Decision Time for John Roan

SouthEastern Rail services
Mike Sparham reports:
On Wednesday 2nd March, the House of Commons held a debate regarding Southeastern trains.
The two MPs in our area, Matt Pennycook (Greenwich) and Woolwich) and Vicky Foxcroft (Lewisham Deptford) both spoke in the debate, as did a number of other MPs.
None were complimentary!

Matt Pennycook MP gave a plug for the Greenwich Line User Group (GLUG), and the Charlton Users' Group.
A report of the debate can be found on this link:
http://bit.ly/1HWMxG

Kenneth Bound RIP
We are sorry to record the death of Kenneth Bound, who was Chair of the Blackheath Society from 1989-1991.
He was a life member who joined the committee in 1979 and following his retirement he became the volunteer Chair of the Blackheath for twenty years and during that period the Society handled a number of difficult campaigns with great effect.

There was a Service of Thanksgiving at St Mary's Church, Bentsham, St John's Park, London on Sunday 10th March.

Yes, it’s that time again:
The Virgin Money London Marathon will once again take place on Sunday 24th April 2016. More than 36,000 competitors will take up the challenge to complete the 26.2-mile course from the starting points at Blackheath to the finishing line on The Mall.

Racetrack will be closed to the public at 07:00, including Woolwich Road, Shooters Hill Road, Charlton Way, Charlton, Vanbrugh Park, Old Dover Road and St John’s Park. Stewards will clear the roads as soon as it is safe to do so. Those who need to leave the Westcombe Park area should consult the map issued to residents.

For more information contact the Virgin Money London Marathon helpdesk on 020 7922 0200 or www.virginiemoneylondonmarathon.co.uk

Shoplifters beware
A Charity Shop based in this area has experienced a number of shoplifting incidents for the past two years.
A suspect has been identified. The WN has been told that the case is likely to end up in court if the offences continue.
What sort of person steals from a charity shop, one wonders?
Westcombe News April 2016

Helping children to grow and develop
Sue Gay

Letters to the editor

From: John Card
Plymouth
This ancient yew tree on the Dartington Estate near Totnes is Devon is thought to be date back up to 2000 years - a date when Christ was alive and well, walking the earth. The tree is now up and running for 0 to 5 year olds.

From: Chris Ormell, Secretary, PER Group
I find the government's drive to return all schools into Academies incomprehensible. Sir Michael Wilshaw has said that some chains of Academies are doing a worse job than the Local Authorities.

From: Frank Smith
Blackheath
I’ll stand there and have it twisted — but that doesn’t mean I won’t work with both politicians and journalists. He was chancellor of Loughborough University being abused by some unscrupulous operators.

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COMMUNITY

Westcombe News

At: editor, W correspondence to: neville Grant. The editor
wnw@westcombesociety.org
Tel. 020 8858 8489

Subject: Newsletter. Post to:
wnw@westcombesociety.org

Deadline for the May issue:
Deadline for all

The Westcombe Society (Market Place) 30p per word

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At a protest meeting in early March, parents, staff and students of John Roan School vented their fury and frustration at what they saw as a threat to the school. Two sixth-formers led the charge, and they were swiftly joined by angry parents and teachers. Among the many issues raised: the possible impact on the quality of education on offer; the threat to teachers’ pay and conditions; the allegation that it was “privatisation by the back door”; and the point that “if it ain’t broke, don’t fix it.” The discussion below has been emended by the news that academisation is to be compulsory...
People's Theatre feminist festival, has already been shown at Camden. The production kept the audience entertained with humour and poignancy to tell its tale of sexism. This innovative production by the talented young women of Corelli College, part of Kidbrooke Theatre Company, took centre stage in Greenwich this February at the Greenwich Theatre, performing their own powerful production, ‘Boys Will Be Boys’. The show was developed from their own original outstanding GCSE work, inspired by Laura Bates’ award winning, ‘Everyday Sexism’ project. This innovative production by local sixth formers was directed by Lucy Cuthbertson, an ex pupil, now working at the college, and was part of Greenwich Theatre’s season promoting women in theatre. This gritty, sometimes playful, production kept the audience engaged with a meticulous blend of humour and poignancy to tell its tale of everyday sexism, a tale as old as time, in uniquely effective ways. The audience laughed as the cast danced their angry dance routines, made signs of recognition as they performed their staged dialogues, and stayed respectfully silent as they stripped off their frilly, coloured undergarments to reveal their plain black leotards. This was a production, worthy of any local theatre, and it has already been shown at Camden People’s Theatre feminist festival.

