

Westcombe NEWS

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May 2021 No.4



“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.” - Mother Theresa

HRH Prince Philip 10.06.1921- 09.04.2021

A fond farewell to HRH Prince Philip, Duke of Edinburgh, Baron of Greenwich who died on April 9th, a sad loss to the nation – and will be much mourned in Greenwich where he had strong links.

On the morning of his wedding to HM The Queen in 1947, he was made Baron Greenwich, of Greenwich in the County of London. He was made Duke of Edinburgh and Earl of Merioneth at the same time.

Soon after his honeymoon he visited his manor – on a course at the Naval Staff College in Greenwich, at what is now the Old Royal Naval College (ORCN), where he was reminded of Greenwich’s strong links with the sea.

In 1967 he helped to set up the Maritime Trust which campaigned to conserve historic vessels. In his view, houses could be listed as sites to be preserved for the nation – and important ships should be given the same status.

Subsequently, Prince Philip became a patron of the National Maritime Museum, and also did much to save the tea clipper, Cutty Sark, from being dismantled. He was the author of over a dozen books – and in 2002 wrote the foreword to the NMM’s Guide written by Keith Wheatley.

His role at the NMM is commemorated by the Prince Philip Maritime Collection Centre, which displays many treasures that cannot be put on show in the main muse-

um for space reasons. The centre is situated south of Kidbrooke Green Park, in Nelson Mandela Road SE3 9QS.

The King’s Troop Royal Horse Artillery at Woolwich Barracks used its six WW1 13-pounder guns to fire a royal salute in his memory; similar salutes were performed at the Tower of London, and in Edinburgh, Cardiff and Belfast.

There are many reasons why the people of Greenwich are mourning his loss, quite apart from his services in the Royal Navy in World War II and his qualities of character. For many years he was Master of Trinity House which does so much to protect the UK’s coastal waters, eventually handing over to his daughter, Princess Anne.

He was the UK President of the World Wildlife Fund, and patron to some 800 different organisations, including the Playing Fields Association, and Action on Hearing Loss. Above all, perhaps he will be remembered by over four million youngsters – boys and girls – who took part in the Duke of Edinburgh’s Award scheme: young people derived enormous benefit from this scheme, a number of them from Greenwich.

Prince Philip was a great man – an immigrant who became the grandfather of the country. He leaves a gap almost impossible to fill. Our deepest condolences to HM the Queen.

-WN Reporter

A personal memoir

HRH Prince Philip was a man of great complexity and intelligence: he has been billed very much as a man of the future: but he also had a profound respect for the past.

A former director of the National Maritime Museum, Richard Ormond, shared his memories of working with the Duke with Neville Grant. He recalled, “He is of course remembered very much for his massive support for saving the Cutty Sark, but he also played a key role in raising funds for the Neptune Hall.

“Prince Philip had extraordinary energy, and he was a brilliant trustee on the board of the NMM. He was an assiduous attendee at meetings, and if he couldn’t be present in person, he frequently sent

detailed memos giving his views on items to be discussed.

“In meetings, he shared with the chair, an old ship-mate, Admiral Lewin, a fairly brisk almost quarter-deck style. We got through meetings that could have been endless, but somehow agenda items were treated with incredible expedition and rigour, and indeed vigour.

He once expressed the view that curators and members of staff tended to specialise too much on their particular areas of interest: submarine parts, styles of rigging, and so on. As a result they frequently didn’t look at the broad picture, at the big issues – such as energy and propulsion.

Not just vigour, then: vision. There is no doubt that his death is a huge loss to the nation.

- Neville Grant

Newsbriefs * * * * *

Euro 2020 gets red card

Plans for a Euro 2020 fan park in Greenwich Park have been scrapped with City Hall planning to use Trafalgar Square to screen matches instead. This will please many residents who were opposed to such a big invasion of football lovers!

Vegan Pledge to Animals

This June Animal Aid will once again be hosting our Summer Vegan Pledge - the perfect opportunity for those interested in trying a plant-based diet to do so, with all of the help and support they need. Sign up for free at: animalaid.org.uk/SVP21

Starting School Aright

The overwhelming majority of children in the borough were offered their first-preference

Primary school place ahead of starting reception class in September 2021.

A total of 89 per cent of children received their first preference school, an increase from 87.2 per cent in 2020. This is followed by 6.6 per cent being offered their second preference and 1.9 per cent their third.

More2Childcare Nursery

celebrated its five-year anniversary on Wednesday 21st April, with the Mayor, in an outdoor event.

