



Westcombe NEWS



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November 2014 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

Was it just 'a vanity project'?

Neville Grant

The Tall Ships Festival may already be just a distant memory – but many had their eyes caught by an accusation levelled at the Council by the head of the Unite Trade Union, Onay Kasab.

Announcing a strike during the festival by council parking attendants, Mr Kasab said: "I will be frank – rather than a Tall Ships Festival, which is a vanity project, the majority of my members just want fair pay."

"Maybe then, our members could actually afford a ticket for a ride on one of these vessels – rather than being taken for a ride as far as pay is concerned."

Mr Kasab may well have a point about about low pay – but does that mean that Greenwich should never have organised the Tall Ships Festival?

Business booming

The people of all ages we saw lining the river banks, queuing up to go on boat trips, taking part, whether crewing ships as volunteers, sailing, or rowing, or just enjoying the many shore-based activities, would disagree.

In Greenwich, many of the shopkeepers, street traders, restaurants and pubs said that they did very well – much better than during the Olympics.

Councillor Denise Hyland, Leader of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, said:

"The last five days have been absolutely fantastic for Royal Greenwich and I thank each and every one who helped make this festival a wonderful success."

"After hosting the London 2012 Olympics, the borough has proved once again that we make the perfect location for a large-scale event . . . Like the Olympics, it has cemented our reputation as a leading destination and has played a part in our strategy for economic growth."



Cllr Hyland added that the festival "has showed how our waterfront is a real draw. The economic benefits of our tourism industry are clear. It creates jobs, helps our local businesses, and gives us a firm footing on the global stage."

"This won't be the last time we see Tall Ships in Royal Greenwich and I look forward to welcoming these glorious vessels back in the future."

Strong visitor economy

She added: "The Council and 'Visit Greenwich' will be building on this success . . . We have experienced a growth in tourism since hosting the Olympic Games and with our partners we will ensure that the same benefits will be achieved as a result of hosting the Regatta. Our visitor economy is already worth £1.2 billion and we look forward to seeing that grow."

However, is there another side of the story?

Vanity projects?

The Conservative councillors on Greenwich Council for once seem to agree with Unite: they have criticised Labour's spending on what they say became known as vanity projects.

"The Tall Ships Regatta was continued under the current leadership of Cllr Denise Hyland who, according to a piece in the *Mercury*, said that the precise cost to the Council is unknown," commented Cllr Geoff Brighty.

"Given that local government budgets are under pressure, and 'the cuts' being a phrase that is constantly on Cllr Hyland's lips, it is surprising that she doesn't appear to know the real cost."

Cllr Geoff Brighty added: "However, a cost of £2.5m to the Borough has been widely quoted and many will wonder why, if money is tight, it isn't being spent on maintaining essential Council services."

"The Council claims that the event will boost the Borough as a visitor destination, but a walk around Greenwich on almost any day of the week shows it is already a must-visit place. The Labour-controlled Council's priorities have to be questioned."

He may have a point about numbers: it is estimated that 18m people visit Greenwich every year. So the estimated 1.8m people who came in September is about what could be expected anyway. But who knows if these figures are reliable?

Provisional costs

The *WN* has tried to establish what the actual costs were. It seems £2.5 million may be very wide of the mark. A council spokesperson informed the *WN*: "We made provision for a contingency budget of £500k to meet additional costs above normal budgets, and taking account of sponsorship and income from sales."

"We are currently collating final information on all of these and will then publish information on the actual costs."

The spokesperson added that the Council's strong financial position and ability to invest in projects which boost the local economy is a result of its long-term financial strategy and sound financial management – which have been commended by the Council's external auditors.

One good turn-out deserves another



Westcombe Society volunteers had a lot of fun raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support at the annual fund-raising coffee morning late last month. Do say: 'Let them eat cake!' Don't say: 'You got any small change, please?' Full story on page 2.

In Memoriam



Don't miss the major art installation *Blood Swept Lands and Seas of Red* at the Tower of London. The installation marks one hundred years since the first full day of Britain's involvement in World War One. Created by ceramic artist Paul Cummins, it finishes on Nov. 11th.



PHOTO: Myles Dove

There are 888,246 ceramic poppies, each one representing a British military fatality in the war. The best view is from Tower Hill and along the path overlooking the moat. Ceramic poppies are being sold to raise funds for six service charities. To view this in colour, go to westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/

< < News briefs > >

Tunnel of Love - or Hate?

TFL are asking for our views on the proposal for a new tunnel under the Thames at Silvertown. The proposal also includes a range of charging options for the Blackwall and Silvertown Tunnels, when the Silvertown Tunnel opens in the early 2020s. For full details, including a list of roadshow locations, and to have your say, please visit tfl.gov.uk/silvertown-tunnel. This consultation will close on Friday 19th December.

Quiz Night

Did you sign up for the Westcombe Society's popular Quiz Night on 7th November? If you didn't, you are probably too late: booking closed on 31st October. But you might try just turning up on the night ...

Ottie and the Bea

We all enjoy seeing old John Roanian, Asad Ahmad, the BBC news presenter, in action. In September, he came back to his home patch in order to interview Julia Marsen of Ottie and the Bea. Asad asked Julia about the problems of running a small business. She said she did not see how any small business could survive in the West End because of exorbitant rents and rates; and she was very glad to be running a business very close to the community it served.

The battle of Creek Road

La Luta Continua for Ed Hill over the Greenwich Green site in Creek Road, an issue highlighted in August's *WN*. He has asked the developers, Mosaic, to remove part of its hoarding to allow access to "common land". Mr Hill

argues that there is a right of way from an old covenant. Mosaic do not agree. Looks like the lawyers at least will have a field day...

Passion Flower

Jan Barnett told the *WN* that Hattie has sold the business to Phuong and is taking a rest/holiday. Phuong assured her that it will be business as usual, with the same suppliers and the same delightful gifts. We wish them both well for the future.

Dog show

Well done, Sophie Spencer and friends for organising a fun dog show in Mycenae Gardens early last month. Thank goodness it didn't rain.

