



Westcombe NEWS

Free to 3800 homes, & in libraries & some shops

March 2017 No. 2



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

Inspectors judge the merits of the Tunnel

The Westcombe Society has been crossing the Thames to take part in the Public Investigation into the Silvertown Tunnel plans. Along with Knight Dragon (developers on the Greenwich Peninsula), the Health and Safety Executive, affected boroughs, the Port of London Authority, and many others, we have been representing our views to the Planning Inspectorate team who must judge the planning merits of the proposal.

The Silvertown Tunnel is the Transport for London scheme to add a new road crossing of the Thames, running roughly under the line of the Emirates Airway, between the Greenwich Peninsula and Canning Town. TfL argue that the new road would relieve the pressure on the Blackwall Tunnel, alleviating the queues of traffic for commuters and longer-distance users.

They say that it would improve air quality along the A102, and that they will add several new bus routes which can travel through the full-sized bores of the new tunnel. Users would have to pay charges, depending on when they use the road. TfL say the charges would control demand for the crossing, pay the construction costs, and eventually contribute to public transport funds.

The Environment Committee of your Westcombe Society held two public meetings during the public consultations to take soundings from residents. We used them to develop our position

that TfL must show that traffic levels will not increase from current levels, and that air pollution levels will improve overall with no area worsening. Without that, we cannot support the scheme.

But such guarantees are hard to believe. Objectors, including the Westcombe Society, have argued that the current queues indicate a high level of demand for the crossing, and that it will be tough to set the charges at a level which will control traffic without seeming unfair.

Analysis suggests that south-bound traffic will increase, with the bottleneck on the A102 from the Sun in Sands junction getting worse. In recent submissions, TfL has admitted that its traffic modelling did not include overheight vehicles – the very large lorries not currently able to drive north through the Blackwall Tunnel. They would be able to use the new Silvertown Tunnel, and TfL say there could be up to 400 per day heading north along the A102.

What the boroughs think

Newham, on the north side, is unhappy about the extra air pollution and noise from at least 10,000 vehicle movements per day. All the boroughs are aware of the dangers of displaced traffic, whether flocking to use a free-flowing river crossing e.g. through Lewisham, or away from it to use an uncharged crossing like the Rotherhithe Tunnel.



Members of St George's congregation took part in a march in central London against the policies of D. Trump. A popular slogan: "Build bridges, not walls!" In the words of the outgoing Bishop of London, Richard Chartres: "I find it impossible to believe that Jesus Christ would approve of erecting barriers between people and in any way demeaning sections of the community."

Greenwich too has concerns, including pressure on the Woolwich Ferry and the effects of an estimated extra 100 vehicles per hour at rush hour through the World Heritage Site. Despite these concerns, Greenwich still actively wants the Silvertown Tunnel. It is the only borough that supports the plans.

ANNE ROBBINS

Role of the STIG committee

But none of the local authorities is happy with TfL's plans for "STIG" – the Silvertown Tunnel Implementation Group. This would be a committee formed from the boroughs, acting for around eight years during the building and the early years of running the scheme. TfL say they would consult it about the plans for charges and mitigating local impacts. But STIG would meet only annually, and at this point there is no obligation for TfL to follow its advice.

The role of the inspectors

It does seem that the Planning Inspectors are asking tough questions. They want TfL to justify its traffic modelling, its claims of

new bus routes, and how the charges will affect people – especially those on low incomes. And they have been very clear that they want everyone to have a voice through the proceedings, including individuals who might feel quite shy, given the array of professionals at the table.

In relation to Westcombe Park, the Inspectors have taken a strong interest in the Siebert Road campaign for fencing to lessen the air pollution and noise affecting them and their neighbours down Westcombe Hill and up Invicta Road. On a site visit, they were invited into a resident's garden to see the effects for themselves, and they continue to ask TfL for clear indications that the fence will be built in the event of planning permission for the new Tunnel being granted.

As Rebecca Moore, of Siebert Road, wrote, '... we would just like a legal guarantee that this will happen before the building of the Silvertown Tunnel. Ensuring this is incredibly important to us as it will mitigate the noise, vibration and pollution from the construction traffic.'

(continued on page3)

Anatomy of a hearing

The hearings are illuminating. Held mainly at the Excel Centre, they have concentrated on air quality & noise aspects; traffic modelling; economic impacts; as well as on issues about how the tunnel would be governed.

At the head of the table sit the three Planning Inspectors; down one side is the TfL team, with ten or so staff members and a barrister; local authority representatives sit across from the Inspectors; and on the other side are speakers from various statutory bodies along with the objectors. Everything is recorded: you can hear the oral submissions on the Inquiry's website: <https://infrastructure.planninginspectorate.gov.uk/projects/london/silvertown-tunnel/>

Some of the exchanges that take place are surprisingly fiery!

The written submissions are also available too, and there are a lot. You'll get a sense of that if you click on the button for the Examination Library. The filter is a fast way to search for particular documents: just type in, say, 'Greenwich' and the list below will show all of our local authority submissions.



Newsbriefs



BREXIT: Don't hold your breath

The views of our MP, Matt Pennycook, are well-known: he voted to remain. But he takes the view that in the interests of democracy MPs should be guided by the results of the referendum, and accordingly voted in favour of activating Article 50. At least he didn't do a Diane Abbot ...

But Matt insists that the negotiations should have "red lines" including the defence of workers' rights, and access to the European single market.

With these red lines we might end up in the EU after all ... Optimists hope for a typical European fudge; those less optimistic think a "Hard Brexit" will be inescapable following years of tough negotiations with the 27 countries of the EU.

Tips for a desperate Remainer

Do you have an urge to Exit after Brexit? If you have a parent or a grandparent who is or was an EU citizen, you could apply for citizenship by right of descent – though the situation varies from country to country. Ireland would be a good bet.

If that doesn't work for you, you could buy citizenship in Malta if you have 1.5 million Euros to spare, though you would need to be a resident for a year – for those who know Malta, this would be no hardship! Two other options:

- marrying an EU citizen
- naturalisation. Finland is quite easy to join, but you would have to put up with Finnish winters for five years; you would also have to learn Finnish – reputed to be one of the hardest languages in the world to learn....

Perhaps after all everyone should just stay with the UK... !

Antique Road Show in Blackheath

Any Old Irons? One person's junk is another's antique! Find out what you've got – and what it's worth, on Sunday March 5th, when Eric Knowles from the Antiques Roadshow comes to Blackheath Halls. Eric will be giving a talk about his career in antiques as well as offering ticket holders the chance to bring in their own heirlooms for valuation before and after the show – with the most interesting spoken about on stage during the second half of the show.

Peninsula plans

In February, the *Times* included an interesting feature on developments on the peninsula. It reminded us that we have on our doorstep the biggest single residential development in the whole of Europe – and among the architects is the distinguished Spaniard, Calatrava. He specialises

in beautiful bridges resembling birds in flight. Let's hope he's more into bridges than walls – if his plans include social and affordable dwellings along with those most of us cannot afford.

Friends of Mycenae Gardens

The Friends of Mycenae Gardens will hold their 2017 Annual General Meeting on Wednesday 22 March in Greenwich Steiner School SE3 7SE. It is a great opportunity to meet others who share an interest in the Gardens, and all are welcome. At the meeting you can elect your new committee, find out what has been happening in the Gardens and the Woodland Dell over the last year, as well as hear about future plans.

Anyone who would like to become a member of the Friends group can do so by visiting FMGs website, www.mycenaegardens.org.uk Alternatively you can send an email to: friendsofmycenaegardens@gmail.com

Home is where the hut is

Belated Happy Birthday to local historian Neil Rhind, who celebrated his eightieth birthday at Blackheath Concert Halls in January. The cake was in the shape of Blackheath Tea Hut which Neil was once very keen to demolish.

The Westcombe Society

Daffodil Tea Sat 18th March 2.00 - 4.00 pm

The Daffodil Tea for Senior Citizens is by invitation; however anyone who doesn't receive an invitation and who would like to come, please ring Caroline on 020 8853 0948.

Spring Quiz Sat. 1st April, 7.30pm for 8.00pm start in Mycenae House. £5.00 entry for members / £6.00 non-members
Please ring Caroline on 8853 0948 – booking by 24th March.
Fish/Chicken & Chip suppers or simply chips must be ordered in advance. Bar open.
Form a team - or come and join a team!

Westcombe Society

WESTCOMBE NEWS

ALL EDITORIAL CORRESPONDENCE TO:

Neville Grant, The Editor
wnews@westcombesociety.org
Tel. 020 8858 8489

ALL MATERIAL TO BE SENT TO: wnews@westcombesociety.org

Deadline for April: 16th March

Environment Editor: Maggie Gravelle

Reporters: The community – that means you!

ENVIRONMENT COMMITTEE

Emily Norton All queries and comments to: 020 8853 2756
environment@westcombesociety.org

DISTRIBUTION Emily Norton and volunteers.

Volunteer distributors please phone 020 8853 2756, we need your help!

ADVERTISING MANAGER

Marilyn Little, 163 Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP 020 8853 1312
Advertising@westcombesociety.org

All adverts payable in advance by cheque to **The Westcombe Society**.
DISPLAY: Single column 6cm x 6cm:
One - four issues £35, five-plus issues £30 each. Other sizes: please inquire.