Established five years ago in response to the Local Authority nursery removing the baby provision,

After two years of operation in 2018 it was awarded Ofsted Outstanding. Due to demand for places, a second nursery was opened at the River Gardens development

in 2019. For more information www.more2nurseries.com/nursery/more2childcare-greenwich

Have your say in the London Mayor elections

6th May 2021 is the date set for the London Mayor elections. In these covid, uncertain times it has never been more important to have your voice heard. And, this year there are many more independent candidates running, eager to make changes to the system post-lockdown. It will be a close race, with the Greens making a stand for a greener vision of London, Sadiq Khan keen to continue his run in City Hall, and Conservative candidate Shaun Bailey fighting for a win too. So do get out and vote!



HRH The Queen with HRH Prince Philip by her side visiting Greenwich to open the newly restored Cutty Sark. (Pics: Nic Burns)



Pic: Vesna Domany

Above: The Kings Troop Royal Artillery left the Naier Lines in Woolwich Barracks to ride through Greenwich to mark the death of HRH Prince Philip the Duke of Edinburgh. Below: The King’s Troop passing by The Standard on the day of the funeral.



Pic: A. Williams

Rules relaxing and so are we



George Cracknell Wright/www.photogcw.com

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FAREWELL ALI

Local business owner Ali Goultekin of Go West Hair Salon has sadly passed away following a brave battle with cancer. Ali was an engineer by profession and opened Go West in 1988 with his hair-dresser wife Sue. The salon remains well known around the Blackheath Standard with 35 years of trading. Sue will continue to run the business with Fonda and her close group of staff. Ali was well liked and respected by all who knew him and was often spotted mending things in front of his salon, sweeping the pavement or polishing his beloved classic red Mercedes. A lovely smart gentleman who will be missed by all who knew him.



YoungMinds Crisis Messenger

A young person experiencing a mental health crisis can text YM to 85258 and receive 24/7 support.

It is free and confidential to text from the following major networks: EE, O2, Three and Vodafone. These include - BT Mobile, Tesco Mobile, Virgin Mobile, iD Mobile, Sky, Telecom Plus, Lebara and GiffGaff. <https://youngminds.org.uk/find-help/get-urgent-help/youngminds-crisis-messenger/#youngminds-crisis-messenger>

Community Gardens Plant Sale

Charlton Community Gardens will hold their annual plant sale on Thursday, 20th May from 5.30pm. A wide range of vegetable and flower seedlings for gardens or allotments will be available, such as a range of cherry tomatoes, courgettes and spinach, herbs including rosemary, basil and lemon balm. A map of the various locations in SE7 where the plants are on sale can be found on their website closer to the time: <http://charltoncommunitygardens.org.uk/>



Letters

Dear Editor,

In last month's Westcombe News there was reference to prominent member of the Suffragette movement, Emily Davison, who was born in Vanbrugh Park Road West. Incorrectly it was stated that there was no commemoration of that fact in Blackheath.

One of several around the Heath, the story board at the corner of Maze Hill and Vanbrugh Park opposite the Vanbrugh Park Gate, installed by the Blackheath Society, includes a reference, with photo, to Emily Davison

and her connection with the area. Funded by the Blackheath Westcombe Councillors Ward Budget it has been there for several years now. There have also been discussions with the local residents group who have been looking at possible options for a memorial to be sited on, or close to, her birthplace in Vanbrugh Park Road West, now part of the Vanbrugh Park Estate. I know the Westcombe Society has also expressed interest. Emily Davison is certainly not forgotten.

Cllr Geoff Brighty, Blackheath Westcombe Ward

Dear Editor,

Hear the rumble
Of the wheelis
It's collection day AGAIN
we must try and save the planet
any way we can
so put it in the wheelie
don't flush it down the pan.
Gabi Marston, Coleraine Rd, SE3

Dear Editor,

So they want to turn Barclays Bank into a brewery, and a "beer

cafe"?

I'm all in favour of breweries, and more to the point, beer. But at the Standard? Where would everyone park? Do we really want two watering-holes opposite each other?

Surely we can do better than this? This building has some history: it was designed to be a bank. Why not give it back to history, and turn it into the Heritage Centre that the Council has managed to ditch?

G Bailey, Humber Road

Watch Out... Scams, scamming, phishing are about!

WN Team

The general public are not the only ones suffering from lockdown fever, so are the criminals who have used the endless hours honing their duplicitous skills. The result being a plethora of on and off line scams, phishing for our economic downfall.

Email scams

Firstly, do not click on any link until you have considered how genuine the email is.

The current scam from Inland Revenue offers you a tax rebate - which we all could use - but the HMRC don't use What's App! Neither do they leave threatening voicemail messages promising legal action should you choose to ignore them. The Inland Revenue still use letters for important correspondence.

Emails from the Royal Mail saying they have an unclaimed package/letter needing postage paid on it, is also a scam devised to get you to hand over your credit card/bank details.