Christmas Bazaar

Put it in your diary: November 22nd

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proceeds to 999 club in Deptford

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COMMUNITY NEWS

WESTCOMBE NEWS

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www.westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/
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<http://westcombe.blogspot.com>

Westcombe society membership

please send this membership form to:
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The Macmillan Coffee Morning



PHOTOS:
Neville Grant

A warm welcome awaited the Mayor of the Royal Borough of Greenwich, Councillor Mick Hayes, and the Lady Mayoress, Mrs Hayes, at the Westcombe Society's Coffee Morning, raising money for Macmillan Cancer Support. In the picture [ABOVE] are Marilyn Little, the Chairman of the Westcombe Society, J-J Aune, Deputy Chair, and Caroline Owens, the organiser of the coffee morning. The event was very well attended: and the children particularly enjoyed the Scrumptious Cakes . . . [RIGHT] The Coffee morning became a bit of a family affair, as Mums (& some Dads) turned up to sample the super sandwiches, cakes and scones - and enjoy the raffle.

Trustees wanted

DAVID HALL

Mycenae House is buzzing, growing, developing and it needs volunteer trustees to join the board and keep up that momentum.

Mycenae House is where people can have fun, fulfil their creative urges, set themselves challenges. It's also a great place to socialise, and make new friends.

Sharing with others is the glue that sticks a community together. And Mycenae House is where it happens. It's run by the community for the community and relies on charity trustees to set the direction and supply additional expertise.

Suitable volunteers with business, organisational or professional skills who could spare time to give Mycenae House a

boost on the management committee are always in demand. It could be anyone who gets a lot out of Mycenae House, or simply a neighbour who wants to keep the community vibrant.

Improving access, upgrading facilities, and building a sustainable future are all essential for a thriving community hub. Royal Borough of Greenwich generously provides the building, and gives some help with running costs, but, inevitably, that is shrinking. Through our own efforts we raise more than 90 per cent of the centre's running costs.

For more information, please contact the manager, Mark Johnson-Brown, or call 020 8858 1749

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.

From: Wendy Higgs Belmont Park

I have an alternative view of the new Tesco building in Woolwich, vilified as "a carbuncle".

The problem with architectural prizes is that new buildings are viewed in isolation from the people whom they 'serve'. This is of necessity – those who evaluate them are unlikely to know the area and its community.

Is a building to be seen purely in 'artistic' terms? And in any case, isn't beauty in the eye of the beholder?

There are nine reasons why Tesco in Woolwich is valuable and functional for those who work there, live there and visit there frequently:

- * The new Tesco feels and is part of the regeneration of Woolwich
- * It overlooks the immensely popular and recently made useable Town square area: the centre now of Woolwich. Its location at one side of the square is ideal, as it gives the square a coherence it previously lacked.
- * Tesco café has ceiling-to-floor windows the whole length of one side facing the square. It has comfortable leather settees and easy chairs next to the windows.

Second floor up, it is highly popular with folk who like to feel part of the scenes around. Woolwich is a lively community and we are busy people – and this is a great place to relax while feeling part of the community.

* Its modern design – simple lines – balconies for all flats (many of which are sunny during the day) – and the use of low-key colour and



stainless steel strips plus curved surfaces is in keeping with the tastes of coming generations. Today's "eyesore" may well be tomorrow's

Masterpiece. No pastiche in sight.

- * Tesco has provided 3 hours free parking in the heart of the town.
- * Its remit meant it provided funding for the new Royal Borough of Greenwich Town Hall and Council offices. This new Woolwich Centre is directly opposite the previous Town Hall which is stylish and a Listed Building. This provides a sense of continuity.
- * The Centre also leads directly into the very popular new library.
- * All these buildings are at one side of Tesco and appear as part of one complex.
- * Tesco has been built in a modern and welcoming design. I would say

that the vast majority of people in Woolwich like and appreciate its presence. It has brought business and jobs with it.

In summary, the building's design, location and presence 'works' in Woolwich and in the surrounding area. It is valued for its role in its community.

From: Sian Tribe Tel. 8852 3909
Blackheath Flower Club are a local Flower Club that celebrated its 55th anniversary in October. We meet on the third Friday of the Month from 1.45- 4pm at Mycenae House. A guest Demonstrator arranges 5/6 designs, to be won in a raffle. Our club is part of a National Flower Arranging group called NAFAS.

From: A local resident

Readers will want to be aware of yet another telephone scam that often targets elderly people. This time, the phone call claims to emanate from New Scotland Yard; the caller, who seems very plausible, claims that £1000 has just been spent using your credit card at Selfridges, or some other store, and wants you to go to your bank to resolve the problem, where two plain clothes police officers will be waiting to assist you.

The caller directed his victims to draw out all their savings and to "pay particular attention to the appearance of the cashier because

The final total raised at the Coffee Morning in raising funds for Macmillan Cancer Support amounted to £900, our highest figure so far. The final figure for the London Bridge Walk is not yet known.

Local resident Judy Spence, who is Macmillan Area Fundraising Manager South London, writes:

"I would very much like to say how much Macmillan appreciates the amazing effort of the Westcombe Society and the local community, not only in raising sponsorship for the London Bridge Walk, which they took part in this year, but also in bringing so many together at Mycenae House for Macmillan's World's Biggest Coffee Morning in September.

"Each year the Society raises well over £1,000 for Macmillan for which we are extremely grateful. This could fund a Macmillan nurse for 37 hours providing invaluable support to cancer patients in our local community and ensuring that they don't face cancer alone. Macmillan could not support all the people they do without your help, so thank you."



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IN AID OF ROYAL BRITISH LEGION

New Scotland Yard was trying to break up a conspiracy at the bank branch."

In this case, the would-be victim claimed to be too unfirm to go to the bank, and asked for an officer to call round. The caller said "If you don't go, you will lose all your savings!" and rang off.

After a call to the local police on 101, two uniformed police officers arrived who confirmed that it was a common scam, and some people had fallen for it – in one case an elderly lady lost £5,000.

Ed: The National Fraud and Cyber Crime Reporting Centre hotline number is 0300 123 2040

St George's

WESTCOMBE PARK

Regular Worship Times
Sundays 11am Parish Communion
Wednesdays at 8.30am Morning Prayer
Wednesdays at 12.30pm
Soup lunch and fellowship

Special November Events
Sat. 8th Nov 7.00pm - Beetle Drive
Fun for the whole family. Bring your own drinks and nibbles.
Sun. 9th Nov 10.45am - Remembrance Day
Sat. 29th Nov. Christmas Fair at Christ Church Trafalgar Rd.

Your neighbourhood church on Glenluce Road. Rev'd Robert T (Tim) Yeager 07804 614245

LOCAL NEWS

Children in Need award for local autism charity

South East London charity Montessori Education for Autism (MEfA) has been awarded £10,000 by Children in Need towards their new Teenage Transitions project. The project will support youngsters aged 11-14 years as they make the transition to secondary school, and will be an after-school nurture group.

