

Twickenham & Richmond TRIBUNE

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22nd May 2020

T&RT

TickerTape - News in Brief

Free laptops keep Richmond children online

As families across the borough continue to face time at home, many children without computer access could find themselves unable to engage with essential social care provision, online schoolwork, and the important ability to virtually connect with friends and family.

In an effort to keep the borough connected, Achieving for Children, on behalf of Richmond Council, worked swiftly to identify 182 children without access to a computer, and thanks to a Government grant have been able to roll out a large number of laptops to those in most need.

Disappointment at lack of community consideration on new construction rules

Last week, Communities Secretary, Robert Jenrick MP introduced the new measures with no consultation with local authorities, saying that the changes were part of the Government's plan to reopen the economy and that the new rules would make it easier for construction workers to operate safely. The statement confirms "Developers should expect their local planning authority to grant temporary changes to construction working hours until 9pm or later, 6 days a week, wherever possible and where construction working hours are controlled by planning condition."

However, whilst Richmond Council appreciates that having more flexible working hours will make it easier for the construction industry to observe social distancing, there are concerns that this new rule could be misused and have a negative impact on local residents.

The new measure only applies to Planning Permissions with conditions restricting the hours of construction works on sites.

Fourteen eCargo bikes given to local businesses and charities

Following a successful bid by Richmond Council, a selection of local charities and businesses, as well as services in Richmond Council, will soon have electric cargo bikes to replace journeys currently carried out by vehicles.

The bikes are part of the Energy Saving Trust's eCargo Bike Grant Fund Local Authority Scheme, where the Council was successful in its bid for funding made available by the Department for Transport. It received £62,000 to purchase the eCargo bikes and equipment for use in the borough.

[Visit the News page for more stories](#)

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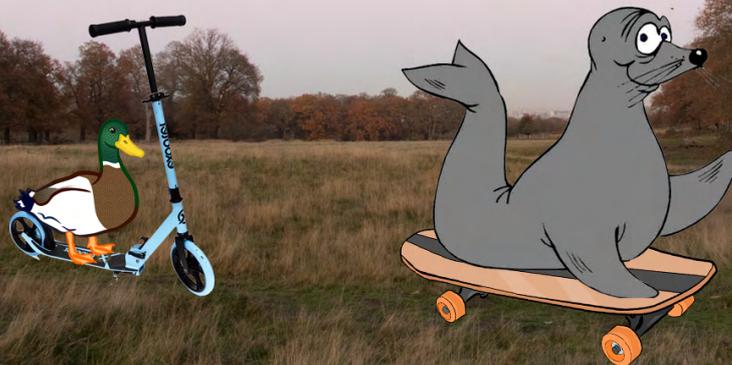
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TwickerSeal

With the wonderful weather we've been having, and the recent changes to lockdown rules, TwickerSeal thought it would be great to get on his bicycle and enjoy Richmond Park without those pesky motorists while they are still barred from the park (although, apparently, all the cars are currently stuck queuing for Townmead Road Waste and Recycling Centre). But lo, what do the signs say? Cyclists are not allowed in Richmond Park! Quelle dommage!

But all was not lost as it seems that skateboards, scooters and rollerblades are welcome, so TwickerSeal returned with his trusty board and TwickerDuck tagged along with his scooter; and they don't even have to wear helmets.



COVID-19 – this week's updates

Teresa Read

The use of Artificial Intelligence

The School of Public Health at Harvard said this week that researchers around the world are using Artificial Intelligence (AI) to assist in diagnosis and drug research to stem the tide of COVID-19. The team said that the biggest success has been to identify drugs which can be repurposed to fight the virus.

<https://www.hsph.harvard.edu/news/features/artificial-intelligence-health-covid/>

Testing the Effectiveness of Face Masks

At the University of Edinburgh's School of Engineering Dr Ignazio Maria Viola co-ordinated a project into the effectiveness of wearing face masks to protect wearers against the virus. It was concluded that wearing masks could reduce the spread of COVID-19; wearing a face covering was estimated to reduce the forward distance of exhaled breath by over ninety percent. Masks must form a tight seal around the face – covering the mouth and nose.

<https://www.ed.ac.uk/covid-19-response/latest-news/face-coverings-covid-19-transmission-risk>

Contact Tracing

Meanwhile, the government has been urged to urgently increase contact tracing – a lesson learned from the SARS outbreak which formed part of an article in this newspaper early on in the COVID-19 outbreak. (The Hong Kong police won an award in 2004 for their successful contact tracing work – “Policing Disease” – leading to the eradication of SARS).

How Long Does It Last?

Some people take longer to recover from the COVID-19 virus than others. Some do not seem to know that they have the virus, others take two weeks to get better but there are cases of those who seem to recover only to experience all the symptoms again; it is said that some can take months to recover.

I Should Have Seen It Coming

One doctor's personal experience of COVID-19.

<http://www.emro.who.int/egy/egypt-news/lessons-and-warnings-one-doctors-covid-19-story.html>

Be Alert

As lockdowns start to ease it is imperative to be aware of your surroundings and social distancing. Remember that the COVID-19 virus can survive for up to seventy-two hours on plastic and stainless steel and up to twenty-four hours on cardboard.



Be **SUPPORTIVE**

Be **CAREFUL**

Be **ALERT**

Be **KIND**

Be **READY** to fight
#COVID19

For the latest health advice, go to:
www.who.int/COVID-19



UNITED NATIONS



World Health
Organization

Local Statistics

The In Your Area website gave the following statistics for COVID-19 on Friday 22 May: 406 confirmed cases in Richmond upon Thames, 513 in Kingston-upon-Thames, 724 in Hounslow. Updates are also available from the BBC on their Coronavirus UK Map.

Number of Deaths from WHO Situation Reports:

At the time of writing the World Health Organization Situation Report for Friday 22 May 2020 gave the following details for countries with high death rates: 91,527 in the USA, 36,042 in the UK, 32,486 in Italy, 28,164 in France, 27,940 in Spain, 18,859 in Brazil, 9,186 in Belgium, 8,174 in Germany, 7,249 in Iran, 6,090 in Mexico, 6,062 in Canada, 5,775 in the Netherlands, 4,645 in China, 3,871 in Sweden and a total of 327,738 deaths worldwide.

Borough View

By Graeme Stoten

'Ham House'



Surviving as both a rare and wonderful example of early 17th Century elegance and grandeur, Ham House was originally built by Sir Thomas Vavaseur. Remaining virtually intact to this present day, the internal decoration is largely attributed to William Ramsey and his wife Catherine (1626) with further extensive structural alterations undertaken by his daughter, Elizabeth and husband John Maitland In the 1670's. Originally gifted by Charles I, it is now designated as a Grade 1 listed building held by the National Trust.



REMEMBER. DUNKIRK.

by Doug Goodman

THIS WEEK IS THE 80TH ANNIVERSARY OF THE EVACUATION OF TROOPS FROM THE BEACHES OF DUNKIRK AFTER THE ALLIED ARMIES FAILED TO HALT THE GERMAN INVASION OF BELGIUM AND FRANCE

The annual commemoration to mark the occasion, when the 'Little Ships' return to Dunkirk, cannot be held this year but we can still remember the 68,000 troops who were killed, wounded or captured during the momentous events exactly 80 years ago. Churchill called it a 'colossal military disaster' but the evacuation of military personnel by 800 vessels became known as the 'Miracle of Dunkirk'. Operation Dynamo was organised by Vice Admiral Bertram Ramsey from his headquarters in Dover. The call went out to all owners of seaworthy boats to assemble at ports on the south coast. Many came from Thames boatyards and Teddington Lock was one of the assembly points before the craft sailed down river.



Troops Evacuated



Display in Dunkirk's Museum



Film Poster

The evacuation took place between 26 May and 4 June: initially it was believed that around 40,000 troops would be rescued but the Royal Navy and the 'Little Ships' really did perform a miracle by carrying over 338,000 men across the Channel to the safety of British ports. The operation provided the UK with the nucleus of a new army to defend the country in the event of invasion. Many in this army went back four years later to France on D Day. But almost all the troops' equipment was abandoned in France including 2,472 large guns, 20,000 motor bikes and 65,000 vehicles. The six week battle for France had been costly.



Dunkirk from the air



Evacuation Harbour



Seafront

The 2017 film 'Dunkirk' by Christopher Nolan portrays the events of 1940 in amazing detail. It was shot on location and employed 1,100 locals as extras. The Dynamo Museum in the city gives a clear insight into the evacuation through photos, diagrams and models as well as having a fascinating collection of memorabilia. The seafront, destroyed during the battle and the beaches, once littered with abandoned vehicles, are now a popular holiday spot. Dunkirk with its history, excellent restaurants and leisure activities is a great place for a long weekend break. DFDS has several sailings daily from Dover.

OPERATION DYNAMO

80th Commemorate Anniversary Cancelled Due to COVID- 19

Dunkirk Little Ship, Princess Freda, was due to set off from Ramsgate with 75 of her compatriots this week to mark the 80th anniversary of Operation Dynamo. The Little Ships assisted with the rescue of British and Allied Forces from the beaches of Dunkirk in late May and early June of 1940.

Every five years since 1965 a commemorative flotilla accompanied by Royal Navy vessels makes this pilgrimage with French and Belgian military vessels also in attendance. This year was to be quite historic as it would be the last return where veterans of the operation would be present in Ramsgate and Dunkirk.

There is a possibility of making the return in 2021.



Colliers Launches have been the proud custodians of Princess Freda since 2003. In a labour of love, the family carefully restored her and joined the flotilla in 2005, 2010 and 2015. In 2015, they were accompanied by veterans Michael Bentall and Garth Wright, pictured below. The lady who sits between them is Lauren, a Royal Naval Wren, who currently serves aboard HMS Defender.

With the dignity she deserves, Princess Freda is lovingly maintained but alas due to COVID-19 her days may be numbered and a fragment of our Great British heritage lost. The government lockdown measures mean the effective cancellation of the passenger boat season, financial hardship for Collier's business and difficult decisions around the viability of operating next year.

