

Westcombe NEWS

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November 2015 Issue 9



A community newspaper commended by the London Forum of Amenity and Civic Societies

Monthly newspaper of The Westcombe Society: fostering a sense of community

The second tunnel: What do YOU think?

Anne Robbins

On October 5th, Transport for London opened the statutory consultation for their proposed Silvertown Tunnel, a new road crossing under the Thames from the peninsula near the O2 Centre to Royal Victoria Docks in Newham.

The consultation closes on November 29th, and the Westcombe Society is urging you to read the papers, and decide what you think. This is the official consultation, and the last before the planning application is submitted to the Planning Inspectorate. So it's particularly important that you have your say. And – more – all are invited to attend a meeting on November 18th at 7.30 in Mycenae House, to help the Westcombe Society finalise its own response to TfL.

Many will already know a bit about the plan. It proposes a new tunnel, with two lanes each way, large enough to take double-decker buses and

heavy HGVs. From the south side, it would be reached on a spur from the A102 heading east across the peninsula, and it would emerge on the north near where the Emirates Airway cable car lands.

TfL say that it will add to traffic levels only at peak hours, because they will be imposing charges on the new tunnel and on the Blackwall Tunnel. The charges will be used to pay the billion pound cost, as well as to control usage.

The new tunnel would make journeys faster at peak hours, according to TfL, and give drivers an alternative if anything closes the Blackwall Tunnel, as sometimes happens now. TfL propose two new bus routes through, and you should review their material to decide if these would be useful for this area.

The proposal is part of a larger package to build new road crossings further east, and potentially to close the Woolwich Free Ferry altogether.

Not everyone is happy with the proposal.

Arguments against it emphasise a known effect of road building – encouraging people to drive rather than use public transport. The capacity for HGVs would mean quite a few more of these very large lorries on the A102. The extra traffic could mean that traffic jams southbound on the A102, already a problem during evening peak times, could be much worse.

The No to Silvertown Tunnel Campaign has recorded very high levels of damaging air pollution near the A102, and more traffic could add to that, when the government ought to be trying to protect peoples' health, and meet EU safety standards.

TfL admit there would be more traffic congestion on local roads, with drivers flocking to use – or escape! – the tunnel. And charging may seem an unwelcome burden to many drivers, who may decide to use

the Rotherhithe Tunnel, via Greenwich town centre.

The proposal can be reviewed online, using TfL's website, or on paper at the Woolwich Centre on weekdays from 10:00am - 4:00 pm. You can also talk with TfL consultation staff and see more details on the plans at several roadshows: Tuesday November 10th noon-7pm, at the Forum in Trafalgar Road; Saturday October 31st noon-5.00pm and Thursday November 26th noon-7.00pm, at the Charlton Community Centre at Charlton House. There are other opportunities north of the river, too.

And please do come to the Westcombe Society's meeting on Nov. 18th, 7:30 at Mycenae House. We'll be giving a short presentation of the plan, and getting your views so we can reply to the consultation for the Westcombe Society.
<https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/rivercrossings/silvertown>
<http://www.silvertowntunnel.co.uk/>



A real community effort



The Biggest Coffee Morning in the World, which took place in September in Mycenae House, is much more than that: coffee (and tea), yes; yummee cakes, yes. But many like those above stayed on for a delicious sandwich lunch, too. Dessert? Yes, more cake!

Things did not auger well for the Westcombe Society's participation in the Biggest Coffee Morning in the World, raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Support, as all the posters advertising the event around the Standard were mysteriously removed.

They were replaced but within hours the second batch were taken down too. As a result, for the first hour no-one came and we were beginning to worry what we could do with the feast of cakes and sandwiches generously made and donated by our volunteers.

Then things changed: people arrived with friends, a group of young mothers with their babies, and soon the hall was alive with

the hubbub of chatter; all the tables and chairs were occupied by people happily munching on the delicious homemade cakes or enjoying a sandwich lunch. Soon it was time to go, the cake stall

had sold out early and there was only the raffle to draw. The First Prize of £50 cash was won by ticket 607 (Wendy) who generously donated it to Macmillan.

In the end a worthwhile £700 was raised for the charity Macmillan Cancer Support.

Special thanks must go to Maureen, Tessa, Marilyn, Joanne, Mary, Dina, Emily, Shirley, Cathy, Henrietta, Jan, Lisal and James who made the cakes and sandwiches to make the event a success.

Caroline Owens

< < Newsbriefs > >

Health of the heath

A notable feature of the heath are the bunds alongside several of the roads across or around the heath, havens for wild flowers and insects. Sadly, the new bunds built in St German's Place have already been marred by cars being driven across them. After the OnBlackheath event there were still tracts of bare grassland: assurances have been given that these will soon be rectified. The wet weather apparently delayed the work of recovery.

Roan Theatre Company

Following their highly successful *Dad's Army* at the Bob Hope Theatre, the Roan Theatre Co. are with a new play at the John Roan Club in Kidbrooke Park Road, with its refurbished theatre space. Local actor/writer Stuart Mitchell-Smith's new play *You Only Die Once* was performed there at

the end of October. A comedy thriller set in a haunted house, the play was perfectly timed for Halloween. Stuart, is teamed once again with Westcombe Hill actor Richard Rickson who was perfectly cast as Private Godfrey.

Post Office

The post office in Stratheden Road will be closed for refurbishment 18th - 27th November.