Wendy Fidler, MEfA's director said, "The new project is an extension of our existing free-of-charge after-school nurture group for primary aged children with autism and other special educational needs. As the children reach the end of their primary schooling it is clear they need more support than most to negotiate the transition to secondary school."

"We are currently seeking a local secondary school to host the group which will



run as a Friday Club after school during term time – we already have skilled staff. The group is for young people who are having various difficulties at school because of their autism."

The charity aims to match-fund the Children in Need award by continuing its successful 'Me 4MEfA Campaign': Schools are invited to join the campaign by raising £100 for the charity. Many local schools and some colleges and universities have already signed up!

To find out more, please contact MEfA: 0208 305 2202 /07710433994

www.montessorieducationforautism.com

Blackheath Art Society

Imagine is an exhibition of new artwork on show in the Upstairs Gallery of Discover Greenwich, running from Nov 8th to Jan.11th, 10.00 am-5.00 pm. The work ranges from local views to abstracts, 3D pieces, craft-work and photography. Entry is free and our artists will be happy to discuss the artwork with you. The work is for sale: ideal Christmas gifts!

Info: www.blackheathartsociety.org.uk

www.ornc.org.uk/events

[RIGHT] *Italian Arches* by Valerie Warren RSBA (detail)



Cards for good causes

The Cards for Good Causes Charity Christmas Card Shop opens again as usual this season in St Alfege's Church, from Monday November 3rd until Friday December 19th, between the hours of 10.30am - 4.30pm every day.

The shop sells cards and many other Christmas essentials for more than 25 charities. They will also be opening every Monday and Friday morning at Blackheath Halls between 9.30am and 2pm - from Monday Nov. 3rd until Monday Dec.15th.

This year - for the first time - they have a fabulous card, depicting Flamsteed

House in snow, designed especially for them by local artist, Margaret Donegan, one of two local scenes which will be on sale. Margaret runs workshops for adults and children in Greenwich studio contact studio75artclub@gmail.com

There will be a formal opening of the shop by Margaret, at 11am on Saturday Nov. 15th in St Alfege's, when coffee and mince pies will be served to get the Christmas spirit started. The cards will also be on sale at the Halls as well as the Westcombe Society's Dickensian Christmas Bazaar on Saturday Nov. 22.

From saddle to paddle

STUART WOLFF



A crew of paddlers drawn from Army Units, including the Household Cavalry, took part in the 22-mile Great River Race last September. Appropriately, since four are Fijian-born, they raced in a Hawaiian outrigger canoe, Keiki Wa'alele. They joined more than 300 boats and 2,400 competitors from all over the UK and around the world, to find the UK Traditional Boat Champions, starting from Millwall, and ending at Richmond.

The entry also included gigs, skiffs, cutters, currachs, jolly boats, naval whalers, Chinese dragon boats, Viking longships, shallops, skerries, wherries, a Bronze Age Canoe and many, many more.

Competitors include dedicated regular racers to fun rowers and paddlers, ranging from teenage Scouts to national champions. They were striving to win the Challenge Trophy of The Company of Watermen & Lightermen of the River Thames (celebrating their 500th anniversary), awarded to the first boat over the line, to figure in one of the 33 other classes or simply to finish and collect a much-prized participation certificate. The Race is run on a 'slowest away first, fastest last' pursuit handicap basis, meaning the last boat away has to make up over an hour to win.

Most rowers were raising money for charity, including the Race's official charity this year, the Royal Benevolent and Educational Fund for Watermen and Lightermen.

Memories of our theatre

Back in the sixties, with a derelict theatre on his doorstep, a young actor named Ewan Cooper campaigned for its restoration. In response to his initiative the Greenwich Theatre reopened on the 21st October 1969, with Ewan as its Founder and first Artistic Director. He will be in reminiscence with David Drummond at the Greenwich Society's Annual Lecture at 11.00 am on Sunday 16th Nov.

Past productions will be recalled along with performers such as Mia Farrow, Irene Handl, Susan Hampshire, Glenda Jackson, Barbara Windsor, Irene Worth, Steven Berkoff, Derek Griffiths, Alfred Marks, Anton Rodgers, and Robert Stephens.

Not forgetting Max Wall: it was Ewan's encouragement of the latter to create his "Aspects of Max Wall" that led to fond memories to this day of Max's funny walks. The theatre has since given us much enjoyment, including of course its critically acclaimed annual pantomime.

This event is in The Lecture Hall of The National Maritime Museum, Greenwich.

Tickets (£10) are obtainable from:

Daphne Barnett Tel: 0203 601 7198

Email: dbarnett102@yahoo.co.uk

Rhythm'n Swing

The Friends of Blackheath Halls and The Blackheath Society join together once again to bring you their autumn celebration Rhythm and Swing. Meet up with friends, enjoy a light supper and some of the great song and dance numbers from the golden age of jazz and the masters of swing and bebop. A talented group of young instrumentalists and vocalist will take you on a nostalgic journey through the 30s, 40s and 50s.

To book tickets and for more information, contact The Blackheath Society on 020 8297 1937 or email

office@blackheath.org TICKETS: £35 |

£300 for table of 10 includes a glass of sparkling wine on arrival and light supper Proceeds go to Blackheath Halls

Georgian fun

As part of the 300th anniversary celebrations of the Longitude Act, visit Georgian London at the NMM, with a Georgian gin and tonic, perchance to design your own wig, play Georgian parlour games, frolic to Georgian music - and take part in a Georgian Pub Quiz!

Venue: National Maritime Museum

Date: 13th Nov. Time: 6.00 - 9.00 pm

Tickets: £5.00 £4.00 concs.

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Vanbrugh Community Association
Annual General Meeting
Thursday 20 November 7.30pm

The VCA are the managing body of Mycenae House who are meeting to present their annual report and accounts for 2013-14 and to discuss the development of the centre. The meeting is open to all including the users of the centre and local residents. The VCA are particularly keen to meet anyone interested in supporting the centre by becoming a trustee.

AGM

90 Mycenae Road, Blackheath Standard, London, SE3 7SE
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FEATURES

STORM SMITH-SUCKOO describes what it was like

Aboard *Dar Mlodziezy*

This year, once again Suzy and I were given another opportunity to go Tallship sailing. Last year we embarked on our first trip, which was a nice leisurely sail from Southampton to France, stopping off in Ireland and other seaside towns on the way.