Classified Ads (Market Place) 30p per word (A telephone number = one word. An email/web address = 3 words.) Deadline for all adverts is 10th day of the preceding month.

Printed by: Trojan Press

Contact the Westcombe Society:
WestcombeNews@egroups.com
Publisher: The Westcombe Society
Chairman: Marilyn Little
Tel. 020 8853 1312

The views expressed in the Westcombe News are not necessarily those of the Westcombe Society or of the Editor. We take all reasonable precautions to protect the interests of our readers by ensuring as far as possible the bona fides of our advertisers but cannot accept any responsibility for them. Any complaints should be addressed to the advertiser.

To access back-numbers (in colour) go to:
www.westcombesociety.org/westcombe-news/
Westcombe Society's Blog:
<http://westcombe.blogspot.com>

WESTCOMBE SOCIETY MEMBERSHIP

Please send this membership form to:
Christine Legg, 69 Mycenae Road, London, SE3 7SE

Name.....

Address.....

Tel.....

Email:

Please enclose payment as appropriate:

Family Membership	£12	[]
Individual Membership	£8	[]
Senior Citizens/unwaged	£4	[]

Correction. The WN usually operates like a well-oiled machine (sic). However, February's *WN* contained the headline *London's toxic air – MP's accusations*. We apologise for the misplaced apostrophe. The last two words should of course have read *MPs' accusations*. **Ed.**

IT SUPPORT

For ALL your home & business needs

Call now for FREE advice

headstart
IT Solutions

020 8858 2002

www.headstart.it

Annual Volunteers' Party



PHOTOS: Neville Grant

New members, old members, guests – all had a great time at the Volunteers' Party in February in Mycenae House. Many thanks to the Events Committee for laying it all on.

Beating the winter fuel blues

If you know of anyone who is worried about paying their gas and electricity bills this winter, help is at hand. A local community group is offering free advice on how to get the best energy deals and how to keep the cold out.

Trained energy advisors from South East London Community Energy (SELCE) are offering individual support over a cup of tea and cake at weekly advice sessions in Woolwich and Catford.

The SELCE co-operative has secured funding from the government's Big Energy Saving Network initiative, and its energy advisors are ensuring that residents are getting access to available support and services as well as help with fuel bill arrears.

The new Energy Cafés are being held on Mondays from 10.00am to 4.00pm at the Woolwich Centre Main Library foyer, 35



Wellington St, London SE18 6HQ and on Tuesdays from 10.00am to 4.00pm at Lewisham Homes' customer support office on the ground floor of Catford Old Town Hall, Catford Road, London, SE6 4RU. The sessions are available until March 20th 2017.

Interested in attending a session? Drop in on the day or book an appointment on SELCE's website at selce.org.uk/energy-advice/ energy-cafe/ Anyone attending a session should bring their latest gas and electricity bills with them.



Letters

From: Victoria Line

Westcombe Park Rd

I read with not a little fury about Greenwich Council's 'eviction notice' to the users of the community garden.

Greenwich Council is apparently seeking planning permission prior to selling off the land, so its hand-wringing about creating much needed new homes is somewhat disingenuous. The buyers of these doubtless 'luxury' homes are not those in need.

Tony Othen's hope that the presence of the old Greenwich Park Line railway tunnel will prevent development is sadly misplaced. Much of the tunnel is already built over, for example, the newer properties in Blissett Street.

From: Nick Raynsford

Thanks for sending me a copy of the latest edition of *WN*, which has clearly gone from strength to strength.

Well done. Thank you also for printing Jim Wintour's very kind review of my book. It was a pleasure to write the book and I have been gratified by the many positive responses it has generated.

I just wish that the political climate both here in the UK and internationally was more conducive to the kind of serious political dialogue that in my view is essential if we are to restore confidence and overcome the cynicism and populist ranting that now dominates political debate.

From: Andrew J Graham

Vanbrugh Hill

In February, the *WN* said that no major tree work can be carried out without the Council's permission. In reality this is not true. A neighbour's contractor butchered my 60 ft birch tree without my permission. I contacted the Council, but they chose to ignore me.

From: Marilyn Little

Westcombe Hill

The AGM of the Westcombe Society takes place some time in May. (TBC) At the AGM members decide on what local organisation or charity should be our "Charity of the Year". Please send in your suggestions or proposals to me at marilyn.little@btinternet.com



As usual, the party was held for our volunteers to thank them for all they do to support the activities of the society. We were very pleased to welcome Toni Hale, of the Mental Health Activity Trust, as a guest at the party, where Marilyn handed over a cheque for £2,000. The MHAT is the Society's 2016-7 "Charity of the Year".

In a moving speech, Tony said how much this grant meant to her and those she called "her family". The aim of the Trust was to support people with mental health problems and help them back into employment. Everyone was very impressed to hear that 41 people had so far been helped in this way.

The WS needs YOU!

The Westcombe Society really appreciates the help of volunteers – and the support we already have says a great deal about the sense of community that exists in our area. However, the society still needs

- * more people to help out at events such as the Senior Citizens' Teas
- * more editorial assistance for the *WN*.

Emily Norton, our Distribution Manager, adds: "Could you help deliver the *WN* either on an occasional or regular basis? We especially need help from those who live in blocks of flats who might be able to deliver to their block and for occasional cover when people are away."

If you think you could help please call Emily on 020 8853 2756.

St George's, Glenluce Rd. Westcombe Park

Sundays: 11.00 am Children's Church
11:00 a.m. Holy Communion (All Age service 1st Sunday of each month)
Wednesdays: 8:30 a.m. Morning Prayer
12:30 p.m. Soup Lunch Fellowship

Sceptics Group meets at 89 Westcombe Pk Road) 1st & 3rd Sunday each month

Special Events in March

Wed. March 15th 7.30 at St George's:
Spiritual Film Night: The Robe starring Richard Burton & Victor Mature

Contact: Revd Tim Yeager
rtyeager@gmail.com Tel. 07804 614245



Thomas Tallis Society Choir & Orchestra
Directed by Eamonn Dougan



Johann Sebastian Bach
ST. JOHN PASSION

Jeremy Budd - Evangelist
Tim Dickinson - Christus
Arthur Bruce - Pilate
Zoë Brookshaw - Soprano
Ciara Hendrick - Mezzo Soprano

Saturday 1 April, 7.30pm
St Alfege Church, Greenwich
Tickets £18, £14 online or at the door
www.ticketsource.co.uk/tts



LOCAL NEWS

YMCA? Why Not?

Are you aged between 18 and 34, in employment, and looking for a new home? A new low rent housing scheme is now available through the council, in partnership with YMCA Thames Gateway.

YMCA is the largest and the oldest charity working with young people in the world. Across England there are 114 YMCAs. Each one is a thriving and active community, a community that is transforming lives.

There is a mixture of bedsits and one bedroom properties available from the 50+ homes in the Woolwich Dockyard area. To be eligible for the scheme the applicants must have 5 years continuous residence in the Royal Borough of Greenwich and:

- Aged 18-34
- In work or work-related training

- No recent history of serious anti-social behaviour or rent arrears
- Able to pay the rent through income and/or housing benefit and be eligible to claim for housing benefit
- Low or no support needs identified
- Have attended or be willing to attend the Money House (18-25) Financial Confidence Training
- Must have a housing application registered with the Royal Borough of Greenwich.

To register your interest, please email: housing-registration@royalgreenwich.gov.uk
You must give your housing reference number (also known as your bidding number) and state that you are interested in the YMCA housing scheme.

The Tunnel (cont. from page 1.)



Greenwich is also pressing for action on the Seibert Road issue.

The Inspectors will also be reviewing the plans for dealing with construction impacts, which set out clearly the routes that lorries may use – none of them are residential roads. And the Inspectors are questioning the effects of charging for use of the tunnel, which would particularly affect local users.

The public inquiry is due to finish in mid-April. After that, the Inspectors have

three months in which to make their recommendation to the Secretary of State for Transport, Chris Grayling. So in about four months, we will all know what they recommend.

Even then the Secretary of State for Transport still has the power to reject or approve the scheme, whatever the recommendation. And the Mayor of London will even then have the power to halt the project. So the project's outcome will be uncertain for some time yet.

Paul Abercrombie

We are very sorry to report the death on 28th December of Paul Abercrombie, who lived in the area for over 50 years.

Readers of the *WN* may recall a review in January 2016 of Paul's thinly disguised autobiographical novella, "Evening before Dawn" and will know that Paul was brought up in a children's home. Paul was exceptionally gifted and despite the normal lack of aspiration for children in care at that time, went to the local Grammar School. He continued his education at Goldsmiths College, where he made life-long friends.

Paul then began his career as a teacher, teaching English in France. On returning to London he taught French at Samuel Pepys and St Austin's. He was in his late 30s when he took his degree in French and Russian at Queen Mary College.

He was a brilliant teacher and enjoyed great exam results for his pupils... but he had his own methods – not always flavour of the month. His classes once failed an Ofsted inspection, despite the fact that he had consistently achieved such good results with his pupils. Paul was undeterred and proudly wore a badge stating "Failed

by Ofsted Inspectors"! So much the worse for Ofsted...

When Paul left Eaglesfield, where he taught for many years, he was snapped up by Bexley Grammar. Throughout his career he arranged school trips to France, Russia and Africa. He was much loved by his pupils.