Fireworks Night

is on Saturday 7th Nov. The display starts at 8.00pm and other activities begin earlier in the day. There will be a fun-fair from 12 noon as well as food stalls and a bar from 5.00pm. A number of roads will be closed during the display and parking will be restricted.

Parking issues

Cllr Geoff Brighty reports that the promised-for-autumn review for the Westcombe Park CPZ should be coming out over the next few weeks. The long-

promised consultation on parking in Old Dover Road will be carried out at the same time.

Welcome to Franklin!

Warmest congratulations to Cllr Cherry Parker, and husband Simon, on the arrival of Franklin Kenneth Parker, born at 12 noon on October 21st, weighing 6.8lbs. And a warm welcome to Franklin!

Congratulations

are also due to Simon Parker for producing his other baby, his new book *Taking Power Back*. More about devolution than revolution?

Congratulations

also to Mary Mills on her new book about the Greenwich Peninsula.

We are very sorry to announce the sudden death on October 18th of Derek Rogers, proprietor of the Well Bean shop on Old Dover Road, aged 69. Our deepest condolences to family and friends.

IKEA news

IKEA have written to some local residents with news that the plans for the new building have been delayed for a year.

Marilyn Little, chair of the Westcombe Society, comments: "We note the change in time-scales and that the demolition of the current store is due to take place in January 2016; and that steps will be taken to secure and make safe the site."

"We also welcome news that the ecology park at the rear of the building will be maintained 'for the foreseeable future.'"

"We very much appreciate the time and effort IKEA are taking to ensure the new building will address the concerns of local people in terms of design, sustainability and environmental impact – including the need to make it transport-friendly."

"We hope their colleagues in Sweden will support our joint wish to create a building in keeping with those concerns. Their Hamburg and Norwich stores show what is possible and hope the design in Greenwich will be worthy of its location."

Mycenae Soup: a roaring success

The Mycenae Soup event in October in Mycenae House was fully subscribed – people had to be turned away. Next time, book early, and book often!

Everyone thoroughly enjoyed the evening. Thanks to the sponsors, Masons Catering, Simply Food, Coriander Restaurant, and Marks & Spencer, it wasn't only soup that was on offer!

There were eight presentations by local projects. They were reportedly all "excellent", and those in attendance had a hard time deciding on the winner.

The eight projects were:

Trash to Treasure Michelle Blundell runs Up-cycling workshops making something out of (almost) nothing driftwood, sea glass, old newspapers etc.

Mental Health Activity Trust Toni Hale helps people with mental health problems get back to health with a gardening project

Meridian Radio This trains people to be competent radio presenters – as well as cheering on the patients at QEH.



Employability through Drama Theatre Workout Ltd runs drama workshops for youth people to build confidence and increase employability.

Sewing stories Libby Rose wants to run free courses in sewing to encourage creativity and create space for sewing stories particularly for parents of children with special needs.

Bites and Bingo This project plans an inter-generational Christmas event at St Ursula's School especially for elderly people living on their own

Montessori Education for Autism Wendy Fidler offers an after-school nurture group for local school children with autism.

Greenwich & Bexley Hospice The project offers therapeutic arts and crafts activities for patients.

So, who won? See page 2!

MYCENAE SOUP



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you!

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Classified Ads (Market Place) 30p per word
(A telephone number = one word. An email/
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http://westcombe.blogspot.com*

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Everyone enjoyed listening
to **Alan King**, speaking up
for Meridian Radio, which
cheers up patients in Queen
Elizabeth Hospital in
Woolwich.

This event was a huge success, and raised more than £1,100.

Our thanks go to Mark Johnson-Brown the manager of Mycenae House, Anna Mars and Barbara Ward and all the staff of Mycenae House, for organising it; not forgetting Rev Tim Yeager of St George's, (the MC for the evening), the poet Rosie Johnston, musician Rob Aldridge, the eight participants and, not least, the audience, whose difficult task it was to choose the winner.

Among the many comments on the event: 'A fantastic evening'; 'Top marks, Mycenae Soup'; 'A well deserved win for MHA'; 'A really good idea, brilliantly realised'; 'Well done to the local sponsors'; 'A lot of fun and a worthy cause'; 'A great evening'; 'This event has really brought the community together.' Mark Johnson-Brown sums it all up: "A brilliant evening, bringing the community together, and raising the profile of local groups."

"It is heartening to hear that people are getting together to offer sponsorship to projects that were not chosen," said Barbara Ward. It looks as though this event may be a regular fixture on the Mycenae House calendar: the BBC magazine recently highlighted the "Soup" movement, which spreads apace not just in the UK, but around the world, after its origins in Detroit.

According to the BBC, "Soup is changing the world."



Libby Rose eloquently presenting
her project – motto, "Creativity
for All." Not just about sewing –
it was also about bringing people
together.



Matt Pennycook MP announced the winner: the Mental Health Activity Trust's Gardening Project. **Toni Hale** gave a speech of thanks, while **Anna Khun** and **Tim Yeager** look on.

Decisions, decisions . . .

Eight people presented the eight different
projects, all designed to be of benefit to the
community. So, who to vote for? Many in
the audience agonised over the decision.

But, like the Great British Bake-Off, every-

one was a winner that night and a lot of net-
working took place. Many in attendance gave
offers of help and support to almost all those
who presented their community projects –
and all benefitted from the publicity.