However this year we got to take part in the Tall Ships Race from Falmouth to the Isle of Wight, followed by a cruise to Greenwich. This trip was special to us as it finished in our hometown, Royal Greenwich, to take part in the Tall Ships Festival.

We sailed on the largest tall ship taking part in the regatta, the *Dar Mlodziezy* which is 110m long. While on board we took part in all the day-to-day activities from hoisting sails to making the brass took super shiny.

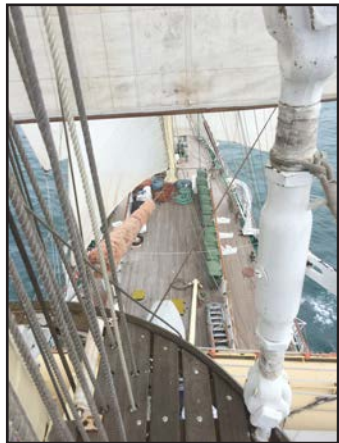
Back in 2007 was the first time that I ever thought of sailing as I went on a taster day at the AHOY Centre; from then on I have sailed there nearly every Saturday. It took a few weeks before I could go to bed after sailing and not feel that rocking sensation, but it has been a fantastic experience and learning experience going from an absolute novice to being trained up to Instructor level.

Every day onboard the ship started with hoisting the Polish flag onboard the boat, this was done from the back deck ... otherwise known as the poop deck, at this time we were briefed by the captain on what was going to happen during the day.

My watch was from eight till twelve both AM and PM: we worked on a basis of four hours on watch followed by an eight hour rest.

It took a little while to get into routine, which normally consisted

of a little power nap during the afternoon to set me up for the evening. On board the ship we had different roles as a collective as we were on Watch Three. Any time sails needed setting during the day, we would set the sails on the mizzen mast, which is the one closest to the stern.



"Don't look down!" This photo was only taken from about 15-20m high but you can still see the distance down to the decks.

However during our evening watch we had to set the sails on all three masts. But when we sailed on the same course for a

long time it was very rare that the sails needed to be reset.

While onboard my favourite job was climbing the mast and edging along the Yards to untie the sails. The first time you climb the rigging is of course slightly scary, but once the adrenaline kicks in you get a great buzz out of climbing up. On the *Dar*, the masts were 50 metres high, so the phrase "don't look down" really did run through my mind.

When steering (aka helming) the ship it gives you a great sense



LEFT: Storm following in James Bond's footsteps (or should we say wake?) as she roars away from Tower Bridge in a speed boat

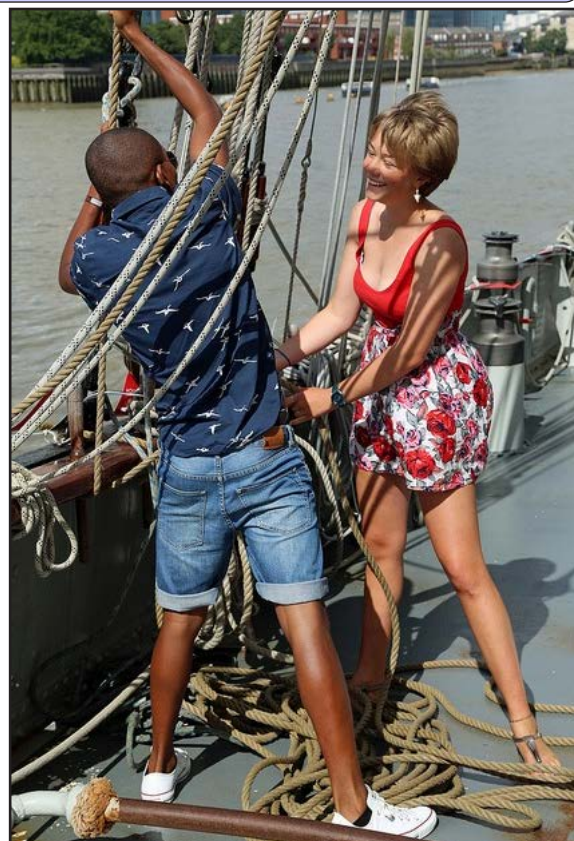
RIGHT: Happy ship-mates

*** FACT FILE ***

The *Dar Mlodziezy* is a Polish sailing training ship. Launched in 1982 in Gdansk, it was specially built to train the cadets of the Polish marine and to win a lot of Tall Ship Races. Her name means "The Gift of Youth", which is appropriate since it was partly financed by the gifts of young school-children.

Vital statistics:

Deck: 110.6 m. long
Beam:
Masts: 62.1 m.
Sails: 3,015 sq. m.
Speed: 12 kn (engine)
16 kn (sail)
Crew: 40 (+ cadets)



of responsibility that you have control of a 110 metre tall ship.

On our ship there were two steering wheels, one on the bridge, where the captain and the officers are with all the charts and navigational equipment; the other is just outside the bridge.

Sadly, we navigated from inside the bridge and so couldn't use the big wheel, which is a bit like the ones you see on *Pirates of the Caribbean*. Steering a boat is a bit weird to get used to at first, as sometimes it doesn't respond straight away, but then you also have to straighten up before you've reached your target or the course you are meant to be following, because it always takes a little time to respond.

I have sailed in bad weather both on a tall ship and in a small dinghy, and it can be a very exhilarating experience; but after a while if the conditions start to worsen then it can get scary.

Last year when I went tall ship sailing, we sailed into some bad weather where the visibility was reduced and the winds blew 30 mph or more, this caused the boat to heel over to one side, which was how I was awoken ... nearly falling out of my bunk!

However, they have all been great experiences and I would do it all again in a heartbeat. The people you meet on board become friends for life, it's an experience you will never ever forget.

Tea and IHT at Mycenae House DAREN WALLBANK

No-one wants to leave their loved ones with a huge tax bill when they die. But that's what many homeowners will be doing if they don't act now to address the amount of inheritance tax that their families will have to pay.

IHT is no longer a tax for the super-rich. Zoopla says the average cost of a house in Westcombe Park is £1.1 million. With the tax threshold fixed at £650,000 for a married

couple until at least 2018, IHT is becoming the rule, not the exception.

And it's a costly rule. If you're married with two children and an estate worth £1.5 million, the tax bill when you and your spouse die will be a sobering £340,000. The tax man becomes your third child!

However, with professional advice and planning, you can minimise "death tax" – or even avoid it. To find out how, pop along to

my free event where I'll explain the ins and outs of estate planning in plain English over tea, coffee and cake. It might be the most profitable hour you've ever spent.