Paul loved his social life – on the lawn, end-of-term parties, as well as theatre outings he organised for the regulars at the British Oak pub. He was a ruthless croquet player – and even taught the French to play the game. He was also a keen bridge player, playing regularly at Mycenae House.

He dreamt up an amazing scheme for celebrating the millennium in Greenwich: a glass maze, in which you could see where you wanted to get to, even though that did not help!

Paul had a zest for life, his work and his social activities. He had a great sense of fun, had a plethora of stories, and was such good company. In the last years Paul led quite a restricted life due to ill-health, but his memory will live on, and many will be grateful to have had their lives touched by Paul. Our deepest condolences go to Paul's wife Avril and their son, Gavin.

Nursery schools under threat

All parents need to be fully informed about the threat to Nursery Schools across the country. Here in Greenwich, there are four, including Robert Owen Nursery School and Children's Centre in Commerell Street. The Government has introduced a new early years national funding formula for nursery schools that is effective from April 2017. Next month!

This funding formula is affecting local authorities in different ways. In three years' time nursery schools will all lose a large sum of funding: if this shortfall is not made up, nursery schools may be forced to close. The Royal Borough of Greenwich is doing its best to support the four nursery schools in Greenwich but the *WN* has learnt that it cannot sustain such a loss.

These schools are hugely important. Ruth Mercer, the head of Robert Owen says:

"This school has provided nursery education for young children in East Greenwich for 70 years. We have highly qualified and experienced teachers and a core staff team that have been working at Robert Owen for many years.

"The opportunities for play and learning here are developmentally appropriate for young children and as a result our children leave full of confidence, and with a strong foundation for future learning.

"Reception teachers tell us they can always tell a Robert Owen child, because they are resilient and ready to read!"

Why are Nursery Schools so important?.

* 99% of Nursery Schools are rated good or outstanding by Ofsted – making them the most successful sector of education

* Nursery Schools have qualified teachers who make a huge difference to children's learning and development

* 60% of Nursery Schools are in the most deprived parts of the country, and thus help disadvantaged children

* They provide specialist support for children with Special Educational Needs

and Disabilities in a fully inclusive way

* Greenwich is the highest performing borough in the country for the Early Years Foundation Stage Profile and Nursery Schools contribute to this success

* Our Nursery Schools, including the four in Greenwich offer initial teacher training for specialist early years' teachers with Qualified Teacher Support.

Please forward your concerns to the Minister, Justine Greening, and MPs Caroline Dineage and Lucy Powell – who are both concerned with early years education. Matt Pennycook, our MP, has told the WN that he is lobbying hard to secure the necessary funding from Govt.

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour coming to Blackheath

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour will be in Blackheath on Sat. 25th March when they will perform brand new versions of 1940s style radio plays to support the St Michael's Church restoration appeal.

Blending comedy, homage and satire to create a heady theatrical cocktail, the cast of three will create all the sound effects live as you are transported into a bygone age of stiff dinner jackets and even stiffer upper lips, and everything is "Rippingly good fun."

Doors open at 7.00pm in the Church Hall in Blackheath Park, SE3, and the evening starts with a light supper of fish

The hour-long show follows, last orders for carriages are at 10.30pm. Tickets at £20 each are available from M Thornhill on 07752 303133 – so book soon!

The Fitzrovia Radio Hour, with no hint of modesty, boasts of "original radio plays of the 40s and 50s performed and recorded with cut glass elegance in front of a studio audience, with all sound-effects created live. We refute the notion that the well-crafted written word is dead. It is alive and well and will always look its best in a dinner jacket." A real period piece!

More information can be found on <http://www.fitzroviaradio.co.uk/>

Debbie's fight for life

There was lots of festive fun in December when families met in Mycenae House, for a Christmas coffee morning.

This event was held to raise funds for Debbie Roche, a mum of three in need of a lifesaving operation that is currently unavailable in the UK. The event raised an amazing £672 for Debbie's Operation. Debbie and her family and friends give their thanks to all who helped out on the day, or attended, including the staff at Mycenae House who were so helpful.

Debbie is debilitated by an unstable spine which is causing compression of her brain stem. This means she is currently unable to walk unaided, suffers with chronic pain, and has a whole host of other symptoms that make life very difficult.

Without this operation, Debbie's condition will continue to deteriorate. The operation cost is £60,000 and Debbie's family and friends are organising fundraising events to help her reach this target.

So far, fundraising events and donations have raised a fantastic £10,000 towards Debbie's target. A big event at the end of February – a fun-filled family disco called *Honey I brought the kids* added to this sum, but there's still a long way to go. The next event is in Mycenae House on Friday April 7th – a showing of the film, *Dirty Dancing*. Free. But donations welcome...

For more information or to donate please visit <http://www.youcaring.com/debbie-rocke-692095>. You can also see updates by liking her Facebook page <http://www.facebook.com/debbiesfightforlife>

Is education happening?

Education means the process by which children are led to acquire deep knowledge and deep insights to prepare for their adult lives: about how people tick, about themselves, about the history which led to where we are today, about the natural world, science, technology and the computerizing of information.

Cramming means memorizing things superficially, quickly – in short term memory – to pass an exam.

The P E R (Education Renewal Group) was founded in 1993 to try to ban cramming in schools and get back to genuine education.

For more details contact philosophyper@aol.com



NEW! Bo-Peep Pre-School: Dtsay & Play sessions for 0-4 year olds Wednesdays & Fridays 1pm - 3pm. Tel. Kathryn 07935 373239

Tues. 14th March Northumbrian Piper Kathryn Tickell & Amy Thatcher 7.30pm £15.00

Fri 3rd March 4 - 7pm. "Once Upon a Time" Book-themed high tea - music, quizzes +... www.eventbrite.com/Once Upon a Tea Time

Fri 10th March 7.30 for 8.00pm Jazz Nights : Kevin Street (accordion) and Jazz Nights Alistairs Tickets on the door £10.00

Fri 24th March 8.00pm ICARUS Acoustic Music Club : Mississippi MacDonald & The Cottonmouth Kings + The Gillies & Zac Turner £7.50

Fri. 31st March Ceilidh & Acoustic Night (GFMA event - see page 5)

FEATURES

Will Woolwich Barracks remain in its historical home?



Practising for the Trump visit? No, it was last year: they were enjoying Armed Forces Day which has taken place every year at Woolwich Barracks.

Following the announcement that the Ministry of Defence (MoD) plans to sell Woolwich Barracks, Greenwich councillors have unanimously agreed to lobby the Ministry of Defence (MoD) to keep the historic barracks at its home in the heart of the borough.

The Grade II listed barracks have been used by the Royal Artillery since the American War of Independence in 1776, finally pulling out in 2007. The barracks have been a core part of the Council's community links with the Armed Forces. The Kings Troop Royal Horse artillery with its 111 horses are now based in Woolwich, and regularly exercise their horses around the borough..

Cllr Denise Hyland, the Leader of the Council, said: "The barracks have a long and respected connection with our borough and we value their continued presence here. I was proud to be part of a motion that crossed the political divide and we stood united in our mission to lobby to keep the Army in Woolwich at the heart of our community."

Leader of the Opposition Cllr Matt Hartley, said: "I am pleased councillors from both parties supported the motion."

Each year, the barracks plays host to one of the UK's largest Armed Forces Day events to be held, organised by the Royal Borough, attended by over 20,000 people.

Combined, the Great Get Together and Armed Forces Day event is set against the stunning backdrop of the Royal Artillery Barracks parade ground. The annual event is a regular favourite of local residents, and features a very wide range of attractions which include an army assault course for children, and other spectacular displays.

Local MP Matt Pennycook has added his voice to the issue. He questioned the wisdom of selling the barracks, telling fellow MPs that a base in Woolwich could accommodate troops in the event of a terrorist attack. In a debate on December 20th he secured a commitment from the Defence Minister to look again in the New Year at the Government's decision to close the barracks.

The MoD said the sale formed part of their Better Defence Estate Strategy. There have been reports that the military have been experiencing some budgetary difficulties, partly as a result of the purchase of American equipment becoming an unforeseen extra expense after the pound's devaluation of the pound. The barracks is one of dozens of sites being sold off. **Visit the new permanent exhibition telling the fascinating 300-year history of the Royal Artillery and its association with Woolwich, at the Greenwich Heritage Centre, Artillery Square, Royal Arsenal, London SE18 6ST**

Paws for thought!

Paws and Padlocks is a new children's opera commissioned by Blackheath Halls in celebration of 5 years of the children's opera programme

With a score by the award-winning composer Kate Whitley (co-founder of the Multi-Story Orchestra) and libretto by Sabrina Mahfouz.

The Multi-Story Orchestra will be accompanying the performances under the musical director of their co-founder Christopher Stark. The opera will be the usual brilliant mix of professional singers and local talent, including, of course, children.

What's it about?

George and Georgina are accidentally locked in a zoo for the night. Whilst there they discover talking beasts, and dastardly plans are afoot...

With a story perfect for families and the usual high quality performances,



Paws and Padlocks will be a very special event and offers entertainment for all. **Sat. 8th/Sun 9th April 2.00pm & 6.00pm Tickets from Box Office Tel. 8463 0100: £11 | £6 under 12s Suitable for ages 6+**

Film Review

Alarming – or Alarmist?