This is an S.O.S. for help. Please go to their crowdfunding page and DONATE NOW.

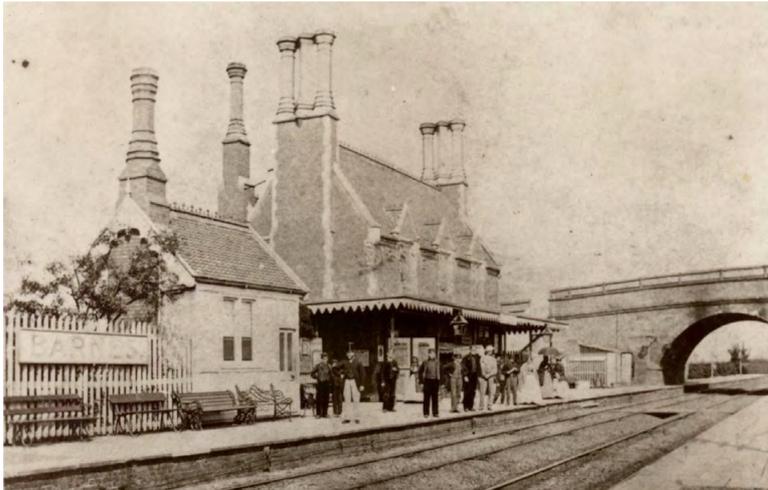
www.crowdfunder.co.uk/mayday-river-thames-family-business-sinking



PART 180 BARNES RAILWAY STATION

The station at Barnes was opened on 27 July 1846 when the line to Richmond was built. When the first section of the Hounslow Loop Line was opened on 22 August 1849, Barnes became a junction station.

Grade II listed, it was designed by the architect John Thomas Emmett in 1846 and is the only survivor of four brick-built Tudor Gothic-style stations on the Richmond branch, the others being Putney, Mortlake, and Richmond. The original Barnes station ticket office, adjacent to Platform 1, is now privately owned.



There are two railway stations in Barnes. The other, named Barnes Bridge, was opened on 12 March 1916 on the Surrey side of the River Thames, on the embankment leading to Barnes Railway Bridge, from which it takes its name.

Our first image showing Barnes Railway station is a very early photograph taken about 1860. This image was subsequently used as a postcard in the early 1900s.

Our next image is of Station Road and this appeared on a postcard in Edwardian times, probably c1904.

The Barnes rail crash, in which 13 people were killed and 41 injured, occurred near Barnes station on 1 December 1955. The Southern Region electric passenger train travelling from London Waterloo to Windsor & Eton collided with the rear of a LMS class hauled freight train from Herne Hill to Brent at about 35 mph.



The accident was found to have been caused by irregular operation of the block apparatus by the signaller at Barnes Junction. The Barnes signaller had forgotten about the freight train and used his release key to clear the signals.

One of the passengers killed was Bernard Crouch, an England table tennis international and world championship medallist.

Just along the road from Barnes Station was a pub/hotel which was of course a common sight throughout the UK in the early days of railways. It made sense to have a watering hole next to each station. Many still exist today but sadly this one is no longer. Originally named the

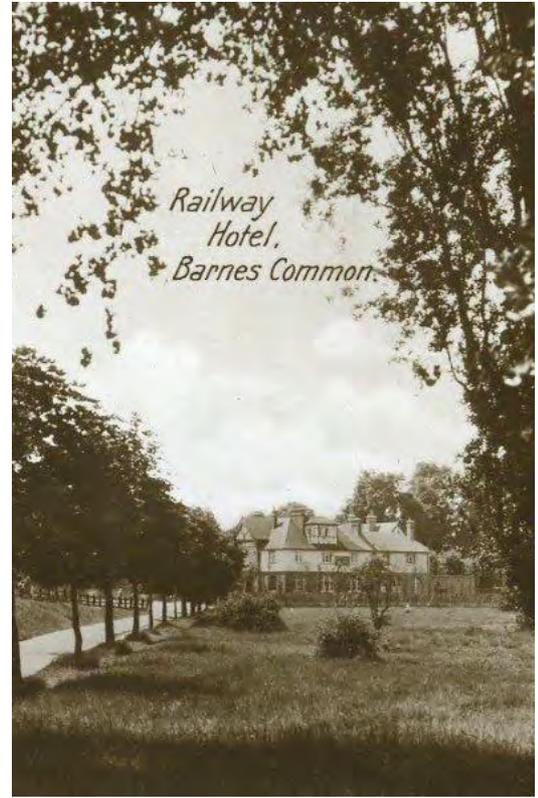


Railway Tavern we have a postcard from 1905 showing it as the Tavern and it must have been re-named prior to 1929 when our last postcard shows it as the Railway Hotel at the junction of the Upper Richmond Road and Rocks Lane.

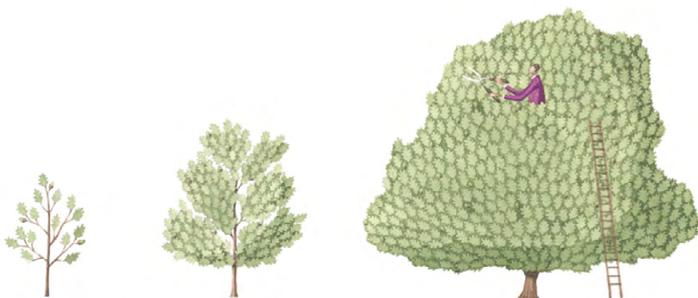
Watneys re-named the pub the Red Rover in 1972. It had strange red plastic seating and was supposed

to resemble the inside of a bus. Horrible! It finally closed for residential development in 1995. I don't know about you but I feel strongly that pubs that have often traded for hundreds of years should not have their names changed by so called clever developers and designers who give no thought to place or history. Thankfully we have seen a few of these regain their original names in the last few years. The Rising Sun and Royal Oak both on Richmond Road in Twickenham are two that spring to mind. That's my rant of the week – sorry!

Today Barnes station is in Travelcard Zone 3. It is seven miles down the line from London Waterloo. The station and all trains serving it are operated by South Western Railway. It is the nearest station for Queen Mary's Hospital; Roehampton Club; Rosslyn Park R.F.C. grounds; and the University of Roehampton.



With many of us confined to home at present it may be that you are using the time to tidy a few drawers or have a bit of a clear-out. If you trip over any old postcards, old envelopes with stamps on, or photograph albums that you would consider parting with, I'd be very interested in arranging to see them. Please contact me on 07875 578398 or by email at: alanwinter192@hotmail.com I am happy to pay cash for anything like that which I find of interest. So don't throw old postcards etc. in the skip or recycling bins. Show them to me first! Thanks, stay safe and well.



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darryl parkin

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RFS The Best of our Recent Historic Screenings

Issue 9, 22nd May 2020

THE ANGELS' SHARE

A new series for those of you who are missing Richmond Film Society's screenings or, indeed, trips to the cinema generally as a result of the COVID-19 crisis. Their committee is producing a number of weekly recommendations of films screened during the last 20 years that were extremely well received by their audiences. Should the notes reproduced below entice you to try and catch-up with this recommendation, then you should be able to do so, as it is available on streaming services and for purchase as DVD/Blu-Ray discs from the online retailers as indicated below.

RFS Context: **THE ANGELS' SHARE** was 712th film screened by RFS on 15th October 2013. **The Angel's Share** was the third ranked film of Season 51, it got an approval mark of 90% from those attending (The joint top film from Season 51, **A Hijacking** (joint top with **Untouchable**) and the third from top film **A Royal Affair** have already featured in our Best of our Recent Historic Screenings as **Issue 3** & **Issue 6** respectively). **The Angel's Share** can be streamed from Amazon Prime and the discs are available from Amazon and others.

THE ANGELS' SHARE

Country: UK, 2012
Director: Ken Loach
Screenplay: Paul Laverty
Language: Scottish
Editor: Jonathan Morris
Music: George Fenton
Cinematography: Robbie Ryan
Running Time: 101 mins., colour

Leading Players:

Paul Brannigan (Robbie)
Siobhan Reilly (Leonie)
John Henshaw (Harry)
Gary Maitland (Albert)
William Ruane (Rhino)
Jasmin Riggins (Mo)
Scott Dymond (Willy)

We start in familiar Ken Loach territory. Robbie is sentenced to community service. His first session is interrupted when his girlfriend goes into labour. Her uncles then beat him up at the hospital. This is looking to be an unremittingly grim film.

Then, during a visit to a distillery (arranged as a reward to the group on community service by Harry, their warm-hearted supervisor), Robbie discovers a rare talent for whisky tasting. This impresses



Thaddeus (Roger Allam), a whisky dealer, who offers him a job. The group also hear that a unique single barrel of whisky (the Malt Mill) is going to be auctioned.

Robbie agrees to meet with a victim of his former violent crimes. Afterwards, Robbie's girlfriend makes it clear that she does not want her son growing up around violence and long-term feuds. Robbie, realises that he can't continue living under threat of assault on himself and his family and decides to steal Malt Mill with the help of his community service group.

At times during the heist you wonder if he might have been better off on his own; especially with regard to Albert, played by binman Gary Maitland. Robbie certainly shows remarkable resource in the face of adversity and accidents and trades daringly on his newly found talent.

So it's a likeable, generous, albeit slightly immoral, film after all. Has Loach decided that a bit of wish fulfilment and respect for everyone's contribution gets a message across just as well as grimness, or is he just having fun? Or was he simply ensuring that, after the overdubbed DVD version of Bill Forsyth's **That Sinking Feeling**, we can see a Glasgow kids-trying-to-make-good heist movie with original accents? Either way, the jury at the 2012 Cannes Film Festival awarded him their prize.

In case you did not know, The Angels' Share is the name given to the proportion of whisky that evaporates from the whisky barrel during maturation. Whether our group of petty criminals are angels after all is for the audience to judge.

