ronnie Scott's, Marquee, Flamingo, 100 Club and many others. I spent most of my working life with BEA/British Airways in a variety of jobs and retiring early as a Project Manager, a job I thoroughly enjoyed. I have lived in the Acton/Chiswick area for close to 40 years, but I seem to spend more time in Richmond and Twickenham these days as both my wife and I are volunteers at Richmond Theatre and have also made many friends through the Crawdaddy.

Please tell us a little about the original Crawdaddy Club. I know it was at the Station Hotel, Richmond (Now 'One Kew Road') then moved to the Richmond Athletic Ground but how did it start and who started it? And weren't there some famous guests at gigs there in the 60s?

You are quite right in saying that the original Crawdaddy was at the Station Hotel opposite Richmond Station, but once The Rolling Stones started playing there the venue was too small to cope with the demand and after a few months moved across to The Richmond Athletic Ground. We are fortunate to be one of the rare venues left where we are still in the original room. The Club has an amazing history started by Giorgio Gomelsky who became the Rolling Stones and Yard-

birds first manager. In my view his contribution to the British music scene has never been adequately recognised. Sadly, he passed away last year in New York and we held a tribute to him in September. Many other famous bands have appeared here in the past including The Who, Manfred Mann, The Downliners Sect etc. and although The Beatles never played here they did pop in to see The Stones. It's worth having a look at the history section of our website (crawdaddyclubrichmond.com) with a timeline which was put together by a young American student, Amanda Franquet as part of her university dissertation. She did an amazing job.

What led you to re-start the Crawdaddy brand?? And when did that happen? Had the name ever been used in all those decades in between? Did you have to ask the permission of the guy who did it back in the 60s? Did you and do you, do this alone? If not who works with you?

My original plan in 2012 was to revive the Richmond Jazz Festival which also began at the Richmond Athletic Ground, but I was unable to raise sufficient funds. Reviving The Crawdaddy was pure chance when a potential sponsor asked if I'd ever thought about reviving The Crawdaddy. To be honest it never occurred to me, but after I spoke to my wife who I knew used to be a regular in the sixties I approached Richmond Athletic who agreed to let me start on a trial basis. The rest is more history. As the Crawdaddy name had become an almost generic name and I wasn't able to contact Giorgio at the time I was able to go ahead with it. A couple of years later I was able to pass a message on to Giorgio, so he was aware of it. I am very fortunate to have the support of my wife Sylvie who not only looks after all the admin, but helps out on the door with my friends Simon and Richard who are a huge help in many ways.

It's amazing that your gigs are in the same room, virtually unchanged, that the Stones played in back in the day. Was there any reason apart from that, that you chose that venue and not the old Station Hotel?

Yes, as I mentioned earlier the room is the original where the Stones, Yardbirds, The Who and many others played although it does look a bit different, The original beams where people used to climb on and hangs upside down are now plastered over, there is carpeting, a large modern bar, proper toilets and very importantly for our audiences, plenty of seating. Although I did consider the Station Hotel initially, the place bears no resemblance to the original and the Crawdaddy was only there for a few months before the move to RAG. Most of the history is where we are now.



I was also amazed that you got original Stone Bill Wyman down to the opening night! How on earth did that happen!?

I have a good friend, Geoff Grange, the lead vocalist/Guitarist/harmonica player with The Blue Bishops who opened for us. He played with Bill's Rhythm Kings in the past, so he invited him along.

Did he get up and play? Did he stay long? What did he have to say?

Although Bill wanted to keep a low profile he relaxed once the audience left and stayed on for a couple of drinks afterwards. He was the one who told me about people climbing up on to the beams. He also pointed out that the band used to play in the opposite corner.

I won't ask you to name favourite artists as I know you love everyone who plays - otherwise you wouldn't book them! But are there 2 or 3 nights that stand out as memorable for any particular reason? We all know that sometimes, some nights, everything is right, the vibe is great and things just take off and become very special.

We've had a number of very special nights, but the standout one was the second show with Jo Harman and Friends, when the friends included a couple of members of Kokomo and some of the top British session players. That show was a sell-out and Jo is now becoming a well-known artist, she has recorded an album at the world famous Muscle Shoals Studios in Nashville, headlined at some major festivals as well as the Brooklyn Bowl at the O2 at this year's Bluesfest. She has a show in New York next year at the same venue where Adele made her US breakthrough. I have become good friends with her manager and hope to work with her again sometime, although it's unlikely it will be at The Crawdaddy.