PETER GREAVES reviews John Pilger's

film *The Coming War on China*

As we start a new Chinese New Year – the Year of the Rooster – many observers are wondering if under President Trump the possible trade war could become even more serious . . .

Speaking to a packed meeting in Davos, Jack Ma, the Chinese billionaire and founder of Alibaba, chided the US for wasting money on military hardware rather than spending it on infrastructure. But is Mr Trump likely to listen?

Early in his film John Pilger says that its aim "is to break a silence", and asks at the end "can we really afford to be silent?"

The silence refers to the American military build-up in the Pacific. It's not making the US many friends among the locals: The Marshall islanders resent being treated as guinea-pigs for the testing of nuclear weapons, and the islanders of Okinawa (Japan) and Jeju (South Korea) are shown resisting the establishment of nuclear bases.

In the film a Chinese academic says: "There never have been two countries

more interdependent on each other than China and the US in history." But today more than 400 American military bases encircle China with missiles, bombers, warships and nuclear weapons.

The film asks whether Trump will take us to the brink; can we rely on his recent "cordial" phone call with the Chinese president? The *Guardian* referred to Trump "recklessly baiting China" during his campaign, and the day after the inauguration sub-titled "Prepare for a direct clash with China." We have been warned...

There will be a showing of this film by Blackheath & Greenwich United Nations Association at 7.00 pm on Tuesday March 21st in the Old Bakehouse, Age Exchange, Blackheath Village. Free. Followed by a discussion. All welcome. Enquiries 8858 8489

Return of the Steinberg Duo

On the 6th March in 1917 two soldiers took to the stage in uniform at Aeolian Hall in London to perform works by Brahms, Beethoven and Ireland to a war-weary audience. It was this concert in 1917 that launched John Ireland's career overnight, and led to fame and fortune for the young composer.

To celebrate the centenary of this extraordinary event, and the release of their latest recording on the Lyrita label, the Steinberg Duo presents a reprise of that concert, exactly one hundred years later. The Steinberg Duo's one-night only concert will be at Blackheath Concert Halls on 6th March 2017.

Readers of the *WV* may recall that the Steinberg Duo – husband and wife artists Nick Burns and Louisa Stonehill – are a violin and piano duo who used to give monthly recitals in their studio on Vanbrugh Hill before moving to the US last year. So this is our chance to hear them again!

See page 5 for details.



Fighting for votes for women

From the 1860s women campaigned to get the vote – and finally succeeded in 1928. Was this due to Mrs Pankhurst and the suffragettes?

In the words of Shirley Williams, the suffragettes got the publicity (often negative...) – but it was the suffragists led by Millicent Fawcett, who got things done – and got the vote. Jane Grant, author of *In the Steps of Exceptional Women, a History of the Fawcett Society*, talks about the campaign, and its aftermath, at the Old Bakehouse, Age Exchange on March 14th at 7.30pm.

Beverley Morris & Co.
SOLICITORS



- Family Law
- Litigation and Employment Law
- Residential / Commercial Conveyancing
- Lease Extensions
- Planning Law
- Collective Freehold Purchases
- Wills / Administration of Estates
- Lasting Powers of Attorney

www.beverleymorris.co.uk

020 8852 4433 enquiries@beverleymorris.co.uk

35 Montpelier Vale, Blackheath Village, London SE3 0TJ
Ground floor offices. Adjacent to Montpelier's delicatessen

62 Lewisham High Street, London SE13 5JH
Close to Lewisham DLR and train stations



WHAT'S ON



ARTS

BLACKHEATH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY, St Mary's Church Hall, Cresswell Park, Blackheath www.artsinblackheath.org
All meetings are on the 4th Thursday of each month - except August and December - 2pm for 2.30pm
Wednesday 15th March 2.30pm Barbara Peacock: The Great Country Houses of Bohemia and Moravia Non-members may pay on the door
GREENWICH DECORATIVE & FINE ARTS SOCIETY King William Court, University of Greenwich Mon. 13th March: Mars and the Muses - the Renaissance Art of Armour Dr Tobias Capwell Curator at the Wallace Collection, AND a Joust! Visitors may pay on the door
BLACKHEATH HALLS Free Art Exhibition in the cafe bar by Nathalie Hesselstine Wed 1st March - Thurs 13th April Oops There Goes... This is a celebration of some of our planet's most incredible, and sadly endangered animals.

CHILDREN & FAMILY

BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. Blackheath SE3 9RQ 0208 463 0100 www.trinitylaban.ac.uk
Sat 11th March 12.00 pm & 3.00 pm **RAPUNZEL AND THE TOWER OF DOOM** by THEATRE OF WIDDERSHINS Ages 4+ Tickets: £8.50
Sat. 1st April 1.00pm & 3.00pm **Ripstrop Theatre** presents A REAL ALIEN ADVENTURE Why do aliens want to steal all the earth's fluffy things? £8.50 Ages 3+
Sat 28th April 1pm & 3pm **PIED PIPER** Norwich Puppet Theatre £8.50 Ages 3+
GREENWICH THEATRE CROOMS HILL London SE10 8ES 8858 7755
Fri 14th-Mon 18th April 11.00 am, 1pm & 3pm **CHESTER TUFFNUT** The tree-mole returns! Tickets £11.00, Children £8.50 Ages: 2-5 yrs
SHERINGTON CHILDREN'S CENTRE, Tel. 0208 - 3053140 - 14, Sherington Road SE7 7JW
DAD'S STAY AND PLAY session every Wednesday, 1.00pm -2.30pm -free drop in Sherington Children's Centre, all home dads welcome Each 2nd Saturday of the month - 10.00am -11.30am - free brunch/arts and craft Contact Daniel.hall1985@hotmail.co.uk for more details, www.selondondads.org.uk

SPOKEN WORD

BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Rd. Blackheath SE3 9RQ Box Office: 0208 463 0100 www.trinitylaban.ac.uk
WED. 1st March 8.00 pm Boris Rumney: THE SPLITS; RECITAL ROOM A memoir and honest account of a difficult life £10.00
INDUSTRIAL HISTORY SOCIETY greenwichindustrialhistory.blogspot.co.uk
Tues. 14th March 7.30 pm Jane Grant talks on In the Steps of Exceptional Women: a History of the Fawcett Society. Meeting at The Old Bakehouse, Age Exchange, Bennett Park.
BLACKHEATH SCIENTIFIC SOCIETY
Friday lectures at 7.45pm Mycenae House. Visitors welcome - donations £3 to the society.
IN-WORDS
West Greenwich Library, 146 Greenwich High Road SE10, in association with in-words.co.uk
March 7th, 7.00 for 7.30pm poetry reading by four published poets - James Flynn, Michael Loveday, Mel Pryor and Frances Spurrier. Huffington Post named Mel as one of "five poets to watch in 2017." Frances Spurrier's The Pilgrim's Trail won the Cinnamon Press award in 2014.
March 28th, 7 for 7.30: Anjana Chowdhury will read from her debut novel "Under the Pipal Tree" (Cinnamon Press, 2016). Both these events are free but donations for refreshments welcome.
Visit Irena Hill's website in-words.co.uk for details of these and other upcoming events.

GLOBAL FUSION MUSIC & ARTS

Globalfusionarts.co.uk Tel 0208 858 9497

Fri. 31st March CEILIDH & ACOUSTIC NIGHT Hosted by Morrigan with Guest artists - Scoldis Bridie
£5.00 wegottickets.com or **£5.00** on the door

Free workshops Fortnightly Tuesday and Friday community workshops 7.30-8.30pm at Mascalls Meeting Room off Victoria Way, Charlton SE7 7TT Tai Chi, Singing, drumming, Writer's Group, African Dance **Info 0208 858 9497**

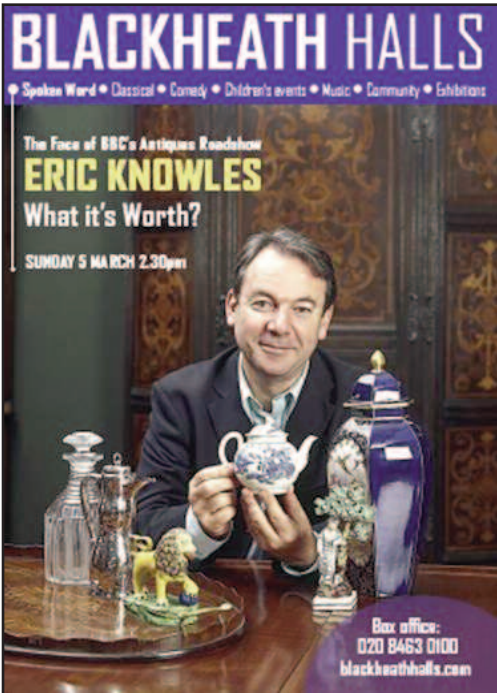
THE WESTCOMBE SOCIETY

Events in Mycenae House:

Sat 18th March 2- 4.00pm Daffodil Tea
Sat 1st April 7.30 for 8.00pm Spring Quiz
Sat 15th April 2.00 - 4.00pm (In garden) Easter Egg Hunt
MAY AGM Date TBC Pl. send Marilyn
Proposals for Charity of the Year
Sat 10th June 7.30 Members' Evening
Sat in July Summer Picnic - TBC
Fri. 20th Sept. 10.00am - 2.00pm Macmillan Coffee Morning
Sat 21st Oct. 2- 4.00pm Chrysanthemum Tea
Fri 3rd Nov. 7.30 for 8.00pm Spring Quiz
The Westcombe Society really needs more volunteers to help out at these events.
If you are interested, please ring Joanne on 07709 571777.