Tea and IHT is running at Mycenae House on 26th Nov at 3.00 and 7.00pm. To book a place call Daren on 0770 6276149 or email events@ginkgofinancial.com

Daren Wallbank (DipPFS) is an FCA-regulated wealth manager & owner of Ginkgo Financial.

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WHAT'S ON

ARTS

NATIONAL MARITIME MUSEUM
THE QUEEN'S HOUSE: WAR AND MEMORY
Until Nov. 16th: 10.00 am - 5.00 pm Free.
Rozanne Hawksley's work examines remembrance, representation and memory in the fitting setting of the Queen's House **ALSO in the QUEEN'S HOUSE: WAR ARTISTS AT SEA** **Until February 2015** A new display showcasing the very best of the museum's collection of First & Second World War art
THE ART AND SCIENCE OF EXPLORATION 1768 - 1780 In The Queen's House. See the Stubbs Kangaroo (and Dingo) saved by the public, and work of artists from all three of Captain Cook's voyages
BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath 4th Thursday of every month, 2.00 for 2.30. Next meeting **27th Nov. Andy McConnell Rene Lalique, The Greatest: this great glass artist, his work, and his wider impact** Non-members £5
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, the University of Greenwich **NEXT LECTURE: 10th Nov.: How Did He Paint That? An Introduction to Technical Art History** by Sarah Cove 020 8852 7873 Non-members £8.00
MADE IN GREENWICH GALLERY 8293 9823 www.madeingreenwich.co.uk 324 Creek Rd SE10 **Tues 4th Nov. Graham Fawcett on Seamus Heaney** at 7 pm (sharp...) Tickets £10 inc. food and drink. **Tues 11th Nov. Sue Rose launches The Cost of Keys, at 7.30** Free. Publisher: Cinnamon Press.
MICHELE FRANKLIN Paintings drawings and prints **Until Nov. 11th.** Open every day except Monday. www.michelefranklin.co.uk

WEST GREENWICH LIBRARY
Until Nov 8th: Cristiana Angelini: A Selection of Drawings and Pastels



GREENWICH GALLERY Peyton Place SE10 8RS **17th - 30th Nov. Photographs of Greenwich Park - Beauty, magic and escape** **Mon-Friday 9.30-5.30 weekends 12-4pm.** Admission Free. These photos by Vivien Davies show the incredible diversity and beauty in Greenwich Park. Also: talented photographers from Charlton Park Academy. These children and young people, who all have special needs or disabilities, display some of their work.
[See http://www.viviendavies.com](http://www.viviendavies.com)

CHILDREN & FAMILY

BLACKHEATH HALLS
Sat 8th Nov. SHOE KANGAROO AND THE BIG BAD BOOT
Sat 27th Nov. THE SELFISH GIANT
Sat 6th Dec. ALADDIN
EAST GREENWICH PLEASAUNCE
Fri. 7th Nov. 10.30-11.30am Crafty Cooks Children's Cookery Class at Pistachios In the Park Cafe. £7 Bring your 2+ year olds along to bake something tasty to take home! Sibling discount is available. Book with Heather: heatherb@craftycooks.co.uk; 0789 0154651 www.facebook.com/craftycooks.southlondon

DANCE

CANCER RESEARCH keep fit & in shape plus Line Dancing at Kingswood Hall, Kingswood Place, off Dacre Park SE13 **Donation £5.00 for Cancer Research every Wed. 10.00 - 12 noon**
Please ring Rosalie Vexter on 8852 7127

THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Quiz Friday 7th November – evening, main hall
Christmas Bazaar Sat. 22nd November at **Blackheath High School, Mycenae Road**
Please ring Joanne on 07709 571777 if you would like to help out on any of these events!

COMMUNITY

CANCER RESEARCH LUNCH
Thurs. 6th November at The Clarendon Hotel, Montpelier Row, Blackheath SE3 0RW Prize draw & Raffle. To book, call Wendy on 8265 0335 by **Mon. 3rd November.** £8.50.
INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY
11th November 2014 Neil Rhind on famous engineers of Blackheath Meeting at The Old Bakehouse, Bennett Park, SE3. Please use the car park behind the station. Meetings start at 7.30: non members £1.
DAVY'S WINEBAR & SHOP 161 - 165 Greenwich High Rd SE10 8JA 19th Nov. Sparkling wine tasting at the Wine Shop in Greenwich High Road. Cava producer Savia Viva will be attending and we are presenting a selection of sparkling wines, comparing them with Cava. Tickets are £20, redeemable against your first case purchase. Booking: 8858 9147
BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon. & Thurs. 7.15 pm & on Wed. at 1.15 Tel. 8851 2609

HALSTOW CRAFT FAIR
Sat. 15th Nov. 12pm- 4.00pm (entrance from blue gate in Halstow Road, SE10 0LD). Ideal for Christmas shopping, inc. pottery, art, jewellery, glass, knitware, textiles, fashion, accessories, cards, gifts, soaps and perfumes, cakes etc. Treat yourself to a massage too. Children are free and adults are 50p.
BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE: First Wednesday of every month at 7.30 pm at Sunfields Methodist Church, Old Dover Road, SE3 8SJ eileenflanagan194@btinternet.com
GREENWICH MERIDIAN CHOIR If you are interested in joining the choir as a regular member, (rehearsals are Thursday evenings during term time), contact **Jean Valsler on 0208 8527548** or email brookjean@btinternet.com

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
THE CLARENDON HOTEL, Montpelier Row, Blackheath Tel. 8318 4321 Jazz at the Row very Wednesday from 7.00 pm in the bar!
BLACKHEATH HALLS
Wed. 5th Nov 8.00 pm BLAKE MORRISON - 'THE PITY OF WAR' First World War poetry – plus a few war poems (including a couple of his own) about more recent conflicts.

Fri 21st Nov 19:30h DOWN TO EARTH with MONTY DON His life & travels visiting gardens all over the world, what really happens behind the scenes when filming & how he transformed his own garden.
PISTACHIOS IN THE PARK SUPPER CLUB
Nov 8th: Dont miss out on a wonderful culinary experience in the East Greenwich Pleasaunce. Numbers are limited, so book early! Book your tickets here...<https://billetto.co.uk/season-my-pistachios> £30.00 a head, inc. drinks, canapes, music
WOODLANDS FARM TRUST Shooters Hill Christmas Fair on Sun. 30th Nov. 11.00 - 3.00pm. Watch Santa arrive on the pony trap driven by Bob the Shetland pony, browse stalls of local crafts and produce for Christmas presents ideas. A great day out for all the family. FREE! But donations always welcome for our animals.