Adam Milford's Theatre Workout uses
drama to help to improve employability
among young people



Ciara from St Ursula's Convent
talks about a "Bites & Bingo"
project to bring fun and music into
the lives of elderly people.

Letters to the editor

Any views expressed are those of the writers only, and are
not necessarily those of the *WN* or the Westcombe Society.

Cllr Geoff Brighty
Blackheath Westcombe Ward

I read with great interest the *WN* article about
the proposed cruise liner terminal at Enderby
Wharf. A member of the Council's Planning
Board, I attended the meeting which approved
the scheme though I spoke and voted against.

As you report, the potential effect on local
air quality was a major issue and at the meeting
in July I argued for deferring the decision to
allow more research into the environmental
implications, but this was rejected with six
voting against and five of us voting for deferral.

After excellent contributions from residents
and a lengthy discussion by members of the
Board the final decision was six in favour with
three against. There were two abstentions.

Of course, a cruise liner terminal could
provide jobs and increase tourism, as argued.
However, on balance, I voted against the plan
not only as I shared concerns on local air quality
but also because of the density and scale of the
development required to support the scheme –
which includes three tower blocks of 23, 26 and
31 storeys.

From: Gillian & Julie Wood Dornberg Close
Our Mum's funeral took place on Thursday 17th
September. We would very much like to record
our praise, and thanks, for all the local services
who assisted on the day.

We used Blackheath Funeral Services
(Stratheden Parade): their service was more than
excellent, friendly – and very supportive.
Passion Flower (Old Dover Road) provided the
main floral tributes, and, after the funeral, the
Royal Standard pub provided a lovely buffet to
finish off what could have been a very sad day;
all of the above made it a true celebration of
Margaret Wood's (our Mum's) life: our Mum
would have been proud and honoured to have
supported our local businesses.

**Ed: We commiserate you on the death of your
Mum; many thanks for your donation to the
Greenwich and Bexley Community Hospice.**

From: Name and address supplied

I am a fervent admirer of the *WN*. However, I
am curious to know the editorial policy that
leads to the publication of Mr Allman's puerile
and self-congratulatory letter in September's
WN. I know that "the Editor's decision is final",
but . . . Fortunately, local residents have the
good sense not to vote for him on his repeated
attempts to get elected to the Council.

**Editor: The policy is to encourage maximum
participation by all members of the community.**

From: Peter Dempsey

I greatly enjoyed going to the OnBlackheath
event – it had a real family vibe – but on the
Saturday it was way too loud, audible right over
in the Westcombe Park/Standard area.

Hardy Rd.

Perhaps I missed letters about it, but on 1 and
2 August there had been an event called Magic
of Thailand, the noise levels from which were
far worse. I went and spoke politely to them,
but to no effect. I also wrote to the organisers,
but they didn't even respond. I hope that the
Council do not give them a permit again.

Perhaps the real issue here is that the
Council (or Councils, both Greenwich and
Lewisham?) are selling out: they get nice fees
from these events, so they are prepared to allow
excessive noise. . .

Meanwhile, we have boy racers with
"enhanced" exhaust systems regularly using the
A102 and surrounding areas as racetracks until
up to 2.00am, but nothing is done about that
either: I started noticing it ten years ago.

From: Roger Marshall

St. Germans Place.
Last month's *WN* had an almost subliminal
banner underneath its title reading "EIIR - Long
May She Reign" and whilst I share whole heart-
edly your implied hope that the Queen continues
to have a long and happy life, many think that it
is high time that she stepped down as monarch.

By tradition if not by constitution the News
has always been apolitical, so with this in mind
the November issue should have a similarly
sized banner reading "Time For a Republic",
"Citizen Not Subject" or "Monarchy Should Be
History". **Ed: What do readers think?**

FEATURES

“What’s your favourite poem?”

Asks the poetry performance group *Live Canon*

Desert Island Discs is one of Radio 4's guilty Sunday morning pleasures. Hearing the great and good, the notorious and the accomplished choose 8 pieces of music to take with them to a desert island is irresistible, filled with opportunities for humour, insight and revelation.

What music would you return to, again and again? The powerful links between music and memory become clear, as well as between music and mood. In a recent, programme, Dame Judi Dench mused that her choices were too gloomy for life on the island, and was tempted to make a last-minute substitution!

Desert Island Poems

But there's another art form linked to memory, to public and private moments of immense joy and sorrow – poetry. Who could forget John Hannah reciting Auden's "Stop the clocks..." in the film *Four Weddings and a Funeral*?

So it seems fitting that Live Canon has decided to take the question – what poems would you take to a desert island? – and turn it into a performance at Made in Greenwich Gallery on 3rd December.

The event begins with a conversation I have with the poet Blake Morrison, who will share his personal desert island poem list, and Helen Eastman, director of Live Canon. The second half is up to us/you!

Live Canon is now asking the public to compile and share their own Desert Island poem lists, submitted by email or on the Live Canon website. Those receiving the most votes will be read out by Live Canon, all professional actors.

Another poetry project

This isn't the first time Live Canon has collaborated with Made in Greenwich (MIG), a community art gallery which also generously supports poetry. In September they performed classic railway poems in a reading during the MIG exhibition "Greenwich Station in Words and Images".

The exhibition revisited work from a residency at Greenwich station first set up in 2014 by MIG's Irena Hill and Sonia Maulson at Southeastern. The original residency featured three painters, Gillian Burroughs, John Govett and David Weekes, and a poet, NJ Hynes, who spent a month sketching, exploring and talking

to the staff. NJ Hynes then continued as poet in residence at the station, posting new poems regularly along platform 2.