Jonathan Earthy with acknowledgements to Wikipedia and Jane Graham (The Guardian)

L E T T E R S

Dear Editor,

I would like to let your readers know the support the British Heart Foundation is offering people with heart and circulatory disease throughout the coronavirus pandemic.

People with heart and circulatory diseases are at increased risk of complications if they develop Covid-19. Heart disease is one of the most common pre-existing health conditions in people who have died with Covid-19.

Understanding what lockdown and the different risk levels mean for people with heart and circulatory disease has been one of the most common enquiries, and the lockdown changes announced last week in England have raised further questions.

The uncertainty of the situation means we can't answer every question, but we can often reassure people who might feel anxious and provide information and support specific to their condition. Since the pandemic began, we've seen an unprecedented demand for this service. In response we've extended our Helpline opening hours, added to its specialist nursing team and launched an appeal to help us continue providing this service.

If you're feeling unwell or concerned about your heart condition, it's still vital that you use NHS services as you always would. However, our team of nurses are available if you're trying to understand what the pandemic means for you or the health of a loved one.

To contact the BHF's Heart Helpline call 0300 330 3311 or email_hearthelpline@bhf.org.uk.

Yours faithfully,

Maureen Talbot

Head of Clinical Support, British Heart Foundation

Johnsons Shoes - A Cut Above the Rest - Falls Victim to COVID-19

By Berkley Driscoll

Family-run business Johnsons Shoes has called in the administrators citing the COVID-19 pandemic and subsequent lockdown as “the final nail in the coffin for a business that was already struggling before the pandemic struck, like many other retailers.” Rising rents, business rates and increasing competition were also said to have added to the company’s difficulties.
Johnsons Shoes Teddington

Johnsons’ shoe shops are well known in the borough, with shops in Teddington, Twickenham, Richmond and East Sheen (as well as shops in Windsor, Newbury, Staines, New Malden, Walton-on-Thames, Northwood, Beaconsfield and Farnham).

Over the years many of the borough’s schoolchildren have been fitted for their school shoes at Johnsons, who were school uniform suppliers to numerous schools in the borough, including Lady Eleanor Holles, Newland House School, St Catherine’s School and Jack & Jill. Johnsons Shoes Twickenham

Ham resident Suzanna Smith said *“I have been buying shoes at Johnsons since my children - now grown up - were at St Catherine’s School. The visit to Johnsons to buy two pairs of shoes - indoors and outdoors - is a memorable experience.”*

All 145 staff, who are currently on furlough, will keep their jobs while a buyer is sought for the business.

Incorporated on 3rd July 1970, Johnsons should be preparing to celebrate its 50th anniversary; we hope a sympathetic buyer can be found.



Johnsons Teddington



Johnsons Twickenham

Photos by Berkley Driscoll

Clean-up begins as Ham travellers leave

Following the departure of an unauthorised traveller camp in Ham, the Council will commence a deep clean of the site to remove any litter or waste items.

The unauthorised camp arrived on Thursday 14 May and in normal circumstances the Council acts rapidly and works with the Police to ensure that travellers move on. Often this has been done in the past within a matter of days.

The pandemic has however brought along new factors that councils must consider in decision making when contemplating enforcement action against camps. This includes new Government guidance relating to the particular vulnerability of gypsies and travellers families/groups to COVID-19.

This particular group in Ham included families with young children and a number of pregnant women. The Council has a duty of care to all those who reside in the borough – particularly those in the most need.



After careful consideration of the new Guidance and with legal and Public Health representation, the Council and its Environment officers agreed that they would not be evicted in the current circumstances. Officers liaised with the travellers and they highlighted their intention to only stay in Ham for a few weeks at the most.

Late on the 20 May, the travellers departed the site – leaving a significant amount of rubbish and waste. Council officers have carried out an inspection and a deep clean of the area will be conducted today and tomorrow, to ensure that it is safe for residents to use.

Cllr Julia Neden-Watts, Chair of the Environment and Sustainability Committee at Richmond Council, said:

“There are a number of boroughs around the country who face similar issues regarding travellers and all are working within the current Government guidance.

“Now that they have left Ham, our focus will be making sure the area is sanitised and safe for everyone to use.

“I would like to thank Ham residents for their patience throughout this time.”



Phillyrea latifolia- The green olive or mock privet

Phillyrea latifolia is an olive like Mediterranean plant , sometimes called the green olive, which thrives in this country and although slow growing will eventually make a small handsome evergreen tree. In spring Phillyrea has clusters of small, white flowers which are followed by tiny, back-blue fruit although in the United Kingdom it will only fruit after an exceptionally warm summer.



Phillyrea was very popular from the 16th–18th century in Britain for planting in landscapes and gardens however appears to have lost popularity after that but is

still used in restoration plantings of gardens such as the restoration at Marble Hill Park. Hence at Marble Hill Park we are making use of this lovely evergreen plant in the woodland quarters as it will give the planted areas a structure and density that will be pleasing to both visitors and wildlife.



Phillyrea may however be making a comeback, as with the infestation of Box caterpillar(particularly in West London) which is devastating Box hedges, there is an increased demand for evergreen plants such as Phillyrea that can be used as evergreen hedging.

It makes a good coastal plant as it is tolerant of maritime winds and responds well to being clipped and used for topiaries, so if you are having problems with the Box caterpillar on your Box hedge it is worth looking at some of the alternatives such as Phillyrea latifolia!



Council urges restraint as waste and recycling centre reopens

Residents are asked to “think long and hard” before they visit Townmead this long weekend and if they do visit - to check the guidance before they travel and switch off their engines whilst queuing. In addition, all households are reminded of the bank holiday changes to their weekly collection service next week.

Townmead Road Waste and Recycling Centre reopened on Monday. However, in order to ensure the safety of residents and staff and to ensure access to Mortlake Crematorium, there are significant rules in place regarding when and how people can access the centre. This includes residents only able to visit on certain days, based on their car registration number (see below). Since the centre reopened queues have been up to two hours long at certain points of the day.

New signage is being installed on the roads leading up to the Centre to remind drivers to switch off their car engines whilst queueing.

Townmead will be open from 8am to 4pm on the bank holiday (Monday 25 May).

Opening times for residents with ‘Even’ registration number plates based on 2nd digit e.g. XX52 XXX

Date	Opening hours
Friday 22 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Sunday 24 May	Open 9am to 4pm
Tuesday 26 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Thursday 28 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Saturday 30 May	Open 8am to 4pm

Opening Times for residents with ‘Odd’ registration number plates based on 2nd digit e.g. XX03 XXX plus old UK style, foreign, personalised etc.

Date	Opening hours
Saturday 23 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Monday 25 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Wednesday 27 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Friday 29 May	Open 8am to 4pm
Sunday 31 May	Open 9am to 4pm

The fortnightly paid for Garden Waste collection service has also restarted and the paid for Bulky Waste collection service is now available to book online, with collections commencing on the 26 May.

As this Monday (25 May) is a bank holiday, all residents are reminded that the Council will carry out general waste, food waste and recycling collections for domestic properties one day later than usual, immediately following the bank holiday.

For example, Monday collections will happen on the Tuesday, and Tuesday collections will happen on the Wednesday. Normal collections will resume on Monday 1 June.

Normal collection day	Actual collection day
Monday 25 May	Tuesday 26 May
Tuesday 26 May	Wednesday 27 May
Wednesday 27 May	Thursday 28 May
Thursday 28 May	Friday 29 May
Friday 29 May	Saturday 30 May

Not a lot of people know this!

By Sue Hamilton-Miller

“That the double yellow rose is of Eastern origin is certain; and that it is Persian is probable, for Sir Henry Willock found, in that country, it, or a variety of it, which is now growing in the Garden of the Horticultural Society” (The Gardeners’ Chronicle, 1841)



Surely even the most sceptical of my friends will allow me the link between the Chelsea Flower Show, which should have taken place this week, and Sir Henry Willock (1788 – 1858) a resident of Richmond House (sometime between 1836-45), who introduced this beautiful rose to this country in 1837. It is still on sale today and is known as the Persian Yellow old rose (*Rosa foetida*).

Because of his *“intelligence, knowledge of the language, conciliatory manners, and exemplary conduct, public and private,”* Sir Henry had been placed, in 1815, in charge of the British Mission at the Court of Tehran in Persia. While he was there he built up an art collection of Persian art, four items of which I believe can still be seen at the British Museum. He also had an important collection of coins of ancient and modern Persian dynasties that he gave to the East India House Museum, though where they are now I don’t know as the East India House was demolished and the Lloyds of London building erected on the site.

Maybe his coin and art collections were made possible by Legacy payments to Antiguan estate owners for the loss of their unpaid slaves with the abolition of slavery. The Willock family owned four plantations in Antigua and Sir Henry was the beneficiary of the money as the original recipients had died. Their land is now a U.S. Naval Base. An earlier resident of Richmond House made all his money from slavery and I hope the opportunity will present itself for me to tell you more about him, though I’m not sure how!

Sir Henry Willock was Chairman of the East India Company from 1844-47 and *“an able, upright and honoured member until it ceased”*.

In 1827 he married Elizabeth Davis and they had 9 children in 14 years. His eldest son, Captain Francis Willock, died during the Indian Mutiny in 1857. A handsome mural monument of white Carrara marble was erected to him in “Mortlake Church, Surrey”.



Sir Henry died a year later in Castelnau House in Mortlake in 1858 *“after a life of usefulness, honour and domestic felicity”*. He is buried in Mortlake Cemetery. A sketch of Castelnau House, done by his son, George B Willock, is in the Borough Art Collection.

In his Will Sir Henry Willock, (Knight of the Lion and Sun)*, left money to various members of his family, and to his wife jewellery that included sapphires set in gold with diamonds, and rings given to him by Emperor Nicholas of Russia and the Prince Royal of Persia.