ENGLISH FOLK MUSIC 9.00pm every Tuesday at the Lord pub, Creek Road; jazz Thursday
Amnesty International Book Sale 10 - 4.00pm Sat. 21st Nov. Church of the Ascension, Dartmouth Row SE10

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Sun. 2nd Nov. CAPTAIN MURDERER Charles Dickens (John Gudrum) 8.00pm £16.00 concs £13.50
SHAKESPEARE SCHOOLS FESTIVAL
Mon 3-Sat 8 Nov. 7.00 pm Each night four schools will perform four different Shakespeare plays.
Nov 20th - Jan 11th. JACK & THE BEANSTALK Andrew Pollard returns to Greenwich with another pantomime spectacular! Tickets £27 (concs £21.00) Children half price

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Tues 11th Nov 8.45pm (doors 8.15pm) £3
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Tues 11th & Weds 12th Nov
2 Day ACTING COURSE - £110
13th - 15th Nov. 7pm £14 4:48 PSYCHOSIS by Sarah Kane For Tickets (£14.00) please go to www.wegotickets.com/448psychosis
Thurs 27th to Sat 29th Nov. 8pm CLUB CLASS
The aviation comedy
Tues 2nd Dec. - Sun 7th Dec. 8pm (5pm Sunday) A Chunk of Chekhov: The Bear & The Proposal

THE SPACE
Email: info@space.org.uk Tel: 020 7515 7799
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FRANKENSTEIN: THE METAL OPERA Ends 1st Nov. 4.00pm £13/£10 .

MUSIC

BLACKHEATH HALLS Tel 020 8463 0100
MONDAYS 3rd, 10th, 17th Nov. at 1.10pm
LUNCHTIME RECITALS in the RECITAL ROOM The Friends of Blackheath Halls bring you a series of recitals for the autumn. A light lunch is available before the recital.
Fri 7th Nov 6.00pm THE TRINITY LABAN SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA perform Vaughan Williams' Symphony No 2 (London), commemorating World War I. £14 | £12
Sun 9th Nov 11.00am BLACKHEATH SUNDAYS: PASCAL AND AMI ROGE Pascal Rogé is one of the great interpreters of French piano music £5
Sun 16th Nov 6.30 pm BLACKHEATH HALLS ORCHESTRA Come and enjoy an evening of music performed by our own Blackheath Halls Orchestra as they celebrate eight years of making music. £10 | £8
Fri 21st Nov 11.00am VOCAL UNDERGRADUATE MASTERCLASS: LOUISE WINTER
RECITAL ROOM £5
Thu 27th Nov 7.30pm ON HEAVEN AND EARTH: A SONG FOR ALL SHIPS, ALL SEAS
The Trinity Laban String Ensemble Free
Sun 30th Nov 10.00 am STRING TIME WINTER WORKSHOPS AND CONCERTS Students from Junior Trinity's String Time programme perform in workshops and informal concerts. £14 | £12
30th Nov 11.00am BLACKHEATH SUNDAYS: DENIZ ARMAN GELENBE AND MICHAEL BOCHMANN

AGE EXCHANGE

BOOK SALES: on the second Saturday every month (except August & December) 10.00 am - 4.00 pm.
LUNCHTIME CONCERTS on the last Wednesday of every month by Trinity Laban students. Free, but there is a retiring collection in aid of Age Exchange & Blackheath Village Library.



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CHORAL

BLACKHEATH CHOIR and **St PAUL'S SINFONIA** perform **HANDEL's MESSIAH**
Sat. 6th Dec. 7.30pm St Margaret's Church Brandram Rd Lee £12 in advance – tel 020 8858 6325 email: tickets@blackheathchoir.org.uk £15 on the door
MIDSUMMER OPERA will perform Mozart's final opera **LA CLEMENZA DI TITO** at St John's Waterloo in November. **Friday 21st November at 7pm & Sunday 23rd November at 4.30pm.** Tickets £19-23 in advance; £22-26 on the door. Box Office 020 7652 0070 or online at wegottickets.com
LEWISHAM CHORAL SOCIETY perform **ROSSINI's PETITE MESSE SOLENNELLE** on **Sat. 15th November** at Goldsmith's College, conducted by Dan Ludford-Thomas.
THU 20th Nov 6.30pm CARL ORFF's CARMINA BURANA with **THE TRINITY LABAN CHORUS** Conducted by Dominic Peckham, Trinity Laban Free
BLACKHEATH HALLS CHORUS
COME AND SING FAURE'S REQUIEM
Rehearsals: **Mon 24th Nov; Mon 1st, 8th & 15th Dec 7.30 pm** Dress rehearsal: **Thu 18th Dec**
Performance: Fri. 19th Dec. 7.30pm Join Blackheath Halls Chorus to sing this classic piece to perform at our popular Christmas concert. Course Fee: £57 | £51
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FEATURES

Men of Conscience – or Cowardly Shirkers?

ROGER MARSHALL

Most people in Britain welcomed the news of the declaration of war in August 1914 with patriotic fervour, and there was a rush to join the army. It is difficult now to imagine the blind jingoism that caused people to believe that it would all be over before Christmas.

This view was fuelled by a campaign of propaganda posters, and such movements as the Order of the White Feather, when women presented men who were not in uniform with this symbol of cowardice (just like internet trolling today). Those who did not volunteer were judged too cowardly to do their bit for King and country.

The campaign was so effective that by mid-September 1914, over a quarter of a million men had joined 'Kitchener's Army', but this rate was not sustained. As a result the Military Services Act was introduced in March 1916 which for the first time ever for England, Scotland and Wales conscripted all bachelors between the ages of 18 and 41; this was extended in May to married men; and in 1918 the age limit was increased to 51 years.

The Act allowed for exemptions on various grounds, including conscience, although, pragmatically enough, ministers of religion were excluded from conscription. To be successful the conscientious objectors (COs) had to convince a Military Services Tribunal of their sincerity. These hearings were often perfunctory, lasting as little as 10 minutes with the Military Representative asking such unobtrusive questions as 'What would you do if a German soldier was about to rape your sister?' or 'Do you think you are cleverer than your older brother, who is in the army?'

The No-Conscription Fellowship, formed at the start of the war by Fenner Brockway, Bertrand Russell, and Herbert Morrison amongst others, offered COs some support.