The recent September exhibition, "Greenwich Station Revisited", reunited the three painters and poet while adding the work of photographer Penny Matheson.

Penny produced a series of small images focused on commuter's feet, capturing the constant movement and transiency of the station. John Govette's watercolours caught familiar ticket hall encounters, while David Weekes' black and white work portrayed the platform with the feeling of an electric storm.

The exhibition also highlighted the poem posters produced by NJ Hynes and designer Paul Kley and shown at the station over the past year, bringing all of the posters together into the same space for the first time.

A highlight was "The Sting of Speed and the Solace of Motion: Railway poems from Greenwich and Beyond", a reading by NJ Hynes, performing poems from her residency, and Live Canon, performing classic and contemporary railway poems.

The gallery was packed, the audience warm and lively, and everyone was game for an audience-participation poem by Hynes which linked "volunteer" readers as if they were standing on a station platform. The Live Canon actors were warm, convincing and engaging -- the poetry came alive, aided by the intimate setting of the gallery, surrounded by railway-inspired art. **Enter your Desert Island poem list on the Live Canon website www.livecanon.co.uk/desert-island-poems or email them to desertislandpoems@gmail.com**

To Reach Me (a riddle) N.J. Hynes
Proceed on foot alone.

After leaving the falling down bridge
you must pass through a deep ford
dine with a stubborn green witch
climb through a maze of hills
and walk east, combing the park
for Charles, who weighs a ton,
and wears wool and Dockers in the yard;
but wool makes him itch (around his arse
and all)
so bring him silk and sweet plums instead.
Then head to the abbey in the wood
for a pint, ring the bell and feed the deer,
don't forget to cover one ear – if
they offer, ride their sleigh across the green
but don't dart before the cruising Ford.
I'm waiting. *Answers on a postcard, please!*

Another poem: by Rosemary Gill

MARNELS

Did you know Marnels have gone?
All the boys are moving on.
They've been there for generations
Meeting our wants and expectations.
I was sad when I heard the news
Over the years they've sold me screws
Hooks and hinges, packets of seeds,
Various concoctions to treat the weeds
Or make the lawn grow, kill off the bugs
Feed the tomatoes, control the slugs –
Light bulbs, candles, sticks for peas
Changed my mophead, cut my keys.
I'll miss them, feel the need to say
Thank you, God Speed you on your way.

* * *

The Westcombe Writers Circle is on the
first Thursday of every month 2.30 - 4.30
pm in Mycenae House
For more information, please ring
Rosemary Gill on 8858 5088



Choose your tools!

Samuel Pepys: Plague, Fire, Revolution The National Maritime Museum's new exhibition

Neville Grant

Samuel Pepys would have loved riddles like the one on this page (and much of his diary reads like a riddle...) But had Samuel Pepys been in office today, he would have been undoubtedly hounded out of public life by the press, for persistent lechery, and bribery.

Which would have been our loss, for Samuel Pepys was a highly successful civil servant: he became Chief Secretary to the Admiralty under Charles II, and did a great deal to build up the Royal Navy. He was twice master of Trinity House, became a fellow of the Royal Society in 1665, and its President from 1684 - 1686. He was also an MP – for Castle Rising in Norfolk in 1673, and then for Harwich in 1679.

If he had been given a drubbing by today's press, we would also have lost one of the most colourful characters in history. A notorious gossip, a skilled musician, and a lover of fine living as well as of women, he lived through what the Chinese would call "interesting times."

His life spanned the reign of 6 monarchs – Charles I, Charles II, James II, William and Mary, and Queen Anne, as well as two commoners, or "Lord Protectors" Cromwell and his son Richard.

During his lifetime, he witnessed two revolutions, Civil War, and the execution of Charles 1st. Astutely, having been a supporter of Cromwell, he managed to

switch allegiance to Charles II, and was personally involved in the Restoration.

He also lived through four wars against the Dutch, in one of which the Medway was invaded by a Dutch fleet (a detailed description of which is documented in his famous diary.)

Pepys' Diaries are essential documents for any historian of the second half of the Seventeenth Century. They document both public events such as the Great Plague of London in 1665, during which he moved the Navy Office to Greenwich, as well, of course, the Great Fire of London in 1666 (when he moved his wife to Woolwich). However, he remained at his post in London during both these events.

The diary also documents less salubrious episodes of his life, his wife Elisabeth unfortunately had to cope with, many of which are written in code.

We are very lucky to have the National Maritime Museum on our doorstep, where we can enjoy a new exhibition about Samuel Pepys. It opens on 20th November, and continues until March 25th 2016.

NMM Special Exhibitions Gallery
£12.00 Adult, £10.00 concs, £6.00 Child
(Members free) Visit rmg.co.uk/pepys

Pictured: Portrait of Samuel Pepys by John Hayls (1666) National Portrait Gallery. Elisabeth de St Michel, Pepys' wife. Stipple engraving by James Thomson, after a 1666 painting by John Hayls, now lost

Maritime Lecture Series on Samuel Pepys

To accompany the exhibition, the NMM is holding a series of six lectures given by Dr Robert Blyth and Kristian Martin, the curators of the exhibition. The lectures are on every Thursday, starting 29th October until December 3rd. 11.00 am - 1.00 pm
Tickets: £8.00 Adult, £6.00 for members.