What kinds of people come to your gigs? Different ages? Are they all local or do people travel to enjoy the Club?

Our audiences tend to be older than the average music goer, but they are enthusiastic, good fun and knowledgeable. The dance floor gets good use. It's always good to see a few younger people who absolutely love the vibe. The majority of people are fairly local, but we do have some regulars who come from as far away as Oxford, Reading and even Somerset. We have also had a number of overseas visitors from the US, Australia, New Zealand Germany and Argentina.

That's fantastic that people look up the Club when they are in town!

I remember you doing separate, summer events at the Riverside, including one I played at with Alix Anthony and loved

it... and also an all day festival you have done 2 or 3 times maybe? Please tell us about these events and their present and future status.

Those summer events by Richmond Riverside have been the highlights of my time as a promoter. They were both very special with such a fabulous turnout. We had planned to repeat it again this summer, but we came across too many complications with the council and decided to pull out. We may try again next year. One of my proudest achievements has been the success of our annual charity event, The Phoenix Festival. We will be in our 4th year next July having started with some very helpful sponsorship from Tenant Finder in year one raising a reasonable £500 to over £2500 this year. We have started planning for Sunday 9 July and I am pleased to say that support from the music community has been superb already.

Thanks for the Tenant Finder mention. Do you do posters for the gigs? I'm sure people with shopfronts such as me would be happy to put them up. Maybe people can ask you to email them those?

I usually just have flyers printed which Richmond Council distribute for us and I leave some in a few pubs and coffee shops, although I am not averse to having a few posters printed.

I think people could print them if you emailed them? I can certainly do that.

I see you as a Blues fan but I think you like a lot more than that. Please tell us about your musical tastes. Do you play an instrument yourself?

I have a fairly eclectic taste in music, although I favour blues, soul and Motown. Sadly I don't play an instrument, but many of my muso friends say that it's never too late. I guess I might try the bass sometime!!

Am I right that your wife and you do a lot of travelling? Is that a big interest and what are your other interests outside of the Crawdaddy?

Yes, indeed. We love to travel and now have the time since we are both retired from full time work. I am also a big tennis fan having played regularly until last year. I also used to run a travel business looking after some of the top pros during the late sixties/seventies. My clients included Boris Becker, Sue Barker, Jo Durie, David and John Lloyd, Jeremy Bates, Virginia Wade and many others. I am holding the Phoenix Festival in the middle Sunday of Wimbledon in the hope that some players might come along

What are your future plans for the Crawdaddy Club, in 2017 and beyond?

2017 is already planned with acts booked for the whole year although dates for the latter part are not confirmed. I also hope to get involved with a couple of festivals in the summer. As for anything beyond that, I am not so sure.

How can people find out more about the Club and about gigs?

We are on most of the online platforms: Facebook facebook.com/crawdaddyclubrichmond
web – www.crawdaddyclubrichmond.com, Twitter @crawdaddyCR

OK thanks. Any other points you would like to add about the Club?

It's worth adding that we genuinely have such a friendly vibe that we have a number of single women as regulars. Many musos pop in to see other bands and just chill out at the bar and are always happy to chat to people

Thanks a lot Mike, I really enjoy the fact that you love what you do so much; your enthusiasm and warmth are I think, part of the 'brand' of the club now.

Well, I love doing what I do and am truly happy to have made so many friends through music.

I'll drink to that! And I really will, at the Crawdaddy, as soon as possible.... Thanks so much and good luck with the Club and with next year's gigs.

The Crawdaddy Club nights take place in the Clubhouse at:

Richmond Athletic Ground, Twickenham Rd, Richmond TW9 2SF. Richmond station is a 5 minute walk away and is 15 mins on Fast Trains from London Waterloo in Central London.

That's it! Thanks for reading and if you think I should be mentioning someone here, let me know.

Dave

David McGeachie runs Tenant Finder / DMG Sales and is a part time musician, he worked in record labels in the 80s & 90s and has been on the Twickenham music scene for over 15 years

Facebook: tenant finder Twitter: @tenantfinderuk, Web: www.tenant-finder.co.uk