New Mayor of Richmond upon Thames

Cllr Geoff Acton has been formally sworn in at a virtual Council meeting as the 56th Mayor of Richmond upon Thames.

Cllr Acton, originally from Manchester, represents St Margaret's and North Twickenham for the Liberal Democrats and has lived in the Borough since 1998. Cllr Acton has been a Councillor since 2006, he was Deputy Mayor in 2008 – 2009 and has been Business and Economics Lead since 2018.

He begins his Mayoral year after a career in marketing and communications in the Automotive Industry. He still works as a business consultant and lives in Twickenham with his wife who works for Kew Gardens.

Cllr Acton will serve Richmond as Mayor for the next 12 months and has chosen to raise money for South West London Environment Network (SWLEN, which has recently merged with the Environment Trust) and Dose of Nature.

The charities have been chosen to raise awareness of the impact of Climate Change and Biodiversity Loss within the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames, and the practical and realistic steps local residents and businesses can take to make a positive difference. This will support the borough's objective to become carbon neutral by 2030.



SWLEN enables and empowers residents and communities to work together to protect and enhance the environment in South West London.

Dose of Nature is a mental health charity that improves the mental health and wellbeing of individuals through increased engagement with the natural world.

Cllr Acton said:

"I am very much looking forward to being Mayor of Richmond upon Thames and representing our fantastic borough. The next 12 months are bound to be challenging as the COVID-19 emergency continues, but I look forward to working hard to make sure the borough recovers as strongly as possible.

"My chosen charities do fantastic work locally. The current crisis has shown the importance of nature and the outside world, something I imagine many of us previously took for granted, and it is my hope that this mayoral year will result in a greater focus on their excellent work."

Colin Cooper, Chief Executive of SWLEN, said:

"We are delighted to have been chosen as one of the Mayor's charities of the year by his Worship Cllr Geoff Acton, as well as the opportunity to work alongside our friends at Dose of Nature. We look forward to working with his Worship Cllr Geoff Acton and his Consort, Eileen McManus, over his mayoral year in raising awareness of the importance of protecting and enhancing our local environment, for nature and people, and how we can all reduce our impact on the planet."

Dr Alison Greenwood, Founding Director of Dose of Nature, said:

"We are delighted to have been chosen as one of the new Mayor's charities. Our innovative nature prescriptions have already been highly successful in treating many local people with a wide range of mental health issues. Now, with so many more people suffering from symptoms of anxiety and depression due to the current Covid-19 crisis, the increased recognition from being one of the Mayor's chosen charities will enable us to reach even more of the Borough's most vulnerable people."

Cllr Julia Cambridge, a councillor for East Sheen, will serve as Deputy Mayor. Cllr Paul Hodgins, Leader of the Conservative Opposition Group, seconded both motions for Mayor and Deputy Mayor.

ROCKIN' THE LOCKIN!

**LANDMARK
LIVE!**

SATURDAY 23RD MAY 2020
JOIN US ON FACEBOOK FROM 11.30AM!

FACEBOOK.COM/ROCKINTHELOCKIN

Council will not be removing NHS tribute mural in Whitton

The Leader of the Council, Cllr Gareth Roberts, has stepped in to reassure a local business that the mural painted on their shutters which thanks the NHS for all their hard work during the pandemic will not be removed by the Council.

Whitton Tyres on Nelson Road, Whitton commissioned the mural to say thanks to local health workers, however following a formal complaint from a resident regarding what they considered to be 'graffiti', the Council contacted the owner of the business to discuss the complaint and offer the local removal service if required. This led to an outcry on social media



Cllr Roberts said *“This was a rather unfortunate misunderstanding. As a responsive council we take reports of graffiti seriously and if we receive reports of tagging and other antisocial artworks – we do seek to remove them. However, this isn’t the case here. We received a complaint. We investigated. And now the case is closed. The mural stays.”*

In his letter Cllr Roberts made clear that there was no suggestion that the Council would be considering enforcement action to remove the mural. Cllr Roberts also noted that the mural expressed a fine sentiment of support for the NHS which was entirely in keeping with the public mood.

A spokesperson for the Council added: *“There have been concerns raised on social media that the council ‘demanded’ the removal of the mural. This is not the case.”*

New project to thank the local charities and organisations helping the borough’s pandemic response

#RichmondGivesBack is a new initiative to recognise and celebrate the many local organisations and charities across the borough that are going above and beyond to help during the current coronavirus pandemic.

The project is a series of videos that will give residents an insight into the work that is being delivered by various volunteers and charity workers.

To kickstart the campaign, the Council has created videos with the below organisations:

[FiSH Neighbourhood Care](#)

[Vineyard Community Centre](#)

[South West London Environment Network \(SWLEN\)](#)

[Integrated Neurological Services](#)

[Crossroads Care Richmond & Kingston](#)

[Crosslight Twickenham](#)

The Richmond Council website has [more information on community projects](#). If you would like to showcase the work that you have been doing to help the borough’s coronavirus response, please email fenna.maynard@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk.





"It's not easy being Green" Kermit the Frog



It is getting easier as awareness grows and the young rebel. There is more support for those willing to stand up when it is not popular to do so and this helps voices to be heard and debate to take place. The frogs were making a loud noise in this dipping pool and you can see and hear them here: [Short video on our Flickr](#)



There are wildflowers growing on our verges and gardens which have encouraged wildlife to visit and we have noticed more insects. Birds with young are relishing these wild sources of food. Fresh Water is needed more now for bathing and drinking and keeping the containers clean and free from parasites is the main consideration to promote the health of our visitors. Visit our website to get in contact or read more about us: [River Crane Sanctuary Website](#)

'Dogs on leads' to be compulsory during deer birthing season in Bushy and Richmond Parks

From Monday 18 May until Monday 6 July, dogs will be required to be on a lead in all areas of Richmond and Bushy Parks. Over the next few weeks, 300 baby deer will be born in Richmond and Bushy Parks. The season marks a vulnerable time for female deer, who hide their young in bracken and long grass to conceal them from dogs and other perceived predators. Baby deer in Bushy Park credit Amanda Cook

Deer are excellent mothers and they will be on constant high alert, unable to relax if they see a dog in the vicinity. During the deer birthing season, protective mother deer have been known to give chase and attack dogs, even if they are at a distance and not acting aggressively.

Deer are instinctively frightened of dogs, and this fear has not been helped by recent events, in which 21 separate incidents of dogs chasing deer in Bushy and Richmond Parks have been recorded since the end of March. Of those recorded, two incidents resulted in deer sustaining fatal injuries, including a heavily pregnant deer just weeks away from giving birth. A further two incidents put visitors in harm's way by causing a stampede of deer through park visitors and their families.

Simon Richards, Park Manager at Richmond Park, said: "Unfortunately, deer worrying is not a new occurrence, however over the last few weeks we've received many reports on the issue. We are about to head into deer birthing season, where female deer will fear dogs harming their young and will act defensively.

"We believe strongly that if dogs are not on leads, we will see an increase in dogs chasing deer, a heightened risk of female deer attacking dogs, and a higher incidence of new born deer killed by dogs.

"It is important to emphasise that we always advise that all dogs, irrespective of how good their recall is, be kept on leads during deer birthing season. This is for the wellbeing of our deer, and for the safety of dogs and Map showing deer birthing areas in Richmond Park visitors. This year, for the avoidance of doubt, we will be making it compulsory. We are sorry for any inconvenience caused and would like to stress it's a temporary measure that will end on the 6th July. We thank all our visitors for their support with these measures."

Recently, park management have also noticed an increase in visitors walking their dogs in more remote areas of the parks. This is likely to be because of social distancing, however many of these remote sections of the park, are also quiet refuges for deer and where they give birth. To help dog walkers plan their route in advance, The Royal Parks has published maps which show the deer nursery areas, so that dog walkers know the areas to avoid.



Map showing deer birthing areas in Bushy Park (left)
Map showing deer birthing areas in Richmond Park (right)



Advice to dog walkers:

- Keep your dog on a lead at all times, and in all areas of the parks
- Avoid the nursery areas shaded in orange on the maps. These are typically areas of bracken and long grass where newborn deer could be concealed. These will be signposted but it's wise to plan your walking route in advance.
- If a deer charges, let go of the lead so the dog can run away.

Advice to all visitors:

- Give deer plenty of space. Always keep 50 metres away
- Avoid nursery areas. Deer may act defensively towards visitors if they inadvertently get too close to their young.
- Do not touch a new born deer, even if it's on its own. It is not abandoned, it's mother will be grazing nearby.

To report an injury to a person, dog or deer, please contact:

Richmond Park: 0300 061 2200 or email richmond@royalparks.org.uk

Bushy Park: 0300 061 2250 or email bushy@royalparks.org.uk

If you witness a dog chasing a deer, immediately call the on-call police for Richmond and Bushy Parks on 07920 586546

LOCKDOWN DOESN'T HAVE TO BE BORING!

On **Sunday 24th May**, The Little Surprises Company, who offer surprise gift experiences, will be hosting their annual 'Super Sunday' – a day-long Festival of Fun!

This will be a digital festival celebrating food, wellness and creativity that will allow its guests to enjoy a range of interactive workshops, panel speakers & a marketplace showcasing the brilliant local brands. This is the perfect chance to learn something new, build a 'to-visit list' for post-lock down & meet some great new people. A brilliant way to finish off Mental Health Awareness week - with a dose of joy!

Following the announcement of the Lockdown extensions, Hannah-Beth Clark – founder of The Little Surprises Company decided that she wanted to do something to promote all of the brilliant local lovely businesses that had pivoted to offering fun things to do online. Working part time as a secondary school teacher in an inner London school, she was incredibly aware of the impact that Lockdown was having on families in the community and so decided to combine the two missions and launch this year's 'Super Sunday' early with all profits being donated to London Food Banks.