Samuel Pepys and Greenwich

'Pepys' diary opens on 1 January 1660, and he continued writing it until May 1669, when, worried about his eyes, he stopped. A frequent visitor to Greenwich in his official capacity as 'clerk of the Acts' for the Navy, he lived in Greenwich 1665 - 1666 and was a great friend of another famous diarist, John Evelyn. Pepys frequently mentions the royal dockyards at Deptford and Woolwich. On one occasion, he accompanied Sir Christopher Wren to Greenwich, and gave advice on the construction of the Royal Naval Hospital. **Some extracts: 4 March 1664:** "... at Greenwich, did observe the foundation laying of a very great house for the King, which will cost a great deal of money."

The Black Death

24 August 1665: At Greenwich, "dined very well and thence to look at our rooms at the Kings' House, which were not yet ready for us." Later, Pepys "walked to Greenwich, in my way seeing a coffin with a dead body therein, dead of the plague, laying in the open close to Combe Farm", which was carried out last night, and the parish have not appointed anybody to bury it...this disease making us more cruel to one another than if we were dogs."

The Great Fire Of London

Sunday 2 September 1666: Pepys was woken at 3.00am with news of "a great fire" in the City. Summoned to see the king, he is ordered to tell the Lord Mayor of London to pull down houses to stop the fire spreading. Days later, he took his wife and gold (worth £2,350) to Woolwich. His diary recalls "what a sad sight it was by moonlight to see the whole City on fire, that you might see it as plain at Woolwich as if you were by it."

* **Combe Farm** A 1744 map by J Rocque places Combe Farm roughly where the A102 crosses the Woolwich Road. A nearby road named Farmcote Road lends credence to this. Westcombe Hill used to be known as Combe Farm Lane (and Sheep Gate Lane on Rocque's map) until around 1900. *Combe Farm, Greenwich*, is the title of a book by Barbara Ludlow and Sally Jenkinson – available in the Greenwich Heritage Centre price £1.50

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WHAT'S ON

ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath 4th Thursday of every month, 2.00 for 2.30. **26th Nov. Andrew Davies** The rise and fall of the English music hall. Social history, architecture - and great songs. Non-members £5
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, the University of Greenwich Mon 9th Nov 8.00pm Cartier 1900-1939: Jeweller of Genius Talk by Judy Rudoe 8852 7873 Non-members £8.00. Annual membership £60.
BLACKHEATH HALLS
Wed 11th Nov. 8.00pm **Ravilious and Bawden: An Artistic Friendship** James Russell, a leading expert on Eric Ravilious, is the curator of the Ravilious exhibition which recently opened at Dulwich Picture Gallery. He also discusses his book *The Lost Watercolours of Edward Bawden*, to be published soon. Recital Room, Blackheath Halls £10
MADE IN GREENWICH GALLERY 8293 9823 www.madeingreenwich.co.uk 324 Creek Rd SE10.
Autumn programme:
"Between Inside and Outside", a mixed rolling show running through to Christmas.
10th Nov. 7.00 pm: Cinnamon Press launch of two new works of fiction - "Send" by Kay Syrad, and "The Disobedient Wife" by Annika Milisic-Stanley. Free, drinks available.
3rd Dec: "Desert Island Poems" with **Blake Morrison and Live Canon**. 7pm, £12 to include refreshments. Booking opens 1st November, strictly pre-booked tickets madeingreenwich.co.uk
See page 4.

CHILDREN & FAMILY

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THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Mon 21st Dec. Carol Singing: Meet at Mycenae House 7.00 pm. In aid of Greenwich Night Shelter.

COMMUNITY

MYCENAE HOUSE
Fri 13th Nov. Featuring Bob MacKay plus JazzNights Allstars and guests. Candlelit musical event occurring on the second Friday each month during 2015. **Backed by the Phil Mead Trio, hosted by Dave Silk.** Further information from Dave on: 01689875683 or visit www.jazznights.co.uk
Sat 14th Nov. 1.30 - 4.30 INTERNATIONAL ART AUCTION raising funds for refugees. 8858 8489
14th NOV. 12-4.00pm HALSTOW SCHOOL CRAFT FAIR, Halstow School, East Greenwich Two floors of top end crafts, jewellery, knitware, textiles, soaps, baking, cards, hand made clothes, decorations, photography, art, sweets, pottery and much more
ST LUKE'S PLAYERS A Cabaret Produced by Gwen Zammit at **THE ASSEMBLY ROOMS** The Village, Charlton SE7 SAT. 21st Nov - 7pm for 7.30pm & **SUN. 22nd - 6pm for 6.30pm**Tickets: £13 Adults (£7 children) (inc. fish & chip supper) bring your own drinks with glasses! Book by 18th: 8856 7373 profits to: muscular dystrophy & alzheimer's research uk
GLOBAL FUSION MUSIC & ARTS Free workshops Fortnightly Tuesday & Friday evenings 7.30 - 8.30 at Mascalls Meeting Rooms off Victoria Way Charlton SE7 7TT: Tai Chi. Singing, Drumming, Writers' Group, African Dance Info: 020 8858 9497
Poetry & Jazz Night
Friday 13th Nov. Charlton House 7.30 - 10 pm
GFMA have been running events for Royal Greenwich Jazz joins Nigerian writer and poet, Funmi Adewole. Tickets from www.wegotickets.com or on the door from 7pm. £6.00 Information: 0208 858 9497
GREENWICH & BEXLEY COMMUNITY HOSPICE Join us for a game of bridge!
Sat. 21st Nov. 1.00 - 4.30 pm: with /without a partner. At the Hospice Building, 185 Bostall Hill, Abbey Wood SE2 0GB Cost: £3.00 (Coffee/tea included) In support of the Hospice.