A prominent supporter was Dr. Alfred Salter, who was born at 23 Greenwich South Street in 1873 and went to the John Roan School before becoming a doctor and later MP in Bermondsey. His pamphlet 'Faith as a Pacifist' sold over a million copies.

A total of 16,000 men were registered by these tribunals as COs during the course of the war, with Quakers, traditionally pacifists, featuring large. Some COs agreed to do 'nationally important' civilian work such as farming; others joined up as non-combatants, acting for instance as stretcher-bearers and first aiders within the Royal Army Medical Corps.

A further group of about 6000 men known as Absolutists refused to help the war effort in any way. These Absolutists suffered very harsh treatment, receiving prison sentences

Tavistock Square has several memorials promoting peace. These include a statue of Gandhi, a tree in memory of the victims of Hiroshima, and, [RIGHT] a stone memorial to conscientious objectors. This year Roger Marshall, whose father was a CO and stretcher-bearer in WW1, took part in a moving ceremony to mark their courage and convictions.



often with hard labour and with periods of solitary confinement in military prisons. 17 of them died in prison from maltreatment, and a further 73 died elsewhere.

In May 1916 one group of thirty-five were particularly badly treated: they were taken to France, court-martialled and sentenced to death as this was judged to be at the front line and their action therefore deemed to be an act of cowardice; however, fortunately this sentence was commuted to penal servitude for ten years.

'Daddy, what did YOU do in the Great War?'

Ideologically midway between the absolutists and the non-combatants was the Friends Ambulance Unit, which was set up by the Religious Society of Friends (the Quakers) in 1914. These volunteers were not part of the military, did not wear a military uniform, and were thus not freeing up others for military work. They were treating the injured and ferrying them from the trenches to special hospitals in France and Belgium. Some 1000 COs, not all of them Quakers, served in this unit during the war.

COs were not immediately set free at the end of the war in 1918, and were only released in April 1919. But this was not the end of their problems as they still faced widespread hostility: for instance job adverts in the Times Educational Supplement had clauses saying 'No CO need apply' and the Absolutists were disenfranchised for a further ten years. Nevertheless, their stance did lead to a more tolerant society and the 60,000 conscientious objectors in WW2 were on the whole treated with much more understanding.

Conscientious objection around the world and for all wars is remembered each year on May 15th with International Conscientious Objectors Day. In London this year white carnations were ceremoniously placed around a stone memorial in Tavistock Square by over fifty relatives of the courageous WW1 individualists who defied public opinion and refused to kill.



PHOTO: Roger Marshall

You, too, can sing

Mouth the words,' the singing teacher told me. 'Don't make a noise or you'll ruin the whole show.' I was ten at the time. Throughout the carol concert I nursed a silent bruise, and have done so ever since.

For anyone who can sing, 'joining in' must be a doddle but for me every chorus of Happy Birthday had been a humiliating ordeal, with weddings and funerals making further uncomfortable demands.

Fast forward forty-something years to a conference where I chanced to be sitting next to Heather – a singing teacher. Telling her I was a hopeless case was half-confessional, half-bravura. Did she realise I was not exaggerating when I told her I sound like a hippopotamus in distress? Did she realise the enormity of the challenge when she offered to teach me?

It was worth a try, she said. We fixed a trial lesson and Heather told me come with a song I knew.

Here was the first hurdle. How does one take a song anywhere? If she'd asked me to take a bowl of cherries or a pint of milk I could have obliged. But a song? Heather must have seen the panic in my eyes; she suggested that even a hymn from schooldays would do.

I trawled the Internet and found Lord of the Dance. 'Nice and skippy,' she said when I arrived though, with hindsight, I realised she had meant me to take the music as well as the words.

Heather explained that she'd be teaching me 'natural voice' singing – with no accompaniment, just my voice and the song. But she would make use of other styles and methods when appropriate.

We began not with words, but sounds. Classical vowel sounds, she explained, as together we swooped up and down with a sustained eeee, ahhh, and ooh. No, you are not tone deaf, she said: it was as if I'd been reprieved from a life sentence.

Did I find, she asked, that sometimes I could hear a tune in my head but that when I opened my mouth a very different sound emerged. Yes! How did she know, and what could we do about it?

In her opinion it was a matter of synapses. Over time and with practice, she promised, I would learn to make the right connections. It was time to tackle Lord of the Dance. Heather sang, then we sang together. It wasn't too difficult and she seemed pleased. Off we went again but

this time she faded out.

I felt like a child on a bicycle realising the steadying hand behind the saddle is no longer there. I faltered, wobbled and crashed. We began again, and gradually I managed three verses and choruses on my own.

'I don't mind if you get it wrong, but I'm delighted when you get it right,' Heather said, nodding and smiling every time I hit the right notes. Licence, approval and praise! I was dizzy with euphoria. My car became my very private concert hall. No-one could hear my uneven attempts. I hummed and laaahed and, cautiously, I sang. I couldn't wait for my second lesson.

Two years down the line, I can move up and down the scales and I have a repertoire of songs and, yes, that includes Happy Birthday. Hey, I can sing.

Now I have a born-again zeal to tell my good news. I am discovering fellow sufferers: grown men and women who, like me, were told to mouth the words and have done so ever since their schooldays.

Have a go, I urge them for I know they will experience not just the joy of making a tuneful noise, but a surge of energy and joie de vivre. This is not a coincidence. To sing you have to breathe in a deep and regulated way thus taking more oxygen into your system.

No wonder I feel more awake. Better still, singing is reckoned to help to release serotonin, the happy hormone, into the brain. Even a sad song can give a feeling of well being.

It's a tale worth telling – or singing. **Ed: Luckily, there are plenty of opportunities for singing locally. See page 5.**

Authentic Voice
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What's new at the Conservatoire

A wide range of music classes is in full swing at the Blackheath Conservatoire – but it's not too late to sign up for other one-offs, including:

Showstoppers - exploring musical theatre
Sat 1st Nov. 2.00 - 6.00 pm
Klezmer workshop Sat 15th Nov 2.00 - 6.00 pm Klezmer is a musical tradition of the Ashkenazi Jews of Eastern Europe, but has evolved considerably, especially in the US.