COMMUNITY

FRIENDS OF MYCENAE GARDENS
Annual General meeting: The Friends of Mycenae Gardens will be having their 2017 AGM at 7.00pm on Wednesday 22nd March in the Steiner School.
BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH WOMEN'S INSTITUTE Meets first Wednesday of every month, doors open at 7.00pm for 7.30pm at Sunfields Methodist Church on Old Dover Road
GREENWICH UNION PUB (MEANTIME)
READING GROUP New local reading group- starting - first Wed. of each month. Read -Discuss-Share food) at members homes. Contact: Barbara Ward ward.barbara@mac.com 07960 107578 Free
BLACKHEATH BRIDGE CLUB duplicate sessions in Mycenae House Mon & Thurs 7.15pm and on Wed at 1.15pm. Tel. Ron 0208 319 1312
DYSLEXIA ASSOCIATION OF BEXLEY, BROMLEY GREENWICH & LEWISHAM
Info: 07762265827 Help Line: 0300 999 1800
Thurs 20th April 7.45pm Talks on Handwriting, and Revision Tips and Techniques. At St Nicholas Church Hall (Village Hall) Church Lane, Chislehurst Kent BR7 5PE **Adult Dyslexia Group:** First Wednesday of each month at 7.30 pm Community House, South Street, Bromley BR1 1RH
CHARLTON HOUSE www.charltonhouse 0208 -856 -3001 Mulberry Tea Rooms Jacobean Entrance Hall Mon-Fri 9am- 4pm Lunchtime concert every Friday 1.00pm - 2.00pm
BLACKHEATH & GREENWICH UNITED NATIONS ASSOCIATION: **Tues. 21st March** Will be showing *The Coming War with China*, John Pilger's alarming (alarmist?) film. The Trump effect... Meeting at the **Old Bakehouse, Age Exchange, Bennett Park, Blackheath** starts at **7.00 pm** as the film is long, and time is needed for discussion. Free. All welcome.
WESTCOMBE WOODLANDS next volunteer day: Saturday 4th March 10.00 am - 1.00 pm.



THEATRE

THE GREENWICH THEATRE, Crooms Hill, London SE10 8ES Box Office: 8858 7755 greenwichtheatre.org.uk
Until Sun 12th March: the Gothic Rock Musical LIZZIE, the story of Lizzie Borden who took an axe, and gave her mother forty whacks . . . Times as advertised Tickets £25.00 Concs. £21.00
Wed 15th - Sat 18th March RAFFLES mystery adventure based on the thriller by E W Hornung Eves. 7.30, Sat Mat. 2.30 pm £16.00 concs. £13.50
Sun 19th March 7.30 pm GALA MUSIC HALL celebrating the 80th birthday of our Celia - CELIA MORETON-PRITCHARD Tickets £18.50 | Concs. £16.00 Proceeds go to Greenwich Theatre's improvement programme
Wed 22nd - Sat 25th March 7.00pm St Dunstan's school present **PARADE**, the US's "Dreyfus" affair . . . £16.00 | Concs. £11.00
Sun. 2nd April 7.30 pm Fascinating Aida's DILLIE KEANE Lots of fun, gales of laughter, Dillie is accompanied by MICHAEL ROULSTON Tickets £21.00 | £18.50 concs.

MUSIC

BLACKHEATH HALLS 23, Lee Road SE3 9RQ 0208 463 0100 www.trinitylaban.ac.uk
CLASSICAL:
Sun. 5th March 11.00 am Recital Room the TRIO ISIMSIZ play Haydn, Schumann & Beethoven Tickets £14 | £12.00 concs.
Sat 18th March 7.00pm JUNIOR TRINITY SPRING CONCERT Concerto performances by final-year students. In Great Hall. Free but ticketed. Advance booking essential
March 6th. The Steinberg Duo play Beethoven, Brahms, Bush and Ireland £14 (£12.00 concs.)
Thurs. 30th March 7.30pm Trinity Laban Wind Orchestra play Skrowaczewski, Roxburgh & Christopher Marshall FREE but ticketed.
LUNCHTIME RECITALS: 1.10 Recital Room. Mon 13th March, and Monday 3rd April.
MAINSTREAM
Sat 4th March Blackheath does Broadway with **GUYS & DOLLS** a concert performance by local community groups. Great Hall. Tickets: £14| £12 (concs)|£8 (students)| £6 (under 12s)
Tues. 7th March, Wed 8th, Wed 15th, Tues 21st, Tues 28th, Wed 29th 7.30pm BEATS IN THE BAR with students & guest artists FREE,
FOLK MUSIC AT THE HALLS
Sat 11th March 8.00pm The Demon Barbers - Disco at the Tavern Winners of 'Best Live Act' at BBC Radio 2 Folk Awards. £18 | £16 concs.
Sun 26th MAR 8.00pm Emily Portman & The Coracle Band TICKETS: £18 | £16 concs.

TRINITY LABAN - FREE CONCERTS
Diana Cummings & Irina Lyakhovskaya play The Complete Beethoven Sonatas 1.05 pm
Every Wednesday 1st - 22nd MARCH
in the Peacock Room King Charles Court

MYCENAE HOUSE LIVE EVENTS: MARCH 2017

Fri 3rd March 4-7pm - Once Upon a Tea Time. A fundraising 'Classic Book' themed High-Tea. £19.50.
Fri 10th March 8pm - JazzNights. Candlit Live Jazz music event hosted by Dave Silk featuring JazzNights Allstars plus guests . £10.
Sat 11th March 3pm - Pop! A Magical comedy show for 3-8 year olds & their families. £9.
Tues 14th March 8pm - Kathryn Tickell. World's foremost exponent of the Northumbrian Pipes. £15.
Sat 18th March 8pm - Shkembe Soup. A fundraising evening of dance for Greenwich Mencap. £10.
Fri 24th March 7.30pm - Icarus Club. An evening of acoustic live music performed by high quality, original songwriters . £7.50.
Fri 31st March 7.30pm Global Fusion: Monthly ceilidh & acoustic night. £8.

For further information about all Mycenae House events visit www.mycenae-house.co.uk

TROJAN PRESS
Printing in Blackheath since 1978
FROM YOUR IDEAS OR ARTWORK WE CAN PRINT AT A REASONABLE COST:
• BUSINESS CARDS
• INVOICES • LETTERHEADS
• BOOKS • BROCHURES
• FORMS • INVITES
• WEDDING STATIONARY
Ia Lizban St
Blackheath, London SE3 8SS
Tel: 020 8853 2268
Email: dave@trojanpress.co.uk
www.trojanpress.co.uk

R.G. Austin

(Established 1963)



Heating Engineers,
Property Maintenance,
Electrics, Painting,
Decorating, Plumbing,
Central Heating,

GAS
SAFE

Shower and Bathroom Specialists

2A Hassendean Rd, Blackheath SE3 8TS
Telephone: 0208 858 7359
rgaustin@fsmail.net

AGE EXCHANGE

11, Blackheath Village, London SE3 9L
Tel :0208 318 9105 www.age-exchange.org
Library Opening Hours
The community library will be opening until 7pm on Tuesdays. Special thanks to volunteer Kathleen Ewen for helping us with this new initiative.
Feel Better with a Book
Starting on Wednesday 3rd March is our Reader Group facilitated by volunteers with the Reader Organisation. Join Penny and Heidi as they share texts (poems, short stories) in a supportive and inclusive setting. Participants are invited to read aloud and share responses to the writing over a cup of tea or coffee. Held in The Studio from 3.15pm to 4.45pm, the sessions are free with a small charge for refreshments.



Learning is fun

St Olave's is a Prep School in New Eltham for boys and girls aged 3-11 years

- Broad, child-centred curriculum
- Excellent results in the 11+ selection
- Clubs, outings and residential trips
- Excellent pastoral care
- Small classes
- Specialist staff for PE, IT, Music, French and Drama
- Sibling fee reduction
- Before and after school care

Tel: 020 8294 8930
www.stolaves.org.uk



Grant Saw Wealth Management Limited

INDEPENDENT PERSONAL and CORPORATE FINANCIAL ADVISERS
Investments - Pensions - Estate Planning

2 Charlton Road. Blackheath Standard
London SE3 7EX (T) 020 3417 9760
email: enquiries@gswwealth.co.uk
website: www.gswwealth.co.uk.

HELPING YOU PLAN YOUR FUTURE
Grant Saw Wealth Management Ltd. is authorised and regulated by the Financial Conduct Authority



FEATURES

The British inventor who sank 13 Allied Vessels Malcolm Hardy



Maritime Greenwich would seem to have allowed the 150th anniversary of one of the most momentous developments in naval warfare to slip by unnoticed – though admittedly, it did not take place in Greenwich or even Britain.

In 1866 the Lancashire-born inventor and industrialist, Robert Whitehead, produced the first effective naval torpedo.

It was constructed in his factory in Rijeka (Fiume in Italian), Croatia, then part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire, which was the first power to accept his invention. By 1870, his torpedoes could travel at 6 knots (11km/h); ten years later, he was selling torpedoes to ten other countries.