Last year, Hannah-Beth welcomed over 500 people to her Super Sunday event hosted in a barn in Waterloo, London. Due to Lockdown, the festival will be hosted online this year which means guests can join from anywhere in the world! With over 50 brands showcasing their brilliant businesses, visitors can join cookalongs with their kids, learn to make espresso martinis & and finish off their evening laughing along with some comedy heroes, Harry Baker & Chris Reed.

Early bird tickets start from just £5 and all profits from the day are being donated to London Food Banks!

<https://www.thelittlesurprisescompany.co.uk/supersunday2020>



A QUESTION OF FLAVOUR...

I'm rather partial to gin. It's **International Gin Day** next month (Saturday 13 June in fact, so you can make a note in your diary!). With this in mind, I thought I might make an excuse to have a look at a few of the massive range (nay, plethora) of flavoured gins that are now flooding the market. One of the first brands that I recall was Pinkster, still one of the leading pink gins. Now, I was brought up (services family) believing that a pink gin was a cocktail using normal Plymouth gin with a dash of Angostura bitters (hence the term pink). To make it a longer drink, you could serve it with soda or tonic and a twist of lemon rind, of course.



Today, however, following on from the success of Pinkster (which is raspberry flavoured, not sweet and in my opinion delicious served with just soda and a fresh raspberry or two) every other distillery now makes a range of flavoured gins, pink being just one of them.

A word of warning: flavoured gins can be rather sweet (in some cases revoltingly so in my opinion) and also can be rather overpowering. Select your gin carefully though, and a whole new world of flavour and enjoyment is opened up!

So, which flavoured gins do I recommend? Well, one of my go-to favourites is **Opihr** – flavoured with spices - not fruit - and delicious served with a star anise floating in top, rather than the usual citrus.

An Italian brand call **Malfy** makes very good flavour infused gins: **Gin Con Limone: Gin Con Rosa (Pink Grapefruit) Gin Con Arancia (Sicilian Blood Oranges)**. It's a really good idea to invest first in a set of miniatures so that you can try out the different varieties and decide which you would like to indulge further in.

It was indeed a set of miniatures in my Christmas stocking that led me to another recent discovery: **Chase Pink Grapefruit & Pomelo**. Reader, it is a delicious, thoroughly British, summer drink to enjoy in the garden as the sun sets, while imagining yourself on holiday somewhere exotic. (Which is about as far as most of us are likely to get this year anyway!) Chase is widely available in good supermarkets and off licences.





Another great British gin is Northamptonshire-based **Warners**. Its award-winning **Lemon Balm gin** is infused with lemon balm, plus lemon thyme and verbena. The result is a smooth burst of fresh, green notes (with a strong juniper hint too). It's just slightly sweet, and with a minty finish, is another strong contender for drinking al fresco and using our superfluous amount of lemon balm in the garden as garnish!
www.warnersdistillery.com

Still in the UK, we have **Finders**, a Yorkshire-based independent distillery using only natural botanicals. There is a wide selection of flavoured gin such as Fruits of the Forest (and vodka and rum), so again, I would suggest you check out the range with a selection pack and choose your favourite. www.finders-spirits.com



And of course, many supermarkets are now launching their own brands of gin. The **Aldi range of Haysmith's gins** are excellent value for money at just £16 for 70cl and the bottles look very classy. One of my favourites is the Seville Orange & Persian Lime, which is sharply citrus with some sweeter lime notes underneath. Again this is one that I prefer with soda, but a plain tonic will work well with it too, garnished with a slice of orange.



While not really a flavoured gin, this is another of my favourites – a London Dry flavoured not so much with fruit, but with the South of France! This French gin is distilled with nine botanicals including local Mimosa flowers, Rose and Fleur d'Oranger from the countryside of Provence, **CAP Gin** was conceived and is distilled on the shores of the Mediterranean, so it is an authentic expression of the South of France. Available directly from www.capgin.com at £35 or from Amazon it makes a stonking G&T



- whatever the weather - and is the nearest I'll get to the Med this summer I fear!

Cheers!

Follow Alison on instagram [@theseasonedgastronome](https://www.instagram.com/theseasonedgastronome)



Colour VE Day: A Critique

Read the full poem, commemorating the 75th anniversary of VE Day, *Colour VE Day* by Keith Wait [here](#).

Critique by Celia Bard

Colour VE Day is a thought-provoking title, which summons up the image of VE Day bursting forth from the monochrome colour of the previous war years. Written in free verse, the poet allows readers to follow his thoughts from different perspectives, though you have to unpick the trail of clues he leaves. The pace of the poem varies in keeping with its content and imagery, creating a specific flow of sound which musically is very pleasing.



The many references to the brightness and colour of the sky throughout the poem act as a poetic background to the many events referred to by the writer. The sky opens coloured platinum, a 75th anniversary, mirroring the end of a horrific war, juxtaposed with images of a fiery sky and the blood of men who lost their lives in war. A 'brother's blood', singular, for that brother is everybody's brother, as the dark sky before dawns over ruined Rheims, where the surrender document was signed.

The third stanza is full of wonderful contrasts, descriptions, and images. The beautiful young Princess Elizabeth escapes the confines of Buckingham Palace and blends unnoticed with VE Day crowds celebrating around the Palace. Many poetic phrases stand out. Particularly pleasing is the image: 'Vintage Veuve Clicquot labelled in orange / Secret in cellars, dark since '39 / Spurts sparkling silver to the evening sky'. Deliciously enticing, popping corks and jets of precious champagne contrast beautifully with 'The shining black of Watney's stout foams free'.

A sudden and serious shift in mood startles. Easily recognisable historical 'Despots' are alluded to, 'Suffocating Europe with their colours/ As their empires grow', but now a fifth, unseen enemy, COVID 19. The Enigma machine used to break wartime codes contrasts sharply with the mysterious virus and its DNA code.

Colour VE Day resonates strongly in the current climate. This is a great poem, made more powerful because of the current pandemic.



Read Celia Bard's full critique at www.markaspen.com/2020/05/12/colour-VE-critique and the full text of Keith Wait's poem at www.markaspen.com/2020/05/08/colour-ve-day

Photography by Robert Poleman and Francis Coles



Programmed to Receive: Part Two

Where was I? Reeling, I think, from discovering Sheila Sim and Richard Attenborough's signatures on the front of a programme for *The Mousetrap* in 1952 ... on its **pre**-West End tour! Well OK, if these are the kind of people we're collecting, I'm unsurprised to find a 1960 programme for *Billy Liar* which tells me that Albert Finney has just completed his first starring role in the film version of *Saturday Night And Sunday Morning*.



Laurence Olivier and Vivien Leigh, (deep breath) signed the front page of Manchester Opera House's 1951 programme for *Antony and Cleopatra*. It was a Festival of Britain production and were married to each other at the time. The cast list inside has numerous other autographs including the fabulous Wilfred Hyde White.



In 1956 Vivien Leigh also appeared in *South Sea Bubble*, "a new, light comedy by Noël Coward". Joyce Carey was in this too. Joyce Carey was the formidable Myrtle Bagot, manageress of the station café in [Brief Encounter](#).

An advert in the 1959 programme for *Look After Lulu* starring Vivien Leigh depicts a woman in long gloves, adjusting her hat. "You never can tell ..." the advert teases, "who she might be... career girl, housewife, a young modern with time on her hands. Who can say?" Turns out she's an avid reader of the Daily Mirror and "nearly one in two under 35s" reads it every day.

Alongside reading the Daily Mirror, the back page of the previously mentioned 1965 programme for [The Killing of Sister George](#) urges readers to try a slice of "mixed fruit cake" during the interval. Yes indeed, if you're at the London theatre you are clearly living in the fast lane in your fake fur, clutching your tabloid and slice of cake

Read more about Eleanor Lewis' treasure trove at www.markaspen.com/2020/05/17/prog-receive-2

Photography by Bateman Cordis and Frederick Prince



March 14

By Anne Warrington

God was so very angry.
He fumed, he seethed, and he raged
Whooshing out great gusts of wind.
Adam and Eve shivered and shook
Trapped by the knowledge that
The fury and wrath of a vengeful God
On them was about to descend.

“It’s all your fault,” Adam shouted at Eve.
“Why couldn’t you resist the lure of that slimy, slippery, rattlesnake?”
“Don’t you yell at me,” yelled back Eve
“From what I remember you weren’t so slow on the uptake
Biting into that red, rosy, juicy apple
Hanging from the branch, shining in the light.
You didn’t say that God would be upset!”

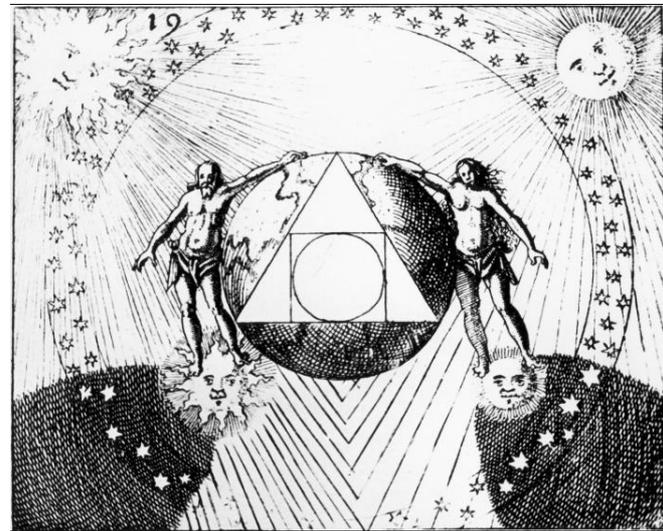
Adam and Eve quarrelled all day and they quarrelled all night
Exhausted they sank to the ground
God stopped his huffing and his puffing
The wind stilled and the air warmed

“We’ve been forgiven,” said Eve
“I guessed God wouldn’t be angry for long.”
“That’s not the way God works,” said Adam
“I’ll wager we’ll pay a price for doing wrong!”

As he spoke a mouth-watering smell wafted through the air
Adam and Eve sniffed in delight:
Cinnamon! Nutmeg! Sugar! Apples! Hot piecrust!