A Brief History of the Symphony 5th - 26th Nov. Starting Wed 5th 12.30 - 2.30pm, with John Andrews. John also continues his series on Music that changed the world with: **Shostakovich Symphony No.5** Thurs 6th Nov. 7.30 - 9.00 pm
Handel's Messiah on Dec 4th.
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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

River crossings

ANNE ROBBINS look at where the Councils have got to in their thinking

Regular readers will know that Transport for London has been looking at various Thames crossings for the area downriver from the Blackwall Tunnel. The most recent consultation closed on September 18, and covered the Woolwich Ferry, a bridge or ferry at Gallions Reach, and a bridge from Belvedere to Dagenham. The Westcombe Society responded to this, as have local boroughs, pressure groups, and many individuals. Detailed results won't be published for some time, but some councils have released their answers.

Proposed new Woolwich ferry
Bexley is neutral on this, but Lewisham supports the idea, and Greenwich is opposed. While Lewisham would like to keep a free service for crossing the river, Bexley argues that the benefits are limited. Greenwich says that a new ferry might bring marginal benefits and improve resilience, but would not help improve air quality or congestion. None of the councils support a ferry at Gallions Reach.

A new bridge?
Instead, Greenwich is strongly supporting the idea of a bridge at Gallions Reach, connecting Thamesmead with Barking. It also wants improvements in public transport here, and improved Overground rail links connecting with Crossrail.



It also wants the proposed bridge to support local travel but not long distance road transport. The danger is that long-haul drivers including heavy lorries could find this bridge attractive, and Bexley notes that this could have serious effects on local road systems. Lewisham, meanwhile, supports the Gallions Bridge proposal, in principle, as it would take some of the traffic off the

heavily used A2 and A102. (Lewisham has deep reservations about the proposed Silvertown Tunnel proposal). The proposal would thus need to be attractive to local businesses, but not to long-haul traffic: a difficult balancing act. If TfL were unable to restrict its use to local drivers, it could mean feeder roads would have to be built, endangering much-loved Oxleas Wood.

Further east?
Further to the east, TfL's proposals include a bridge between Belvedere, and Rainham, Essex, at the A13. This is strongly supported by Bexley, which also supports a rail crossing here as well. It's opposed by Lewisham, which sees a stronger case for a Gallions Reach crossing. Greenwich would only support this if crossings at Gallions were built first.

How would any of this be paid for?
The answer is PFI funding, using revenues from tolling – though TfL is not saying what the fees might be. The Woolwich Ferry would no longer be free. This tolling would also be used for the proposed Silvertown crossing. Greenwich complained that the Silvertown proposal should have been included in this round of consultations, so that everyone could see the full array of possible road crossings. Moreover, Greenwich also asked that the Blackwall Tunnel be toll-charged.

The Westcombe Society's response?
The Environment Committee took a neutral stand on all but the Woolwich Ferry, which we would like to see retained. Our experience of the road systems is not strong enough to comment, but we argued strongly for more investment in public transport, over any expansion of roads. *You can read the Westcombe Society response on our website; we would welcome comments. The next consultation is on the Silvertown Tunnel crossing (see page 1), so we would like to hear our members' views. The link for Greenwich's response: <http://committees.greenwich.gov.uk/ieDecisionsDetails.aspx?id=2878>.*



Estate agents & surveyors, established in 1975. Branches in Westcombe Park, Blackheath, Greenwich & Lee, alongside dedicated branches for Lettings & Commercial. Contact the Westcombe Park branch on 020 8858 6101

John Payne

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A green thought . . .

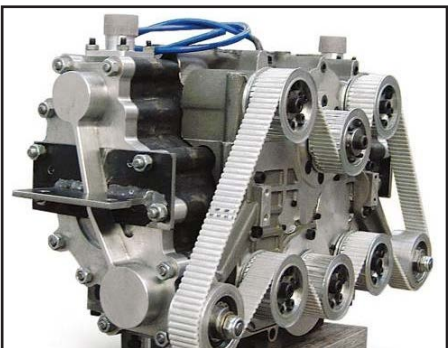


PHOTO: Frank Smith

. . . in a green shade, in the words of the poet Andrew Marvell. It's not always all-go in the Westcombe Woodlands: four volunteers take a well-earned coffee break on our new benches, made by our tree surgeon from timber felled in the woodlands. Our next Volunteer Day will be on Sunday 23rd Nov. (probably to plant some more fruit trees in the orchard in the Glade) from 10.00 am until 1.00 pm. Our meeting point will be in the Maze Hill cul-de-sac at about 9.50am. We are asking everyone to arrive and leave together for reasons of safety and security. Please note that access is not suitable for children or for anyone with mobility problems. Coffee, tea, fruit squash and biscuits will be provided. Please call Frank Smith on 8852 6390 or 07989 445 057 with any queries you have on the day. If you have any other queries, please email westcombewoodlands@hotmail.co.uk. And if you haven't already done so, don't forget to sign up to become a Friend of Westcombe Woodlands! You can find a joining form on our website www.westcombewoodlands.org. Friends will be invited to our second Annual General Meeting on the evening of Wednesday 12th November. FRANK SMITH

The car that runs on air

Eat your heart out, owners of hybrids or electric cars! Sell your oil shares! Could the air car be the next Big Thing? Tata Motors in India seem to think so. The Air Car uses compressed air to push its engine's pistons and make the car go. The Air Car, called the "Mini CAT" could cost around 365,757 rupees in India (that's around £6,000.) The Mini CAT is a simple, light urban car, with a tubular chassis, and a body of fiberglass that is glued not welded. A tiny radio transmitter controls all the electrical functions of the car, such as turn signals and lights. The temperature of the clean air expelled by the exhaust pipe is between 0-15 degrees below zero – handy for the internal air conditioning system. Running costs are less than 50 rupees per 100 KM– about a tenth the cost of a car running on petrol. Its mileage is double that of the most advanced electric car. Very little maintenance is needed. One fill-up with compressed air is good for 185 miles. Because there is no combustion



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(See also <http://www.westcombesociety.org/>)

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23 GLENLUCE ROAD ref 14/2636/F
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TREE WORKS

81 HUMBER ROAD ref 14/3050/TC
Crown reduce fig by 30% (front garden) and cherry by 25%. Lift magnolia to 3m.

1C COLERAINE ROAD ref 14/2943/TC
Reduce Scots pine by 30% (rear garden)

BLACKHEATH HIGH SCHOOL,
27 VANBRUGH PARK ref 14/2910/TP
Crown reduce oak by 20% (tree preservation order)

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A black and white photograph of a young child, likely a toddler, wearing a light-colored diaper. The child is performing a handstand, balancing on their hands with their legs spread wide and feet pointed. The child's head is tucked down, and their face is visible, looking towards the camera. The background is plain white.

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