The Covid-19 scams doing the rounds include those offering access to "Covid-19 relief funds", those claiming the recipient has been in contact with someone diagnosed with Covid-19. Both of these ask you to click on links and then reveal personal information or equally nasty, infect devices with malware. Then there are the fake adverts for non-existent coronavirus-related products, such as hand sanitizer and face masks, which simply take the victim's cash and send them nothing.

Emails asking you to update your TV licensing fee is another popular one as is the one saying they will help with your universal credit application, for a small fee.

Telephone scams

Often using computer generated voices, they purport to be from Amazon, your Bank or a government department. They require you to press a key in answer to a question e.g. do you want to cancel your Amazon Prime Account, refuse a payment

due to be taken from your account. They will direct you to a premium number and you will not be aware until you get your telephone bill.

Never give your personal details out. Never disclose your pin. If unsure...put the phone down and use another phone (scammers could be still on the line and will pretend to be the police etc.) and seek advice from a known source.

Romance Scams

Love is blind and we all want love and companionship but don't be a sitting duck for the romance scammers. Never ever lend money to someone you have never met. Even if they tell you they are working abroad or in the forces abroad, to explain why you cannot meet. Scammers may even pay the first loan back, to hook you in but the next amounts will be significantly larger and won't be returned.

These scams often start via an on-line dating site or forum but can use any social media outlet. They can move on quite quickly to voice contact.

Conversations or on-line contact can continue for some weeks or three to four months before an urgent request for money is made.

These scammers often use fake profiles and pictures. Protect yourself by not giving away personal details, sending or receiving money and by using reputable dating sites.

Contact Action Fraud

<https://www.actionfraud.police.uk/> or ring **0300 123 2040** if you feel you have been a victim of any type of scam.

Blocking Nuisance Calls

The Telephone Preference Service (TPS) is a FREE service. It is the official central opt out register on which you can record your preference not to receive unsolicited sales or marketing calls. For more information contact the TPS on 0343 005 9576 or at www.tpsonline.org.uk.

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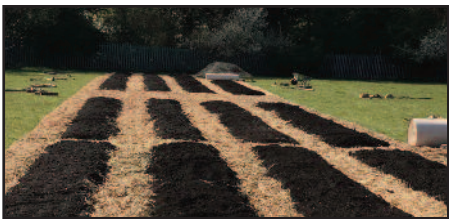
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LOCAL NEWS

How’s our Summer Veg progressing?

It’s been a wonderful few weeks down at Sitopia Farm. With the help of some of your readers and many other local volunteers we’re making excellent progress building beds - see photo!

This is making use of recycled, natural materials and ‘no-dig’ or ‘no-till’ farming methods which are all about preserving and maintaining soil structure and life. In the past we’d probably have ploughed up



the field to expose the soil for planting, or done back-breaking digging. Instead we’re increasingly understanding the complexity of the soil’s microbiome, and the importance of soil biology and structure as much as its chemistry (the nutrients it contains).

We’re blessed with our patch of Greenwich: due to the care Woodlands Farm Trust have taken looking after their land, the field hasn’t been ploughed or sprayed with chemical fertilisers or pesticides for over three decades. The results of that are visible to the naked eye: every new visitor to our site gets shown some of the many 1000s of worm casts in the grass, all evidence of soil teeming with earthworms and other life.

We’re making the best of that richness (and the reality of heavy clay soil!) through making no-dig raised beds: we roll out cardboard to suppress the grass and any ‘plants-we-may-not-choose-to-be-there’ (weeds are of course only in the eye of the beholder). Then we shovel on barrow-fulls of green waste compost (all recycled -so thanks to all of you who diligently recycle your waste!). The paths are made of woodchip-again from local trees donated

by the wonderful Patrick Schroth our local tree surgeon. The very first delivery was of oak and apple trees pruned 300m down the road. The woodchip paths serve multiple purposes: they look beautiful, add further organic matter to the soil, and as they decompose will help stimulate beneficial mycorrhizal fungi action in the soil.

At the same time we’ve been very busy sowing seeds and nurturing seedlings, just waiting for enough beds to be ready (and irrigation - will it ever rain again?) before planting out in the beautiful beds being created with our volunteers. Tomatoes, chillis, peppers, aubergines, basil are all awaiting the completion of our polytunnel...we have over 40 different kinds of green vegetables and salad leaves and herbs sown and bursting to get into the soil...and a beautiful range of flowers on their way too (both edible flowers like nasturtiums and violas and calendula) as well as cut flowers (dahlias, delphiniums, celosia, and many many other delights).

As I write we only have 19 days left of our crowdfunder campaign and £3k left to raise: hopefully by the time you read this we’ll have hit our target or be very near it! Please do keep spreading the word and spare a small pledge if you can: <https://www.spacehive.com/sitopiafarm>



If you’d like to come down and help us build beds please do check out the volunteering link on our website <https://www.sitopiafarm.com/> and sign up for further volunteering sessions: we’d love your help!