“I’ve sent you an apple pie,” boomed the voice of God

Read Anne Warrington’s poem in full at
www.markaspen.com/2020/05/20/march-14 and a critique by Quentin
Weiver at www.markaspen.com/2020/05/22/march-14-critique.



St Mary's University Update

Drama St Mary's Celebrate 2020 Eric Yardley Award

The Drama Department at St Mary's University, Twickenham recently celebrated the award of the 2020 Eric Yardley Bursary to two of its students, Jed Kerby (BA Acting) and Katie Norman (BA Technical Theatre). Jed was described as being a "positive presence in the classroom" and Katie as having a "get up and go attitude."



The award ceremony was held via a Zoom call with Director of Drama St Mary's Imogen Bond hosting, alongside Head of 2nd Year Acting Olusola Oyeleye and Head of Technical Theatre Paul Stowe. Bill Compton a Trustee of the Eric Yardley Trust spoke about Eric, who founded the Youth Action Theatre in 1970 and committed his life to the theatre and the arts. Alumni of the Youth Action Theatre include



Each received a bursary award of £1,250 and were celebrated by the cohort of students and supportive academic team in attendance. The Eric Yardley Bursary has been awarded since 2019 to Drama St Mary's students who would benefit from financial support, show great promise in their respective areas of acting or technical theatre, and the enthusiasm to make a success of their career in the industry. As with last year the £2,500 bursary has been split equally between two students.

actors Martin Freeman and Rufus Sewell. Eric passed away in 2012 and as part of his legacy he wanted to support and recognise acting and technical theatre students, particularly those facing financial barriers. The Trustees approached St Marys in 2018 with the idea of the Bursary, which will continue for another three years.



St Mary's
University
Twickenham
London

News from Church Street

By Shona Lyons



This week our hanging baskets arrived. All 55 of them, there were quite a few BID sponsored baskets (24) and a few Church Street Association sponsored and quite a few traders paid for their own. Bruce coordinated this and on Wednesday after we had a tip off from Emily at the Eel Pie we realised they had all been put in the street, a few are in the wrong places but we will sort that out in a few days' time. We had actually been expecting them this coming Monday so it was a little bit of surprise as we had also asked for lots of summer bedding plants, but its fine, we have managed to plant these

in the last few mornings and still have to spend a few days finishing it all off. It all needs quite a bit of a Spring Clean, but with the fantastic quality and range of bedding plants from our lovely supplier who supplies to the boroughs of Kensington, Knightsbridge and Chelsea, our little street should soon be looking just as good as these iconic city locations.

Simon Gander at Tsaretta Spice also tells us he is working out his PPE and Social Distancing measures in order to open but he has brought a jet spray and is also going to clean and weed the square (things I was finding really difficult) so with the summer planting, it should be a green and beautiful oasis for you all to come and have a glass of wine and Indian Tapas and also enjoy the beautiful bird song in the square which is really lovely these days.



Church Street even though still under lock down has seen the Estate Agents opening this week, Snax is already open and serving take away which seems to work really well as there are queues all day

for their sandwiches and coffees as too is the case with Rosie Chai where Hala and Faisal serve Lebanese cuisine for those after something a little different for their breakfast, lunch or tea. Corto is also open and doing a roaring trade right now with all kinds of Italian delicacies, cooked Italian food, and also a well- stocked Italian

grocery complete with all kinds of pasta, pizza and all-purpose flour and yeast! Romina is also serving Daniele's Ice Cream (he has a shop in Brewery Lane in Richmond) which is very yummy but you have to mortgage the house to buy it. Pierre from Limpopo is also serving all kinds of take away biltong and South African Treats from his little window of delights and amusing everyone with his South African Patois and increasingly hilarious hairstyles.

Right now I'm a little tired after spending the last few days trying to get all the bedding plants in but it's a good kind of tired as I have really enjoyed it especially since Bruce is quite a bit better now and has been accompanying me on my morning adventures into our urban jungle.

TRAVELLER'S TALES 72

SENT TO SIBERIA

Doug Goodman heads to Russia's far east



In the 70s and 80s it was much less complicated to travel to and within the Soviet Union than it is today. Thanks to Thomson Holidays, the world's largest tour operator at the time, travel to The USSR was opened up in 1975 with £29 weekends to Moscow. So great was the demand for trips to this mysterious country that by the late 80s package tours to The Ukraine, Georgia, The Arctic Circle, Central Asia and Siberia were all featured in the holiday brochures. The reasons travel was so easy were the holiday company handled visa applications and made all travel and accommodation arrangements, the Soviet authorities, through Intourist, the state-controlled travel organisation, wanted hard, (Western), currency and the opportunity to show off Soviet power and achievements. Visits to the 15 autonomous republics were arranged by Intourist without the need to apply for additional visas. Today it's a costly and complex procedure to obtain a visa for Russia. My application for a visa for a Volga cruise last September involved giving answers to many questions such as 'which countries have you visited in the past 10 years: details of your parents' lives; your job and financial status. A personal question session with a member of the Soviet consulate and finger prints we provided took up considerable time too.



Siberian Scene



Doug Goodman on Right with Colleague in Bratsk



Pictures of Hero Workers

GREAT EXPERIENCE

In 1978 I made my first week-long visit to Siberia with a group of travel writers. You might enjoy the eight day train ride with 45 stops on the 6183 mile journey from Moscow to the Pacific at Vladivostok but a flight on an Ilyushin jet via Omsk was somewhat faster. Forty years ago, when State-owned Aeroflot controlled the vast network of domestic flights, you often flew in an aircraft which resembled a bomber. In fact it was a passenger plane easily converted into a bomber - or perhaps the other way round. The railway linking Russia's capital with Siberia was completed in 1916. While I was there construction was underway of the Baikal Amur Mainline, (BAM). This was a line built to avoid being too close to China as relations were often strained. Huge numbers of workers were incentivised by the State with large wages and subsidised living to move east to work.

Siberia extends from The Urals to the Pacific and from the Arctic Circle to central Asia. At over 5 million square miles it makes up 77% of Russia and 9% of the earth's land mass. It was a wild and untamed region until it became part of Russia in the 17th century. It is best known for its sub-zero temperatures, vast forests and a place to which political prisoners and criminals were sent. In the quarter century from 1929 an estimated 14 million people were exiled to the Gulags.



Irkutsk War Memorial



BBC TV in Siberia



Frozen Lake Baikal

My 1978 visit was one of the first for Western tourists and so great was the media's interest that BBC TV joined the group. A documentary was filmed presented by Julian Pettifer and this brought even greater demand to visit Siberia.

INTENSE COLD

On arrival in Irkutsk in early March the temperature was about minus 15 degrees centigrade – far too mild to be seen as a wimp with your fur hat's ear flap down. The city was founded in 1652 as a frontier town for gold and fur trading: later came explorers, fortune seekers and the convicts. Many of the original wooden building remain all brightly coloured with carvings. Shops were well stocked and people wore extravagant furs. I was glad of an army greatcoat with rabbit fur lining, sturdy boots and a wolf skin hat. We visited the war memorial where Young Pioneers stood guard by the eternal flame. From Irkutsk we headed toward Bratsk on the mighty Angara River to inspect the world's largest hydro- electric power station. The intense cold here- minus 30 degrees centigrade was balanced by the warmth of our welcome from the station's director. The huge turbines and the control room were impressive sights. For 'hero' workers there was a cash reward and a display of their portraits for everyone to see.



Shopping Siberian Style



Wooden House with Water Pump



Birch Forest

After miles of driving through dense pine and birch forests we reached the highlight of the visit; Lake Baikal. This lake, the world's largest expanse of fresh water formed 25 million years ago, is 400 miles long and 49 miles wide and is also the world's deepest. The water freezes to such a depth that it's safe to walk or drive over it and once a railway line crossed its southern end. Fishing fleets are frozen in for many months but fishing continues by drilling a deep hole in the ice and sitting still for hours in the hope of a catch. At nearby Listvianka a museum describes life around the lake and its evolution. Over 1200 species of animals and 600 plant varieties exist here of which 75% are exclusive to the Baikal region. The world's only fresh-water seals live there too. Wild red dogs, snow leopards, reindeer and bears are rarely seen but they inhabit the region. Plans to protect the lake from pollution by banning the wood processing mills and logging companies were in place 40 years ago as the Soviet Authorities were anxious to maintain the environment. How well this has succeeded since the fall of communism and state control remains to be seen.

Next time – Over the Altai Mountains on Air Mongol to Ulan Baator

Going Going Gone - Not Exactly

By Bruce Lyons

For our wonderful readers and dedicated clients we have been picking our way through the devastation that COVID-19 has wrought on the travel industry and travellers apart from the sheer uncertainty that Governments have introduced into the assorted policies, the possibility of being quarantined either on your return or on arrival is just too daunting for words, so unless there are changes in the coming weeks (the next ministerial review is not till around 15th June, according to the 10 Downing Street briefing today) the high Summer Med holiday is "on hold"

However not all is lost. At present there are no quarantining in Ireland, Isle of Man or the Channel Islands, of course we need the 'easing' to allow their accommodations to re-open, but again from the Downing Street briefing that may be the next thing to happen, coming soon?

On firmer ground many have turned their attention to Autumn, Winter and 2021 holidays and looking in that direction and perhaps thinking why not choose destinations that had little or no COVID Experiences like Nevis in the Caribbean with None! Or many of the Islands that were nearly completely free, like Antigua, but there are others all over the Caribbean and just now you can find good prices, as the operators are keen to cheer you up. Go East and the season starts in October and runs thru to March (good weather) in Vietnam with no COVID deaths, and this a populous country!

Another of my personal favourites is Iceland, who also seemed to get an early grip on COVID - a destination for all seasons, but if the Northern Lights is on your "wish list" go from November thru February, but there are many other experiences, from Whale Watching, Geysers, Waterfalls, Glaciers and Volcanoes to mention just a few.