SPOKEN WORD

MYCENAE HOUSE
Fri 20th Nov. 8.00 pm Laddish humour from **MATT RICHARDSON** & Jenny Collier & George Rigden £8
GREENWICH THEATRE
Sunday, 8th Nov. RUBY WAX - Sane New World
Based on her critically acclaimed book, US comedian Ruby Wax helps us understand why we sabotage our sanity with our own thinking
INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY
17th. Nov. Enderby Wharf: History and Progress
Meeting at The Old Bakehouse, Bennett Park, SE3. Please use the station car park. Non members £1.
BLACKHEATH FLOWER ARRANGING SOCIETY Meets third Friday of the month in Mycenae House. **Next meeting: Nov 20th Jill Griffin TBA** siancaroline@googlemail.com
BLACKHEATH SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY
Next meeting: Nov 20th. PAUL RYAN talks on Television – Gathering the Strands: the disparate sources that together make a sports programme.
BLACKHEATH SOCIETY
Tues. 24th November: 8.00 pm Recital Room, Blackheath Halls **Prof. ANNE CURRY** on **AGINCOURT** (800th Anniversary of the battle); Henry V & his army were welcomed on Blackheath. Tickets £10.00 from the society - Studio 2 The Old Bakehouse 11 Blackheath Village. Pl. enc sae.
GREAT HALL, BLACKHEATH HALLS
Sat 28th Nov. 8.00 pm Award-winning comedian and comedy writer **ANDY HAMILTON**

FOUND

Set of golf clubs found in Glenluce Road a few weeks ago. Contact, info @westcombe.society.org.

WANTED

The Westcombe Society needs a new Membership Secretary. For more information please, ring 8853 1312.

THE CASE FOR RADICAL CHANGE IN EDUCATION

This report was prepared by the PER Group to send to the political parties in May. It has forewords by Antony Seldon, Richard Harries and Frank Funnell.

You can buy it post free if you receive the *Westcombe News* for the special price of £5.00 by sending money or cheque, payable to PER Group, to:

The PER Group
c/o P.O. Box 16916, Blackheath, SE3 7WS



Nov 3rd - 15th. COASTAL FRAGMENTS - Trevor Crone. *Trevor Crone's photos are on view at The Greenwich Gallery* "The British coast has held a fascination and admiration for me since childhood. This series of photographs is an attempt to capture both the slightly quirky nature of the English seaside resort and the unspoilt beauty of our coast - a project I've been working on for almost 20 years.

"I still use traditional film based products, preferring darkroom produced prints over inkjets. The craft aspect of photography is important to me and there is more 'hands-on' working within the darkroom than at a computer."
On show at The Greenwich Gallery, Linear House, Peyton Place, SE10 8RS Tony and Helen Othen - Administrators
Open weekdays 9:00am to 5:30pm; weekends 12:00 to 4:00pm (closed Sunday 8th Nov.) www.thegreenwichgallery.com

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THEATRE

THE GREENWICH THEATRE Crooms Hill, Greenwich SE10 8ES 020 8858 7755
Sun 1st Nov. 7.4 30 pm THE HAUNTED DOLL'S HOUSE Based on the story by M.R James 7.30 pm
Ticket prices: £16, Concs £13.50
SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL
Mon 2nd. -Sat 7th. Nov. 7.00 pm Each night four schools will perform four different Shakespeare plays. This is the UK's largest youth drama festival and enables over 1,000 primary, secondary, and special schools to stage abridged Shakespeare productions in their local professional theatre. 35,000 young people will take to stages across the UK. A full list of participating schools is available from the Box Office. Tickets: £10, Concessions £8, Groups £7

MYCENAE HOUSE 90 Mycenae Road celebrates **International Men's Day** with a new play **TROUBLED MEETS THE TROUBADOUR** by local playwright Andrew Ogilvie on **Thu. Nov. 19th** at 8pm, tickets £8 available at www.wegotickets.com

Lewisham Choral Society

Sat. 14th November 7.30 pm

Cherubini: Requiem in C Minor
Rossini: 3 Motets
Mendelssohn: Capriccio brillante for piano and orchestra
Mozart: Ah! Vous dirai-je maman: Variations for piano solo

Nico de Villiers (Piano)
Forest Philharmonic Orchestra
Conductor: Dan Ludford -Thomas

Great Hall, Goldsmiths College, Lewisham Way SE14 6NW

Tickets, inc. programme: £15, £12 (concs) £5 Full-time students £2
Info and tickets from:
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In Memoriam

“We will remember them ...”



But how do we recover information about them? EMMA SNEAD tells us how we can uncover the secrets of the past at Greenwich Heritage Centre

Greenwich Heritage Centre are inviting the public to use the extensive archives held at the centre to uncover the secrets of the past.

Carolyn Ayers, Heritage Project Officer told the *WN*: “Anyone can contact us to request an initial search. We recently assisted a Dutch man who contacted us to find out information about a British pilot whose aircraft had crashed during an air raid, and who is buried in the town of Winterswijk in Holland.”