Eventually he set up a British torpedo factory at Portland in 1890. Meanwhile, the British licensed his technology for their own torpedo made in the Arsenal at Woolwich from 1872, supplementing this production with purchases of Whitehead torpedoes produced in Rijeka. The Rijeka "Torpedo" factory went bankrupt in the 1920s, but was again producing torpedoes for Italy in the Second World War.

By 1943, it was producing 160 torpedoes a month – no wonder it became a target for allied bombers. The factory in Rijeka continued to supply the Yugoslav armed forces for some 20 years after the war.

A curious footnote

A curious footnote to the Whitehead story is that his grand-daughter Agatha married



A German U-boat

an ambitious Rijeka-trained officer in the Austrian Navy who commanded the Austrian submarine squadron in the First World War – so successfully that a special medal was struck to commemorate his exploits. Under his command, the submarines SM U-5 and SM U-14 sank thirteen Allied ships.

His name? Corvette Captain Georg Johannes Ritter von Trapp, an Austro-

Hungarian Navy officer: familiar to us from the film *The Sound of Music*. His numerous decorations included the Order of Maria Theresa.

However, in this era of fake news it is worth noting that he was not an Austrian aristocrat (as in the film) but was born in Zadar, now a coastal town in Croatia, but at the time part of the Austro-Hungarian Empire. In 1920, Zadar became part of Italy, and Georg was therefore technically an Italian citizen, along with his wife and children.

After the death of Agatha from scarlet fever, the family moved to Austria where Georg subsequently married the children's tutor (aka Julie Andrews!). Badly affected by the depression, they turned their hobby, music, into a profession.

Later, unwilling to become part of the Nazi war-machine, he and the family went by train to Italy, from where they travelled to the US in pursuit of a musical career. Another grand-daughter of Whitehead's married into the Bismark family.



ABOVE: Georg von Trapp and Agatha

The Maritime Museum of Rijeka commemorated Whitehead's invention with a special exhibition

Anita's Cleaning Services

Domestic & Commercial Cleaning
To a Very High Standard

Reasonable Rates.
No job too big or too small.
Honest and reliable
CRB checked, First Aider
Public Liability Insurance

Contact: anitabonta@outlook.com or
07989660419 for more info or a quote

Unravelling DNA Machines, one Molecule at a time . . .

In February, the Blackheath Scientific Society welcomed Dr Daniel Burnham Marie Sklodowska-Curie Postdoctoral Fellow at the Francis Crick Institute in London, to talk on his research on DNA and the role of nano-technology.

Dr. Daniel Burnham is working at the interface of biology and physics to build novel, bespoke microscopes and develop new biological assays to address fundamental questions of how nanoscopic machines copy DNA when cells divide.

He described how his interdisciplinary field of science is at the cutting edge of research and knowledge at "The Crick" into how the human body works and how this research will provide the framework for future anti-cancer therapeutics.

Our bodies are made of trillions of cells, each containing the instructions for life, DNA. The genetic information in DNA consists of 6 billion nucleobases, like letters in a book, wound together as a 2 metre long double helix. This fits inside cells 250 times smaller than a pinhead and has 70,000 letters copied every second! The nucleobase letters of DNA are arranged like the zip on a coat: every time a cell is copied so are all these letters - without mistakes!

We know that a zipper, or molecular machine, unzips the DNA, but we have no idea how it works. This is Dr Burnham's current research project: How does the zipper work? The problem is that the zipper is 10,000 times smaller than the width of a human hair . . .

This report is adapted from the Blackheath Scientific Society's website www.bss.btck.co.uk. The Society has hosted lectures accessible to the lay-person for over 150 years. Visitors are welcome, and are asked to contribute £3.00 towards the cost. Contact details of the Society are available on its website.

BESPOKE PERSONAL TRAINING
SILVER SENIORS

BOOST YOUR ENERGY | SUPPLENESS | BALANCE

Home Visits | Outdoors
*SPECIAL RATES Tues - Thurs Afternoons**

Email: Daphne@Vanbrughfitness.co.uk
Msc Exercise & Health Behaviour

BUILD & CREATE CONSTRUCTION LTD

BE INSPIRED AND BUILD

Extensions and refurbishments



buildandcreate.co.uk
clinton@buildandcreate.co.uk
0796 1089012 0208 305 2184

Proud members of
Checkatrade.com
Where reputation matters



GRANT SAW SOLICITORS LLP

For You & Your Family:

- Divorce and Financial Settlements
- Children Disputes
- Residential Property- sales and purchases
- Transfer of Equity
- Leasehold Extensions and Enfranchisement
- Wills and Probate
- Lasting Powers of Attorney

For Your Business:

- Commercial Property
- Sites for Redevelopment
- Commercial Contracts
- Mergers and Acquisitions
- Dispute Resolution
- Court and Tribunal Proceedings
- Insolvency

Greenwich Office
Norman House
110-114 Norman Road
Greenwich, London
SE10 9EH
Tel: 020 8858 6971

Blackheath Office
9 Hare & Billet Road
Blackheath
London
SE3 0RB

E-mail: enquiries@grantsaw.co.uk
www.grantsaw.com





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

‘It gets worse every year...’

MARY MILLS on the problems of hill-dwellers

“It gets worse every year” said an elderly neighbour to me when I moved to Humber Road fifty years ago. She was talking about Vanbrugh Hill – and yes, it does get worse and for many people the struggle to get up it is impossible.

This does not just affect the disabled, elderly and those with small children; there are many people with a whole range of conditions which make climbing steep hills a bad idea – or impossible.

In our area the hillside up from the river stretches from Greenwich proper, right along to Plumstead. Very few of those hills have adequate bus services – in our immediate area Westcombe Hill is well served – but Maze Hill has no public transport, and Vanbrugh Hill has – oh dear, oh dear - the very inadequate 386.

One major concern now is that traffic along Trafalgar and Woolwich Roads has led to plans for increased parking controls. Consultation rules mean that people north of the railway line are being asked – although Trafalgar Road shops and the Greenwich centre serve a population up Vanbrugh and Maze Hills.

Plans for new transport facilities on the Peninsula - bus routes, roads, a planned

new station, etc , etc – don’t take into account the access problems of people who live ‘up the hill’ and who need to use them too.

We don’t have a direct bus which goes to North Greenwich and it's a bit too far to walk. At other stations there are proper facilities for local people to pick up and drop off passengers with luggage, or whatever – but not for us at North Greenwich. Many of the new – and old - facilities on the Peninsula are awkward for us to access – and we are increasingly missing out.

Planners need to factor the steepness of hills into their plans – and it isn’t just about transport. As a local councillor I used to argue that light pollution from new peninsula facilities didn’t affect those who were consulted in the surrounding areas on the same level. People ‘up the hill’ weren’t asked although those bright lights shone right in their windows.

As far as the planners were concerned the consultation rules are about distance, not gradient. So– we need to get gradients on to the agenda when plans are being made, and see that they get factored in to the changes being made in our local environment.

Green light for Greenwich

In December, Greenwich Council got the go-ahead for “The Greener Greenwich Strategy” which outlines the actions planned to tackle climate change and air pollution across the Borough.

This follows a series of consultations the Royal Borough ran earlier in the year, on its Greener Greenwich Strategy and the Royal Borough’s Air Quality Action Plan, both of which were launched last summer. Some of the key initiatives included are:

- Expanding solar panel installation on Council-owned properties.
- Exploring technologies such as battery storage to improve energy security.
- Exploring the development of district heat networks to supply locally produced lower emission energy to residents; including the investigation of a water source heat pump in the River Thames to supply council homes.
- Trialling smarter lower emission transport solutions such as e-bikes, electric vehicle car clubs and e-charging points through the EU funded Horizon2020 programme and the Low Emission Neighbourhood scheme.

Deputy Leader and Cabinet Member for

Regeneration and Sustainability, Councillor Danny Thorpe said: “Climate change and air pollution present a significant challenge.

“I am delighted that the Royal Borough has just been awarded ‘Cleaner Air Borough Status’ from the Greater London Authority (GLA) for the wide range of measures we have adopted in improving air quality.

“We will continue to lobby for lower polluting hybrid buses, multi-modal river crossings and an Ultra-Low Emissions Zone (ULEZ) as well as a range of other measures in the Borough.”

For more information go to: www.royalgreenwich.gov.uk/greenergreenwichstrategy

Parking in Old Dover Rd

Traders in Old Dover Road are pressing for an early solution to this problem. Traders complain the problem has been going on for years. Newsagents who start work at 5.00 am report that there is no room to park anywhere in the road at that time. One van has not been moved for days on end.

“Parking controls would make a huge difference to the viability of businesses in Old Dover Road,” said one Trader.

“How much longer do we have to wait?”

PLANNING APPLICATION

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

105A HUMBER ROAD ref 17/0326/F
Replace single glazed sash windows with double glazed sash windows

A & A LANDSCAPES
Landscape Specialists



Free advice & estimates



Qualified horticulturalist

All aspects of soft & hard landscaping work carried out including

- * Maintenance
- * Site clearance
- * Turfing
- * Tree surgery
- * Fencing
- * Patios
- * Brickwork

Tel. 020 8318 2530

Canker in the Park

Neville Grant

A reader asked the *WN* about two chestnut trees recently felled near the Maze Hill entrance to Greenwich Park. A spokesman for Greenwich Park told the *WN* that the trees had to be felled because they were dangerous: they were ‘riddled with canker’ caused by an ascomycete fungus.