Finally think Israel, another small country that harnessed COVID from the start - another country good for all seasons but autumn thru to Easter can give you a fantastic choice Cities: Tel Aviv for an exciting lively never stop type or historic Jerusalem, capital to three religions. There is the Holy land or the Dead Sea and Masada and finally for Winter Sun, Eilat with its diverse

sports amenities and warm weather throughout the winter.

So, dear reader, whilst a Summer Beach Might be a virtual dream, Travel this autumn, winter or in 2021 is an achievable reality and at present good prices too.

Here's an unusual idea, instead of Xmas Shopping in New York or Toronto why not try a weekend break to Tel Aviv or Jerusalem here you can find markets and art fairs with all sorts of unique treasures at good prices and it is all good value.

Looking forward to hearing from you Stay Home, Stay Safe and Save the NHS Bruce



Romania's Claim to Fame

Romania was linked with the British Empire when Queen Victoria's granddaughter married the King of Romania in 1914.

Although known for Vlad "Dracul", made famous by Bram Stoker in his novel Dracula - loosely based on tales of the fifteenth century prince - Romania is known for pioneers in medicine.

Victor Babes (1854-1926) founded the Institute of Pathology and Bacteriology in Bucharest and Gheorghe Marinescu (1863-1938), the professor of Neurology at the Faculty of Medicine in Bucharest, was the first to see living nervous cells with a microscope.

In 1974 George Emil Palade, a pioneer of modern cell biology, was awarded the Nobel Prize in Medicine.

Photographs by Lucian Dumitru and Dr Simon Flower, author of Canyoning in the Alps: Northern Italy and Ticino (linked on the home page of World InfoZone).



<http://worldinfozone.com/gallery.php?country=Romania>

TEACHERS' RESPONSE TO CORONAVIRUS SPARKS GRATITUDE FROM PARENTS IN GREATER LONDON

New research reveals nearly nine in ten parents in Greater London have developed a greater appreciation for teachers since coronavirus restrictions began, as more than one in five admit they previously rarely considered the role teachers play in society

Eight in ten parents believe teachers in England have gone “above and beyond” over past two months

Today, in support of national Thank a Teacher Day (Wednesday 20 May), children and their families are joining forces to #ThankATeacher by sharing videos thanking the teachers and school staff who improve their lives

A new survey with parents of primary and secondary school age children, released today¹ and commissioned by the Get Into Teaching campaign in support of national [Thank A Teacher Day](#), reveals the scale of newfound appreciation for teachers up and down the country.

Nearly nine in 10 (86%) parents in Greater London who responded to the survey agree that over the course of the coronavirus restrictions they have developed a greater appreciation for the job teachers do, and eight in ten (80%) agree teachers nationwide have gone “above and beyond” over this period.

Based on their experience supporting home education, nine out of ten parents in Greater London agreed that being a teacher requires a lot of patience (90%), and keeping young people engaged in learning takes a lot of creativity (90%).

The Thank A Teacher campaign, run by The Teaching Awards Trust, is calling on children and their families to join forces today to thank the teachers and school staff who go above and beyond and profoundly impact their lives.

Abigail Welton, a teacher at Engayne Primary School in London said: *“It is humbling to hear that so many parents appreciate our efforts. Being a teacher allows you to make a real difference in the world, no more so than during these extraordinary times where school leaders, teachers and staff have pulled together to keep schools open for those who need it the most and find innovative and creative ways to support our pupils.*

“At my school we have planned sports activities, dance lessons and art competitions for the children to complete at home. Teachers are making regular calls to their class to check how they are, what they have been up to and if they need help with any of the work. It has been amazing staying in touch with the children and hearing the positive feedback and impact it has.”

Some of the biggest challenges parents in Greater London identify when supporting their child with home learning include:

- 55% find it hard to keep their child motivated to complete work set;
- 49% find it hard to keep their child engaged in the work they are doing;
- 34% find it hard to help their child with work they don't understand; and
- 32% find it hard to come up with creative ways to make subjects interesting.

Nearly nine in ten (89%) parents surveyed in Greater London are grateful to the teachers who positively influence their child, day in day out. Children themselves also seem appreciative, as more than eight in ten (84%) parents say their child is missing their schoolteacher and being in lessons while schools are closed to the majority of pupils.

Steve Munby, Chair of the Teaching Awards Trust, said: *“We have always known the incredible lengths that teachers and other school staff go to for their students, and these results show how much parents have grown to appreciate this work.*

“This annual campaign is our opportunity to thank the incredible teachers, lecturers and other staff who keep our schools running, who inspire wonder on a daily basis, and who do everything in their power to give our young people the best possible education, whatever the circumstances.”

Minister for School Standards Nick Gibb said: *“Teachers, head teachers and support staff have shown outstanding professionalism and commitment during these challenging times.*

“They are doing an incredible job in finding innovative ways to continue young people's education at home, be it through online lessons, set work or motivating phone calls with pupils.

“Now as we prepare for more young people returning to school, and as the country takes careful steps towards recovery, teachers and support staff are playing a vital role in ensuring children continue their education in these unprecedented times.”

Using the hashtags **#HowWillYouSayThankYou** and **#ThankATeacher**, pupils and their families are being asked to come up with their own creative messages of thanks to celebrate their teachers and wider school staff, for example by singing songs, reading poems and recording video clips.

An inspirational teacher makes all the difference. Find out how to share your appreciation for a teacher you know by visiting: thankateacher.co.uk



Overview of the UK government's response to the COVID-19 pandemic

Today's report by the National Audit Office (NAO) provides an overview of government's wide-ranging response to COVID-19. It has found that between 31 January and 4 May, government made over 500 announcements. The report sets out £124.3 billion of programmes, initiatives and spending commitments in response to the pandemic.

The costs of government's response are large and uncertain and will depend on the continuing health and economic impacts of the pandemic. The £124.3 billion of programmes, initiatives and spending commitments announced by government cover grants and other payments (£111.3 billion); expected costs of loans (£5.0 billion) and increases to benefits (£8.0 billion). This does not include loss of receipts to the Exchequer of £4.4 billion, largely from deferred tax payments.

Government's response was mobilised across five areas, with the following spending commitments:

- £6.6 billion: Health and social care measures, covering equipment, testing, services and vaccine development;
- £15.8 billion: Other public services and the wider emergency response, including funding for local government services, education and children's services;
- £19.5 billion: Support for individuals, including benefits and sick pay and support for vulnerable people;
- £82.2 billion: Support for businesses, including support for retaining jobs, loans and grants; and
- £0.2 billion: Other support, including providing the public with information

There have been 11 ministerial directions related to the government's responses to COVID-19. These have been sought and granted to exceed Departmental Expenditure Limits authorised by Parliament for 2019-20 to support urgent spend; and because it had not been possible for departments to carry out as full an appraisal of the value for money of some schemes as would usually be undertaken.

This report is the first of a programme of work to be undertaken by the NAO to support Parliament in its scrutiny of government's response to COVID-19. It provides a summary of government's actions up to 4 May and includes additional government funding commitments of over £0.5 billion made up until 15 May but does not assess their value for money or their effectiveness. The NAO will continue to update Parliament on further government announcements, programmes and their costs. It will also undertake detailed audits of specific elements of government's response, to identify lessons for subsequent stages of the pandemic and potential future pandemics.

Gareth Davies, the head of the NAO, said:

"The scale and nature of the COVID-19 pandemic and government's response is unprecedented in recent history

"This report outlines the range of measures taken by government to date and where financial support has been targeted. It also forms the basis for a substantial programme of independent reports from the National Audit Office to Parliament and the public on how the money has been spent and the lessons learned."

Read the full report [HERE](#)



National Audit Office
www.RichmondTribune.com

Saga poll shows mental health of over 70's faring best in lockdown

A national poll commissioned by Saga has found that the mental health of the over 70's has been the least impacted by lockdown measures when directly compared to other age groups.

The findings, published to mark Mental Health Awareness Week, might surprise many people who have expressed concern over how the over 70s are faring in the COVID-19 pandemic. While there have been marked increases in anxiety, depression and loneliness among the over 70s, the increases are significantly below those of younger age groups. Of those surveyed:

- 12% of over 70s have felt lonelier during in lockdown, compared to: 52% of 18-24 year old's; 32% of 25-34 year old's; 28% of 35-44 year old's; 21% of 45-54 year old's
- 19% of over 70s have felt more anxious during lockdown, compared to: 47% of 18-24 year old's; 39% of 25-34 year old's; 41% of 35-44 year old's; 33% of 45-54 year old's
- 17% of over 70s have experienced lower mood or felt depressed, compared to: 44% of 18-24 year old's; 39% of 25-34 year old's; 36% of 35-44 year old's; 34% of 45-54 year old's

The over 70's are challenging the age-old stereotype that older generations are the loneliest age group by demonstrating their resilience to the lockdown measures. The survey indicates that many have taken the need to spend more time at home in their stride and adapted better than other age groups to the new limitations on their movement.

To help keep up spirits during lockdown, Saga launched the #NotGoingOutClub, creating engaging content for Saga members and customers. This included joining forces with a number of celebrities to create podcasts; guests to date have included Joanna Lumley, Alan Titchmarsh, Roger Daltry and John Sergeant.

Nick Stace, Chief Strategy Officer at Saga, said:

“The resilience and stoicism of people over 70 shines through this survey. We at Saga know that those in this age group are fiercely independent and determined to live life to the fullest – and now we can see that they have adapted better to lock down than other age groups.

“Even so, the limitations on social interaction have had a knock-on effect on mental health across all ages, perhaps unsurprisingly given the fact that COVID-19 is undoubtedly the most significant peacetime challenge we have collectively faced in our lifetime.

“Despite being the least affected age group, the fact that one in five people over 70 have experienced increased low mood, loneliness and anxiety as a result of lockdown is clearly concerning. As we enter this important next phase, we will be doing all we can at Saga to make sure we can support our members and wider community to limit the knock-on effect of lockdown on mental health.”