Mr Rhebergen told Carolyn that the town had ‘adopted’ the grave of Pilot Charles Frederick Marshall, and that each year local residents and school children placed flowers in remembrance.

Thanks to the work of Greenwich Heritage Centre volunteers, they were able to find out previously unknown information about his family and his parents’ life in Plumstead.

Carolyn said, “Charles’ father was a local man, who worked as a clerk at the Royal Arsenal and joined the Royal Field Artillery in August 1914. It is possible that the descendants of Charles Marshall still reside in the Greenwich area and I am sure they would be interested to find out more about their ancestor.”



ABOVE: the grave of the aircraft in which Sgt Marshall flew
BELOW, LEFT: Sgt Marshall’s grave in Winterswijk: still tended by the local people

The Greenwich Heritage Centre’s archives include a great mass of material: historical records, photos and information about local businesses, residences, and people and their knowledgeable team are able to assist anyone who wishes to find out more.

For additional information please contact: RGHT Chief Executive Tracy Stringfellow on 020 8856 3951 or email tracy@rght.org.uk

About Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust

Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust is a new charity, registered in May 2014. The Trust and its staff and volunteers aims to help people find out about the heritage in our care and the wider history of the Royal borough of Greenwich, through the built assets and collections we hold. Bringing the heritage of the Royal Borough to life through working with community partners is also at the centre of the Trust’s work and there are a number of projects planned for the future. These will include community events and new exhibitions. Both Charlton House and the Greenwich Heritage Centre are open to the public and available for corporate and community hire.

RGHT head office is based at Charlton House. Registered Charity 1157164

St George’s Garrison Church, Woolwich

Bombed in 1944 by a V1, the church is the VC Memorial for the Royal Artillery, who recorded 65 VCs over the years. Heritage of London Trust Operations is restoring the fine mosaics. It is hoped the church (which is roofless) will become a memorial garden for the local community.



PHOTO: NG

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The Merchant Navy



As we remember the First World War, the history books are dominated by the land operations (mainly in Europe) and to some extent the war at sea. But almost forgotten is the part played by the Mercantile Marine.

The National Maritime Museum’s research guide (C9) explains how to use the facilities of the Caird Library at the NMM to research the crews and vessels of the Mercantile Marine in 1914-1918. It also provides details of the principal relevant records held at The National Archives (TNA) and elsewhere.

Partly in recognition of the war service performed by civilians, standard uniform and insignia for officers of the Mercantile

Marine were introduced in 1919. The first formal use of the title Merchant Navy came with the appointment of the Prince of Wales as Master of the Merchant Navy and Fishing Fleets in 1928.

In the Caird Library reading room there is free access to most of the records that can be searched and viewed online. There you can find details of most of the men who served in the Mercantile Marine – including Frederick Parslow (below).

More information on visiting the Caird Library, and guidance on how to register and order items for viewing or copying, etc., can be found here on rmg.co.uk/researchers/library

Frederick Daniel Parslow VC

Among the stories one can unearth from the NMM and The National Archives is that of Frederick Daniel Parslow VC. A Master in the Mercantile Marine, he was the first from that Service to be awarded a Victoria Cross.

Parslow was master of on the bridge of HM Horse Transport *Anglo-Californian*, en route from Montreal to Avonmouth. On board were some 900 pack horses that were destined for the Western Front.

The *Anglo-Californian* was 90 miles south west of Queenstown (now Cork), when she was attacked by a German U-boat, U-39. The submarine skipper had already used up all his torpedoes, so the U-boat surfaced, and began to open fire.

The convoy system for Merchant ships was not introduced until May 1917, so not only was Parslow’s ship unarmed, it was unescorted too. However, Parslow gave the U boat captain a run for his money. He called for emergency full speed, 14 knots, and instructed the wireless operator to try to contact any nearby Royal Navy vessels.

Capable of 16½ knots on the surface, the U-39 began to gain. Informed by his own wireless operator that the *Anglo-Californian* had contacted a Royal Navy ship, the German skipper opened up with his 88mm deck gun.

Parslow now cleared the open bridge of all the crew, save for the second mate, his son, at the wheel. Parslow faced aft and ordered a zig-zag course, staying stern-on to the submarine.

By 0900, the U-39 had closed to 1½ miles, its firing becoming more accurate. Parslow ordered the crew below and his son now steered lying flat on the deck. At 1030, the submarine signalled Parslow to abandon his much-damaged ship. Not wanting to risk his men any further, Parslow rang for the engine to stop and ordered boats to be lowered. The U-boat ceased fire.

His wireless operator then passed a message that two Royal Navy destroyers were on their way. Parslow immediately ordered the boats inboard, and full speed.

Taken by surprise, the U-boat commander opened fire again. Parslow, his ship badly holed and on fire, decided to heave to in the interests of his crew, lowering boats. As the U-39 closed to within 50 yards, the Royal Navy ships appeared and the submarine hastily dived and escaped. Some 33 of the *Anglo Californian*’s crew had been killed as well as 30 horses.

The ship was taken into Queenstown (Cork), where Frederick Parslow and 8 of his men are buried; 14 without a grave are named on the national Merchant Navy Memorial on London’s Tower Hill.

While the Admiralty wished to recognise the gallantry of Parslow, as a civilian, he could not technically be awarded the VC. In the end, Parslow was made a Sub-Lieutenant in the Royal Naval Reserve in May 1919 and this allowed him to be given the Victoria Cross. His son was awarded the Distinguished Service Cross.