Until recently, there have been only isolated outbreaks of the disease in England. The disease was first spotted in Warwicksire in 2011, and isolated outbreaks have occurred in seven other locations, including East Sussex and Devon. In 2016, the disease was confirmed again near Maidstone, Kent in a single sweet chestnut tree which had been planted in 2009.

The owner noticed symptoms and reported it to the Forestry Commission with Tree Alert. The tree was destroyed with the owner's co-operation, and in line with the normal precautionary procedure, a survey was conducted of sweet chestnut and oak trees within 5km (3.2 miles). Fortunately no further cases were found in the area.

According to the website of the Forestry Commission, Sweet chestnut blight is a plant disease caused by the ascomycete fungus *Cryphonectria parasitica*. For years this pathogen has caused severe epidemics that have destroyed sweet chestnut trees in North America: during the first half of the 20th century, it killed some 3.5 billion trees after it was accidentally introduced there from Asia.

It was first identified in Europe (in Italy) in 1938. Although losses have not been on the same scale, it has spread steadily throughout much of the continent.

Sweet chestnuts are grown commercially

Fact file:

In the early 1660's, King Charles II commissioned Le Notre (gardener to Louis XIV) to design the formal French-style layout of the Park, much of which remains today with its impressive avenues of sweet (Spanish) chestnut. Many of these trees remain as ‘veterans’ more than 400 years old.

Ancient trees, such as the sweet chestnuts and the many other mature and veteran tree species to be found in the Park, are of tremendous value to wildlife. The complex structure of the trees includes cavities, splits, rot holes and bark flaps - all of which provide valuable habitats for fungi, many kinds of specialised insects and other invertebrates, as well as vital roosting sites for bats and nesting sites for birds

both in mainland Europe and the UK for the timber and nut markets, so in addition to environmental and biodiversity impacts, the disease can have an economic impact.

The disease poses no threat to people, pets or livestock, and it does not affect horse chestnut (conker) tree. However, sadly, more trees are likely to be infected, and therefore felled, in Greenwich Park, although the park authorities are hoping that losses can be minimised

The Forestry Commission is asking local people, especially tree professionals, to help by checking their sweet chestnut trees everywhere, whether they are in gardens, woodlands, hedgerows or elsewhere, for signs of the disease.

Any suspected symptoms must be reported, preferably with the Forestry Commission’s Tree Alert disease reporting tool: <https://treealert.forestry.gov.uk>

The new gold: Grass

Yes, not gold: GRASS. A new report shows that Britain can get almost all of its gas from a very simple source – grass. So a new outfit in Gloucestershire, Ecotricity, is calling on the government to rethink where Britain gets its gas.

Quite incredibly, researchers have found there is enough suitable land to produce enough green gas each year to power 97% of the homes in Britain. And it can be done without affecting food production – in fact, it would be boosting it (via crop breaking), and at the same time creating new wildlife habitats.

Not to mention the £7.5billion boost to the economy and 150k new jobs in a new and sustainable industry – and making fracking a redundant concept.

It’s not too late, because fracking hasn’t started yet. But Britain needs a proper review of where Britain gets its gas from – we can either frack the countryside or we can grow the grass. It’s that simple.

Ecotricity recently got consent for its first Green Gas Mill. All that is needed now is

for the government to get behind this simple, abundant and benign energy source.

There’s lots more information on our website about what we’re doing, including the full report and detail on how our Green Gas Mills will work.

Visit ecotricity.co.uk

Dale Vince is the founder of Ecotricity Group Limited, Lion House, Rowcroft, Stroud, Gloucestershire GL5 3BY

Susan Clark Interiors



113 Humber Rd
London SE3 7LW

Construction to complete renovation
Project Management • Interior Design
Upholstery • Joinery • Lighting
Curtains • Blinds • Paint
Antique Furniture • Gifts • Cards
sales@susanclarkinteriors.com
www.susanclarkinteriors.com
0208 305 2299

HAVE YOU MADE YOUR WILL?

PETER BOWYER

PROFESSIONAL WILL WRITING SERVICES

Member of The Society of Will Writers and The Institute of Professional Will Writers

Single/Double Wills
Lasting Powers of Attorney
Home Visits

Freephone 0800 389 7387
Visit: www.londonwills.com

MARKET PLACE

Please send ads for the Market Place with payment by the 10th day of the preceding month to:
Marilyn Little, 163, Westcombe Hill, SE3 7DP
8853 1312 Advertising@westcombesociety.org
ALL classified adverts 30p per word. Please make cheques payable to The Westcombe Society

ACCOMMODATION

GOOD RELIABLE HOST FAMILIES wanted for foreign students. For more info. please contact Lynne on 01732 822649 or email sesgreenwich@aol.com

ROOMS FOR HIRE

FUNCTION ROOM FOR HIRE
Blackheath area, up to 150 people, Bar, disabled access. Tel 07940 296290

GARDENING

GARDEN MAINTENANCE: mowing, weeding, pruning, communal garden contracts, fruit and vegetables, gardening tuition, RHS qualified, also domestic cleaning. Call John and Rachel on 07746 121510

HOLIDAYS

WHITSTABLE WEEKENDS / WEEKS Sea wall house between Oyster Warehouse and Harbour. Sleeps 5. Fantastic views. 8858 6578 or 013 04 367443

PERSONAL CARE & THERAPY

BLACKHEATH HOLISTIC HEALTH SERVICE.
Counselling, Psychotherapy, Yoga
Westcombe Park <http://www.bhhs.selondon.co.uk>
Tel: 020 8858 1991
COUNSELLING FOR CREATIVE PROFESSIONALS. Speak to Jon Edge, MA, MSc, UKCP, BACP Registered. 0788 777 8360
<http://counsellingforcreativeprofessionals.net/>

SERVICES & TRADE

TRAINED CHIMNEY SWEEP & STOVE INSTALLER
Fast, friendly Happy to work! Call Anthony on 07772 649577 or email: chimneymaintenance@gmail.com
ANDREW FLETCHER Painting, Decorating & Tiling services. Over 20 years' experience, fully insured. References available. Call 07702 094382
INTERIOR DECORATOR & CARPENTER with over 20 years experience. A member of the guild of mastercraftsman. Free quotes & friendly advice on all your decorating requirements. Local references available. Tel. Ashley Greaves 8858 2981
ELECTRICIAN / ALARM ENGINEER
No job too small TMIET registered. Call 0787 9011792
C.S. CARPENTRY-JOINERY
Decorating and all building work undertaken. Joseph McNamara 8857 5480, mob. 07947155366
LOCAL CARPET/OVEN CLEANER Specialist in cleaning Carpets & Ovens, Upholstery & rugs. Competitive rates. Email: adam@carpetcrew.co.uk M: 07828503132 <http://www.carpetcrew.co.uk>
MALCOLM TIERNEY, CARPENTER
Specialist in refurbishment, repair and replacement of sash windows. 0777 5657371
UPHOLSTERER SPECIALISING IN TRADITIONAL UPHOLSTERY Www.suemayesupholstery.net or phone 07932 040298
HOMEWORKS
All-round handyman for those DIY's you have no time for! General repairs. Painting & Decorating. General Carpentry and flooring. Flat-pack assembly. Patio and deck cleaning. No job too small. Contact Matthew Barron 07903 388658
DECORATING, ELECTRICS Plumbing and Property Maintenance. Est, 25 years. References available. Phil McNamara 8857 5480, mobile 07814 360862

MARK CHEESEMAN, LOCAL CARPENTER AND JOINER with 30 years experience. All aspects of carpentry and construction carried out considerably and to a high standard. Reinstatement of original Victorian/Edwardian/Georgian details, ie shutters, skirtings, plinth blocks, picture rails, cornices etc. Bespoke joinery, wardrobes, cupboards, stairs, kitchens. Sash windows overhauls. Resin timber repairs. Please call M: 07767 456131 or H: 020 8854 4028
S.S.D PLUMBING AND HEATING Friendly local plumber available for free estimates and advice. All works undertaken, no job too small, from boilers to bathroom suites, all works viewed within 24 hours, fully insured and new work guaranteed. Call today on 07931 536533 or 8305 1039 ssdbuilders2@hotmail.com
S.S.D DAMP PROOFING SPECIALISTS in the treatment of RISING & PENETRATING damp. Repair/renewal of rotten structural timbers as a result of damp. Chemical injection and render using tried and tested systems. Specialists in providing horizontal and vertical barriers against damp/ water ingress. Please contact us for a free consultation and written estimate. Mob: 07931 536 533 Land: 020 8305 1039
PUBBLE PLASTERING Need a plasterer with excellent references? Work is of high standard. Qualified C&G. Plastering-Rendering-Plasterboarding - Repairs. Free quotes! Call Alex on 07547 468459 / 0203 092 0684
pubbbleplastering@googlegmail.com
DRESSMAKER Specialist in Special occasion wear, Bespoke wedding dresses and alterations with over 25 years experience. Bookings in advance on 07904880448