Museum of London launches 2018 Disease X exhibition in online version as part of wider digital programme

Earlier this month the Museum of London shifted focus to become the Museum for London as part of a mission to bring first-class online content to visitors at home while our physical doors are closed. A primary strand of this digital programming is publishing objects and stories from some of the museum's most popular exhibitions from both past and present. Today, the latest instalment of this programme launches with the temporary exhibition [Disease X: London's next epidemic?, originally open between November 2018 and March 2019, now available online here.](#)

London, like the rest of the world has been affected in unprecedented ways by the current Covid-19 crisis, but it's not the first time a virus has hit the capital. London has been affected by many epidemics and pandemics over the centuries including plague, cholera, smallpox, influenza and HIV/AIDS. The opening of Disease X in 2018 marked the 100th anniversary of the second and most deadly wave of the so-called 'Spanish Flu'. Using the Museum of London's collections, new historical research and interviews with public health experts and epidemiologists the exhibition explored if the city might be at risk from an unknown 'Disease X' as the World Health Organisation called it.

The Disease X digital exhibition shares the stories, objects and words of the original display to demonstrate what the past can tell us about historical maladies, their impact on London and its people and the different methods used to fight back. Some of which include the mourning dress worn by Queen Victoria to mark the shock passing of her grandson Prince Albert Victor due to 'Russian Flu', a 17th century pomander used to waft away the foul smells thought to cause diseases like the plague and a poster advertising 'Flu-Mal', which dubiously claimed to combat both influenza and malaria.

Vyki Sparkes, Curator of Social & Working History at the Museum of London, said:

"We're pleased we are able to share content from our exhibition Disease X: London's next epidemic? in a new online format. When we opened the exhibition in 2018, almost two years before the current Covid-19 global health crisis, we did not attempt to predict what might cause a future disease outbreak in London, or when it might occur. Instead we aimed to link past, present and future together by using our historic collections, new historical research and interviews with top epidemiologists and public health experts to look at what impact any future outbreak may have on London.

Disease X explored how London faced many epidemics through history for which it had no cure, but also gave notes of hope, including the development of the first vaccine by Edward Jenner, the global eradication of smallpox in 1980 and the pioneering work in reducing HIV infections by 56 Dean Street sexual health clinic. It also provided an important reminder of the people behind the statistics through focusing on the personal stories of four Londoners who sadly died during the so-called 'Spanish Flu' epidemic.

Since creating the original Disease X exhibition, Londoner's lives have changed dramatically in a way we could not have anticipated and we hope that this digital exhibition gives some historical context to the situation facing London, and indeed the world, today."

The **Disease X** digital exhibition is now live here and is part of a wider series of online programming and digital engagement which also includes the [Museum for London Collecting Covid](#) project, the [Museum for London Docklands VE Day at 75](#) and [The Clash: London Calling exhibition film](#) commissioned and co-produced by BBC Arts and Art Fund as part of BBC Arts' 'Culture in Quarantine' and #MuseumFromHome celebrations.

To stay up to date with all Museum for London online programming updates and announcements please visit www.museumoflondon.org.uk or follow us [@MuseumofLondon](#) **#MuseumforLondon**.



The latest announcement from the ROH: further details of free online content and activities

The Royal Opera House is delighted to continue its **#OurHouseToYourHouse** programme of curated content, featuring free online broadcasts, musical masterclasses and cultural highlights that can be accessed by audiences for free anywhere, anytime.

We look forward to the next in our series of free online broadcasts, with the YouTube and Facebook premiere of **Cathy Marston's *The Cellist*** on **Friday 29 May at 7pm BST**. *The Cellist* received its world premiere at the Royal Opera House in February and is inspired by the life of renowned cellist **Jacqueline du Pré** whose career was cut short by the onset of multiple sclerosis at the age of 28. The ballet stars **Lauren Cuthbertson** as The Cellist, **Marcelino Sambé** as The Instrument and **Matthew Ball** as The Conductor, while the commissioned score by **Philip Feeney** features sections of **Schubert's *Trout Quintet***, **Faure's *Cello Sonata*** and **Elgar's *Cello Concerto*** with **Hetty Snell** as solo cello alongside the **Orchestra of the Royal Opera House**.

Ahead of Friday's broadcast, join us on Instagram as **Marcelino Sambé** shares his lockdown essentials playlist (Wednesday 27 May) and takes over the ROH Instagram's channel (Thursday 28 May). Choreographer **Cathy Marston** will curate the Friday premiere of *The Cellist* as it is broadcast to audiences across the globe.

This week our virtual classroom for families across the globe presents *Tall Tales* and invites children and young people to create their own storyboard as part of the [Staging Stories activity](#). Discover how designers bring stories to the stage and take inspiration from productions including The Royal Ballet's *Swan Lake* and *Romeo and Juliet* and The Royal Opera's *La bohème* to create your own storyboard.

As part of our ongoing partnership with the BBC, a new behind-the-scenes documentary by Director **Richard Macer** shines a light on The Royal Ballet's male dancers. *Men at the Barre – Inside The Royal Ballet* will be shown on **BBC Four** on **Wednesday 27 May at 9pm BST**. Celebrating a golden generation of male dancers including **Matthew Ball, Cesar Corrales, Steven McRae, Vadim Muntagirov, Marcelino Sambé** and **Edward Watson**, this documentary offers a unique insight into the life of a dancer, revealing the athleticism as well as lyricism required to be a male dancer today.

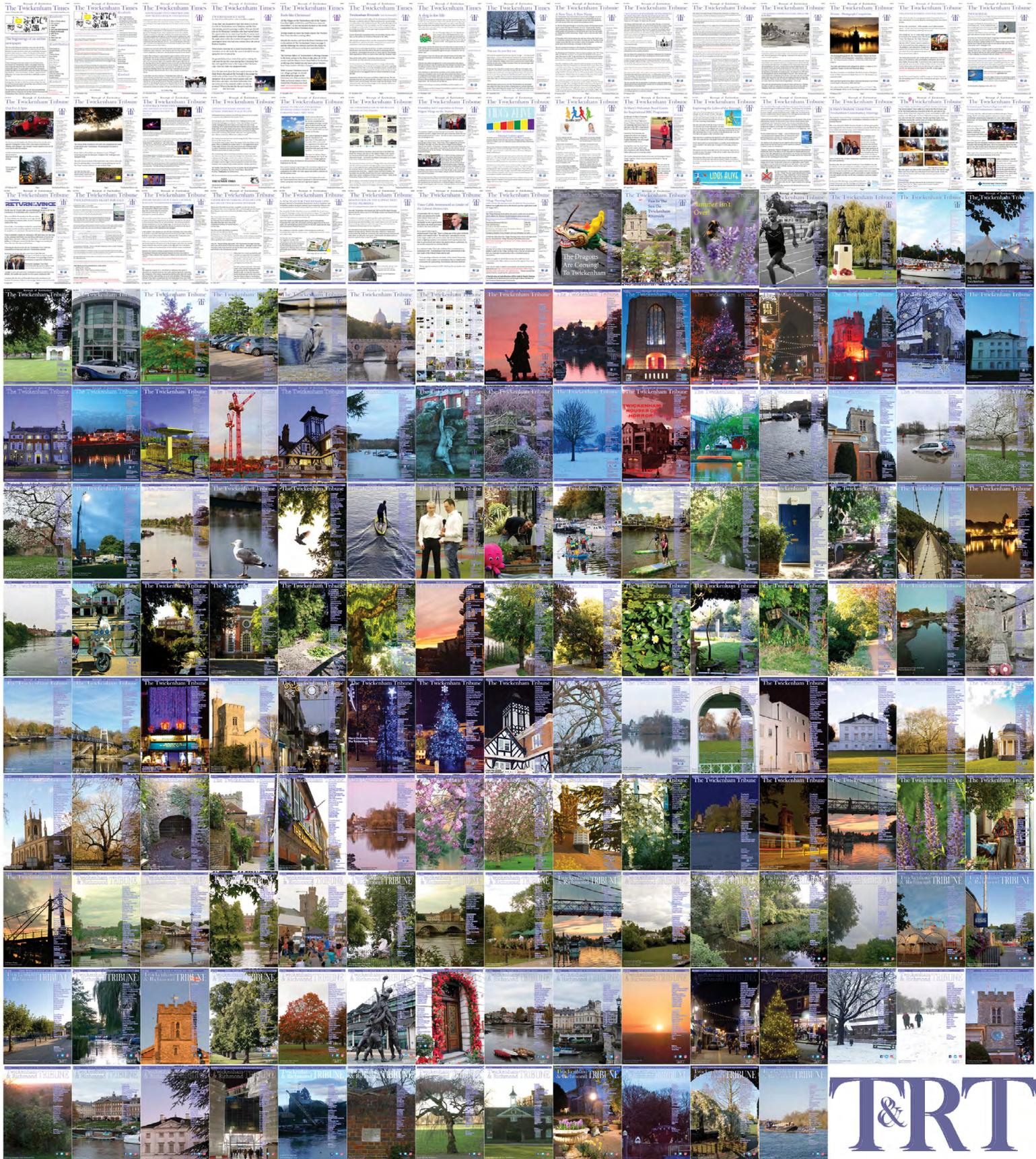
Royal Opera House content is also available on demand across the BBC. The Royal Opera's performances of **Strauss's *Ariadne auf Naxos*** (2014) and **Donizetti's *Lucia di Lammermoor*** (2016) are available to listen again on **BBC Sounds** and *Romeo and Juliet: Beyond Words* can be viewed via **BBC iPlayer**. Featuring dancers of The Royal Ballet, this creative reimaging of **Kenneth MacMillan's** seminal ballet is produced and directed by multiple award-winning **Michael Nunn** and **William Trevitt** of **BalletBoyz**.



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For details of all ROH broadcasts, creative activities and unique content, follow **#OurHouseToYourHouse**.

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