Review “Boys will be Boys” at the Greenwich Theatre

The reason for the increase in affordable rented housing is simple. The number of council and housing association homes in England has fallen by over 1.5 million since 1991, mainly because of the right to buy. The Housing Bill now before parliament will actually make the shortage of affordable rented houses worse.

Robin Hood in Reverse

The Housing Bill is a Robin Hood in reverse. Less affluent people will pay the cost of measures to help people who are better off. In two main ways resources will be moved from affordable rented housing for less affluent people to fund home ownership.

First, the Bill will require developers to provide starter homes for sale instead of affordable homes for rent. In Greenwich 282 affordable homes for rent were started last year, many by developers. In two years’ time developers will instead be building starter homes for sale. These homes are unlikely to be affordable for most households in Greenwich. Indeed, it has been estimated that in Greenwich an income of as much as £75,000 a year may be needed to buy a starter home.

Second, the Bill will require councils to fund the Housing Association right-to-buy discounts by selling their most valuable council houses as they become empty.

The Conservative Party estimates that councils will have to pay the Government £4.5 billion a year, funded by selling 15,000 expensive council homes a year.

If Greenwich is typical of England, the Council will have to pay the Government about £60 million a year, funded by selling about a quarter of the council homes that become empty, and available for letting each year.

Fewer Affordable Rented Homes

The effect of the Housing Bill in the Royal Borough of Greenwich is clear: the number of affordable rented homes in Greenwich will be reduced.

* People on the council waiting list will wait longer.

* Homeless households will be left longer in temporary accommodation.

* Young people looking for renting housing may face a choice between moving out to Bexley or Dartford or else sharing a severely overcrowded flat in Greenwich.

What Can You Do?

If you are concerned, write to a peer at the House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW. See www.HousingBillAction.org. If you are concerned, write to a peer at the House of Lords, London SW1A 0PW. See www.HousingBillAction.org.

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**Blackheath International Chamber Music Festival:** 23rd-29th April 2016

Saturday, 9 April 2016 at 19:30
Double Concert by Bach and Vivaldi
All Saints Church - All Saints Drive SE3 0TY
Wednesday, 13 April 2016 at 20:00
Guitararama - chamber music with guitar virtuoso
Nicko十佳 - All Saints Church - All Saints Drive
Wednesday, 20 April 2016 at 19:30
Church of the Ascension Dartmouth Road SE10
Friday, 26 April 2016 at 14:00
Mozart: All Saints Church SE3 0TY
Saturday, 2nd April 2016 at 14:00
Shakespeare & Art Workshop - for all ages / for church
From the event: www.eventbrite.co.uk/blackheath-international-chamber-music-festival-
Tickets on the door (adult 15+, adult 13, £13, Friends of Age Exchange 11 students £5, under 18 Free)
**GLOBAL FUSION & THEATRE: BRITISH & WORLD WONDERS**
- Comedian Graham Fawcett on WB - 27th March Fri-2.00pm Jane Patterson – Happy Days
- 3rd Friday of each month Mycenae House 23, Lee Rd, London
- 7.30pm at Sunfields, Old Dover Rd, SE3 8SJ
- Global Fusion-arts.co.uk
- Chris Roberts (Arrive 7pm for 7.30pm start) A History of The Greenwich Theatre
- Sat 23rd April- 8.00 pm The Magic of the Beatles
- Great Hall: BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. SE3 9RQ
- Change? Dr Tom Armitage – University College London
- Thursday, 13 April 2016 at 19:30
- Church of the Ascension Dartmouth Row SE10
- Saturday, 23rd April 2016 at 14:00
- Musician: George Wood: The great 20th Century Pianists
- Enfield Tapes – 5th April: a complimentary drink and a chat

**Families up to 11 years**
- All events are in the Main Hall of Mycenae House unless otherwise stated:

**Spring Quiz** – Fri 15th April
Spring Needs New Life Sale Sat 22nd April 2-4pm & 4pm
AGM May 13th 7.00 - 9.00 pm - Student School, Mondays Evening – Fri 27th June
Summer Picnic Sat 25th June Mycenae Gardens Maidsen Coffee Corner – Fri 25th July
Annually New Sale – Sat 5th September Christchurch Annual Quiz – Fri 5th October