JEWELLERY AND WATCH REPAIRS AND VALUATIONS from Michele Franklin. British Jewellers Association accreditation 07809 502 714 Michele@personaljewellerylondon.co.uk
S.S.D BUILDERS LTD.
Long established Building & Roofing Company available for free estimates & advice. ALL works undertaken, from guttering to Refurbishments. All works viewed within 24 hours, fully insured & new work is guaranteed. Call us today on 07931 536533 or 0208 305 1039 ssdbuilders2@hotmail.com
PHONE/BROADBAND SOCKETS.
Improved Broadband speed plates, Fault Finding Repairs, New Extensions, Tidying of cables. 25 yrs BT, Insured. 07845 705900
SUNSHINE WINDOW CLEANING For a no-obligation quote call Martin on 07821403577
AIR CONDITIONING & ELECTRICAL WORK
Fully qualified engineers CSCS Tel: 07419 312547
A MAN AND A VAN Tel: 020 8858 3889
Mobile: 07885 917842
T.TA ELECTRICS. NICEIC Approved Contractor, Quality Tradesman. All electrical work undertaken, Fully Insured & Guaranteed. 24HR EMERGENCY ELECTRICAL. Please call Tony on 07961 509 403 OR 020 84887425 OR info@ttaelectrics.co.uk
PEST CONTROL SERVICES All types of pests dealt with including fox control. Call John 0208 300 3496
WESTCOMBE CLEANERS I'm a friendly, hard-working & organised domestic cleaner. Regular or single services. Competitive rates. Additional tasks. I love my clients to be happy. Phone 07746 291617

TUITION

ITALIAN TUITION Native Italian teacher offers lessons at all levels.Preparation for GCSE, A-LEVELS courses, Grammar, Conversation Tel 07788 743371
MATHS & ENGLISH TUITION and preparation for 11+ and independent school selection tests by qualified and experienced teacher.marystuition.com Mary Bauckham 07709089838 mary.bauckham@virgin.net
ENGLISH/PRIMARY/11-PLUS TUITION All ages welcome. GCSE, A/S-Levels, Common Entrance, Primary, etc. Fully qualified, experienced teacher. Call Hellin Halliday BA(Hons), PGCE on 020 8858 7704 / 07928 017762 to discuss how I can help.
SHOW YOUR COMPUTER WHO IS THE BOSS
Are you looking for some extra help working with your computer? Need some help with your digital photos, online shopping and the jargon? To discuss the options, call Paul on 07958 251448 or email paul.clayton@soulchip.co.uk
SPANISH TUITION all ages and levels, GCSE, A levels, conversation, literature, by Latinoamerican native speaker. Please contact Miguel at migansiergut52@gmail.com or 07910318513
MATHS TUITION
Qualified and experienced secondary teacher offers tuition to GCSE level.Call Miv Whitaker: 07745816338; or email miv.whitaker@fsmail.net
MATHEMATICS, PHYSICS AND PSYCHOLOGY TUITION Ex Head of Department with 20 years experience providing support through CE, GCSE, IB, GCE/STEP and degree studies. All boards and levels. SEND and G&T specialist. Full access to all academic resources. T: 07497 828247 E: blackheathmaths@gmail.com
Website: blackheathmaths.com
MARTIAL ART DEFENCE, also walking cane and staff training. Groups and schools welcome, plus Boot Camps. Master 35 years teaching; High standard Booking: Telephone 07952 503660; or 0208 3034362
MULVIHILL ACADEMY OF IRISH DANCE
Adult and Child Irish Dance Classes available in the Blackheath area. Come along for a fun-all-in-one workout. For more information call Rachel on 07707 100521
NEED HELP WITH YOUR COMPUTER?
Local technician provideshome technical support & tuition. No job too small, all in your own home. Ring Glenn: 8473 4091

FOR SALE

CLASSICAL MUSIC CD BOXED SETS FOR SALE.
Immaculate condition; including:Deutsche Grammophon, Decca Classics & Phillips. Individually priced and cheaper than Amazon.
Contact:
SEClassicalmusic@yahoo.com

BUY LOCAL!

Discounts available on production of your Westcombe Society membership card.

BLACKHEATH VILLAGE: PARES FOOTWEAR
10% OFF all shoes over £20, excluding sale stock
RAFFLES DESIGNER WEAR.
10% OFF all non-sale goods
THE VERB SHOP 10 percent discount on all copywriting and content creation. Free 1 hour assessment of your marketing material.

GREENWICH: NORTH POLE RESTAURANT
12.5% OFF Meals only for two
3D DIVING 10% discount on all scuba diving courses. Offer excludes scuba diving equipment.
GREENWICH COMMUNICATION CENTRE
at 164 Trafalgar Road: 10% Discount on all Computer Maintenance & Repairs (inc Tablets & Smartphones)
www.greenwichccc.com T: 02082692103
HUMBER ROAD: BODYWORKZ - THE FITNESS CLINIC
109 Humber Road.10% OFF all treatments costing £30 or more except Chiropody; exc.Saturdays.
ROYAL NEPALESE RESTAURANT
(Station Crescent) 20% OFF meals for two or more Sunday - Thursdays.
THE CURIOUS COMB
10% discount on services over £30 Weekdays 8am-10am, 2pm-4pm (excludes retail purchases).
CORIANDE RESTAURANT (Station Crescent) 25% off Sunday to Thursday. Bookings only!

THE STANDARD: COTON & HAMBLIN - OPTICIANS
£65 off complete spectacles
KARAN CHEMIST 10% OFF Weds. only
BLACKHEATH EYECARE OPTICIANS
20% off 2nd pair of spectacles. (Same prescription). Not in conjunction with any other offer. (Complete glasses start from £49.95 with single vision lenses). 5% off contact lens solution and accessories. <https://www.blackheatheyecare.co.uk/>
TROJAN PRESS 10% OFF all quotations

WESTCOMBE HILL A * DRIVING SCHOOL £5 discount on the price of one x 2 hour lesson for WS members.
THE WONDER WOMEN NETWORK 10% discount

WESTCOMBE PARK ROAD KAREN STOREY OF HOMESPACE offers members 10% discount on decluttering & homestaging services 0844 846 5854 www.home-space.biz

PENINSULA SHENDA FALVEY PERSONAL TRAINING & BOOTCAMPs Free bootcamp session at Greenwich Peninsula worth £10. Book to secure place (excludes existing customers) 25% off first personal training session plus free consultation M: 07887 727 335 www.shendafalveypersonaltraining.com

HAVE YOU GOT THE SKILLS – OR TIME – FOR DIY?
Or is it all just such an effort! If that's your problem, I can solve it !
* Decorating including preparation, wall- papering, painting, & special finishes.
* Re- hanging doors and putting up shelving.
* Re-laying floors-lino, wood laminates and ceramics.
* Domestic Electrical work.
* Plumbing - taps, showers,radiators and external.
* Garden revival and maintenance
Need help with any of these?
Please call
Tony: 0208 856 9398 M: 07961 540836
<http://www.tonysdiy.com/>

J K Auto Services
All makes of vehicles serviced
— Saab Specialist —
Tyres & Exhaust Fitting Service
—
Air Conditioning Re-gas & Servicing Facilities
Unit 52, New Lydenburg Industrial Estate,
New Lydenburg Street,
Charlton SE7 8NF
Tel: 020 8293 1511

WRISTWORTH HEATING & PLUMBING
Installation - Servicing - Repair
Tel: 07725 008230
Email: wristworth@hotmail.co.uk
Check Out Our **NEW** Website: wristworthheating.weebly.com

Childcare for ages 3 months – 5 years

I can see a great nursery from here

If you're looking for a nursery that will help your child to grow and develop – choose Zoom Nurseries.

At Zoom every child enjoys an individual Learning Journey. A record that tracks their daily progress through our fantastic fun-filled learning environment.

It's just one of the tools we use to keep our parents up-to-date with their child's achievements, as well as their personal, social and emotional development. It's an important tool, one that helps us ensure that when they leave Zoom to start school, they leave as independent learners and thinkers, ready for the challenges ahead.

With five nurseries in **Eltham, Hither Green, Blackheath** and **Brockley** that between them have four Ofsted 'Outstanding' judgements, and places available, you don't have to go far to give your child a great start.

To find out more and arrange an informal visit please call **Ann Briley, Assistant Childcare Director** on **07816 413718** or email ainnbriley.zoom@gmail.com

Or visit our website for more details www.zoomnurseries.com

BLACKHEATH CHOIR AND VANBURGH ENSEMBLE
perform Handel's SEMELE on Sun. 2nd April at 7.30pm at St Margaret's Church, Brandram Rd, Lee £12 in advance – Tel 07921 295430; email: tickets@blackheathchoir.org.uk £16 on the door
www.blackheathchoir.org.uk

SPECTRUM Painters & Decorators
Interior/Exterior
No job too Small
Clean and Reliable
Free Estimates
30 Years Experience
Telephone:
020 8853 2759 or 0795 0815412

THE POINTER SCHOOL

An independent co-educational school for pupils aged 3 to 11 years

"We believe that, with love, guidance, encouragement, discipline and hard work, every child can do so much more than he or she may consider possible."
Mr RJS Higgins Headmaster

Nursery - Year 1
37 Shooters Hill Road SE3 7HS
Tel: 020 8858 7977
earlyyears@pointers-school.co.uk

Year 2 - 6
19 Stratheden Road SE3 7TH
Tel: 020 8293 1331
secretary@pointers-school.co.uk

www.pointers-school.co.uk

LEARNING FOR LIFE