John Travers Cornwall VC



The paintings at the NMM are often more moving than the photographs. In 1914, John Cornwall enlisted in the navy. He became a First Class Boy on HMS Chester.

At the battle of Jutland in May 1916, he was mortally wounded in action, but remained at his post, even though most of his gun crew were dead or wounded. He died two days later in Grimsby hospital, aged less than 16 and a half. He was posthumously awarded the Victoria Cross – the youngest person ever to have won the VC.

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Planning applications can be viewed in the library, or at the Woolwich Library on the lower ground floor of the Woolwich Centre, 35 Wellington St. They may also be viewed on www.greenwich.gov.uk/planning

More on Seibert Rd

Cllr Geoff Brighty casts new light on the issues

Residents of Seibert Road have long complained that the boundary between property curtilages and the A102 did not provide an effective barrier to sound from the Blackwall Tunnel Southern Approach Road (BTSA). I was pleased to read that Matt Pennycook has raised the issue with TfL and that my fellow-councillors have contributed. They are the most recent in a long line of local representatives – including Alex Grant and myself – who have been trying to get something done.

The petition

The petition – a request for installation of noise and pollution barriers along the A102 containing 231 signatures, was presented by Cllr Paul Morrissey and referred to the Director of Director of Community Safety & Environment for investigation.

The Council responded that Transport for London (TfL) are responsible for the A102 and would need to approve the installation of measures to reduce the impact of noise from the road on adjacent properties. For years the Council has brought those concerns to the attention of TfL, and their predecessors.

In June 2013 the Council wrote to Transport for London (TfL) on behalf of the Residents of Seibert Road and in response to an enquiry, from me, raised on their behalf.

TfL's past responses

A letter from the Council in June 2013, elicited this response from TfL:

- TfL accept that traffic noise levels on the Transport for London Road Network can be high at certain times in certain areas
- The fencing which TfL are responsible for along the A102 is in good order
- Unfortunately, TfL has no funding to provide noise barriers as mitigation against road traffic noise; nor are they obliged to provide mitigation
- at such future time as highway maintenance requires, TfL may use low noise surface materials on the A102 as the most effective feasible measure available
- TfL may consider this location as well as others for government funding (DEFR) from the Governments noise action plan, but there is no commitment to this.

Next consultation

The Greenwich Conservative Group's response to the consultation on the new proposed new tunnel (see page 1) has also drawn attention to the need for pollution and noise mitigation measures.

They suggest that these issues should be addressed as part of the proposals – though of course, the problems need to be addressed whether or not Silvertown Tunnel goes ahead.

It is of course unclear what impact if any the next round of consultations, which ends on Nov. 29th, will have on TfL's plans, but the residents of Seibert Road are not holding their breath . . .

Consultation documents can be found in Public libraries; or visit: <https://consultations.tfl.gov.uk/rivercrossings/silvertown> <http://www.silvertowntunnel.co.uk/>

Rail trouble

More disruption to train services at London Bridge is scheduled from 24th December until 4th January. Although services from Charlton and Blackheath can be diverted to other London termini, this is not the case with services from Westcombe Park and the other stations on the Greenwich line.

Mike Sparham, Convenor of the Greenwich Line Users' Group, said "It is simply an unacceptable level of service that a blockade of London Bridge also means a blockade of the Greenwich line. Although there are ticketing arrangements in place, there is no compensation for the extra journey time and inconvenience."

When there are no train services, the Users' Group has been successful in getting train tickets accepted on local bus routes from the Greenwich Line stations to Blackheath, Lewisham and Charlton, but with further blockades inevitable until 2018, the Greenwich Line Users' Group is pressing Southeastern to keep the line open to/from Deptford when London Bridge is closed.

Southeastern have also admitted there will be further disruption from August 2016 until January 2018 ...

Watch this space for further details ...

PHOTO: Patricia Slade-Baker



Eleven Westcombe Society members took part in the annual Macmillan Cancer Support London Bridges Walk, raising an astonishing £972.73 for the charity. All those who took part thoroughly enjoyed the walk.

Spotted en route: Four horse riders on the Thames, waiting patiently for the tide to submerge them, only to be revealed again at low tide. Eerie, lovely. The Four Horsemen of the Apocalypse? Possibly. The heads are like oilwell pump-jacks "This piece is about fossil fuels, which way we're heading, and where our future lies," says the sculptor, Jason deCaires Taylor. In the background one can see the London Eye, and Parliament. Are either taking a blind piece of notice?

Open Letter From J-J Aune

The Westcombe Park community will have become accustomed to the posters that are displayed around the area to advertise forthcoming events.

These are usually put up a fortnight before the event and taken down very soon after. All the profits made at these events are donated to local charities or used to fund projects that will improve the local environment. The exception to this is the Macmillan Coffee Morning and the Macmillan Bridges Walk.

Posters for both of these events were displayed locally, but on two occasions they were all taken down. the same things has happened to other recent events.

Whilst we realise that a multitude of posters can make the area look untidy, we are careful not to display them where they might cause problems, and always remove them after the event. We also remove the plastic ties which are used to attach them to railings when placed there.

We have checked with our local street cleaner and the council who all say they

are not responsible for their removal. So the question then is, who is removing the posters?

The same thing is happening to other posters put up by local groups. The work of the Society is undertaken by volunteers for the benefit of the locality and we hope that we can rely on the support of the folk living and working in Westcombe Park.

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