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- 8.00 pm CHASING THE WOOLSEY: KING OF THE SOUTH SEAS 18
- The GREENWICH THEATRE, Cossons Hill
Monday, 25 April 2016 at 19.30
- Salomon, Charlton House £3 donation
- Globalfusionarts.co.uk
- Chris Roberts (Arrive 7pm for 7.30pm start) A History of The Greenwich Theatre
- Sat 23rd April- 8.00 pm The Magic of the Beatles
- Great Hall: BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. SE3 9RQ
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Mr RJS Higgins, Headmaster

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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 forwards by Anthony Seldon, Richard Harris and Frank Furedi

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Westcombe News April 2016

If Musick be the food of love, play on...

Shakespeare has inspired many composers through the ages. Here are some of them:

1616 Henry Purcell A Midsummer Night's Dream
1741 Thomas Arne As you like it
1795 Haydn song from Twelfth Night
1816 French Hensel Unter dem Leuchten Hof (rendition of "Under the Greenwood Tree"
1839 Hector Berlioz symphony inspired by Romeo and Juliet
1841 Felix Mendelssohn A Midsummer Night's Dream (including the Wedding March)
1842 Otto Nikolaus The Merry Wives
1847 Giuseppe Verdi Romeo and Juliet
1893 Giuseppe Verdi Falstaff (based on Shakespear)
1896 Ambrose Thomas Hamlet
1906 Tchaikovsky Romeo and Juliet
1926 Jean Sibelius The Tempest
1932 Dmitri Shostakovitch film music for Hamlet
1933 Dmitri Shostakovitch Lady Macbeth of the Moukun District
1935 Sergis Prokofiev ballet music for Romeo and Juliet
1938 Ralph Vaughan Williams Toward the Unknown Region
1944 William Walton film music for Henry V
1957 Leonard Bernstein West Side Story (this version of Romeo & Juliet)
1960 Benjamin Britten A Midsummer Night's Dream
2002 Jonathan Dove Moonlight reveals (a double concert for Titanic and Oboes)
2004 Thomas Ades The Tempest
2008 Judith Bingham Shakespeare Requiem
2014 Joby Talbot A Winter's Tale

(Original Opera House production)
ENVIROMENT

The Dell: a refuge for wildlife  Ann Hill

The Friends of Mycenae Gardens were delighted at their AGM on March 8th by Tim Hoe’s medley of photos of happy volunteers busy working in the Dell, Mycenae Road, and very impressive ‘before and after’ images of what has been accomplished.

In the Dell, a local naturalist, was guest speaker and his talk included a fascinating comparison of bird species observed in the Dell during his surveys in 2015 with those observed by John Burton in May 1949.

Two species appear to have been lost (willow warblers and spotted flycatchers, both of which are summer visitors that have drastically declined across SE England).

However, we seem to have gained seven species (blackcap, stock dove, magpie, ring-necked parakeet, coal tit, long-tailed tit and nuthatch). In total, Joe observed 26 bird species in the Dell, showing that it continues to provide a safe haven for birds even in our urban environment.

The evening ended with a quiz of 10 photos of birds, insects and plants that are found in the Dell. The winning team had an impressive score of 9/10!

Blackheath Halls, which is an integral part of Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance, has been awarded two major grants to enable it to undertake an extensive programme of capital works.

The planned works will ensure that this beautiful and historic building within Blackheath can continue to thrive for many years to come and remain at the heart of cultural life in South East London.

As the result of a grant of £234,832 from Viridor Credits, which is part of the Landfill Communities Fund, the Halls will be undertaking a complete renovation of the main roof, commencing in July this year.

At Trinity Laban, the proprietor of Blackheath Halls, said: ‘As a second stage funding towards the cost of the main roof, we are very excited at the prospect of receiving this funding from Arts Council England. The Hall will undertake a complete revitalisation of the roof and its surroundings, commencing in July.

Beginning in the summer, we will commence final preparations for the roof, and anticipate completion in early 2017. We are in the process of securing the necessary funding to ensure its conservation.’

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