Chloë Dunnett, Founder/Chief Grower

Students’ joy to be back on Court

Like many sports people up and down the country, the boys from The John Roan School Basketball Academy were raring to get back to training as school teams came back together in April.

Founded in 2017 with the aim of making basketball more accessible to young people in Greenwich whilst creating strong educational pathways, The John Roan Basketball Academy now boasts three teams. The teams are coached by former professional player turned teacher and mentor, Courtney Van-Beest, who has been at the school since the inception of the Basketball Academy.

In a unique partnership with Greenwich Titans Basketball Club, students in the Academy have access to elite level coaching, professional mentoring, regular training and access to local and national leagues whilst they study. Students also benefit from free unlimited access to a local gym and free kit, which is part sponsored by the John Roan Foundation.

The Basketball Academy has proved to be an extremely successful pathway to bringing out the best in the young men. Van-Beest kept the teams motivated throughout the lockdown through one-on-one mentoring and squad meetings on Microsoft Teams, and by focusing on

Daniel Garvey, Director of Raising Standards at The John Roan School commented: “The Basketball Academy provides our students with an elite sports provision. The quality of coaching, the personalised training programmes and the exposure to regular, high quality competitive experiences make this an exciting prospect for promising Basketball players. It’s also exciting to witness how the Academy inspires our younger students. Our post-16 Basketball players are talented sportsmen who are dedicated to personal development, they conduct themselves brilliantly and as such are brilliant role models.

Ashley Thomas, Greenwich Titans Basketball Club Chairman praised the success of the Academy: “The Basketball Academy has been a resounding success and is testament to what can be achieved with willing partners who place emphasis on the development of children. We could not have found a better partner.”

The Basketball Academy has proved such a success that they will soon be expanding to include a girls’ team, It’s also led to the creation of The John Roan School Football Enrichment Programme with Charlton Athletic Community Trust. The programme started in September 2020



but due to Covid restrictions and lockdown, the teams have yet to play a match this year. Like the Basketball Academy, students in the sixth form with the potential to play professional football benefit from professional development, regular training and career coaching. Both the Basketball Academy and the Football Enrichment Programme are currently open to applications for September 2021.

- Jayne Nelson

Time to Call time on Fogwoft? Mary Mills (Chair) Ian Blore, Mike Shallcross

Fogwoft (Friends of Greenwich and Woolwich Foot Tunnels) was formed in 2013 to press Greenwich Council to com-

plete the stalled refurbishment project and to explain what went wrong. The fogwoft committee (now reduced to three after the

sad death of one and retirement of another) have decided that we have achieved much of what is feasible in the seven years of existence of the Friends group.

Major issues remain unresolved, as detailed in the attached position paper sent to the tunnels' manager Greenwich Council and to City Hall. Top of the list are the issues of cycling and of lift maintenance. The first is blocked by the refusal of Tower Hamlets to agree to a revision of the byelaws. Without this change infringement fines are set at 20 shillings; result, zero enforcement. A trial of allowing cycling under certain circumstances remains stalled since it is dependent on the byelaw change.

The lift issue appears hamstrung because of the need to source spares from Germany.

Such political and technical issues are beyond the competence or power of fogwoft to solve. They dwarf all others. We are now asking for the members of fogwoft to support our closure. Their support has sustained us over the years though we were never a subscription group. The tunnels will go on. Let's hope they may be managed better than over the last year when everyone has been distracted.

For more information contact Ian Blore (Sec., fogowft) at fogwoft3@gmail.com or 0208 293 1796

A Garden for Everyone



The CABAHS volunteers and the Royal Greenwich Heritage Trust jointly held a grand opening of the revived walled gardens on Sunday 18th April. The day was very successful and included a visit from the

Mayor of Greenwich, Linda Bird, who is a keen gardener. The walled gardens are now open to the public on weekdays, 10-5pm. The hope is that visitor numbers will increase and more people can enjoy these lovely secluded gardens.

The archive picture, left, shows a model in a Hardy Amies outfit as part of a fashion shoot in the Pond Garden from the 1950's. CABAHS is interested in collecting photos of people using the gardens, to put together an exhibition in the garden this summer. Please contact Kathy at cabahshortisoc@gmail.com if you have any photos to share.





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FEATURES

Bets at the Barber's Tony Lord

Up to seventy years ago, when the first betting shops opened one could not gamble on racehorses unless you were actually present at the meeting yourself. Our betters in Whitehall and the churches thought that it was bad for the working class man to spend the housekeeping money on beer and betting. In the afternoon, the pubs were closed and librarians were instructed too cut out the racing pages of the Daily Mirror, Herald and Worker before displaying them on the boards in the library. As ever, the lower classes found ways of getting round this restriction on their civil liberties.

Opposite the Roxy Cinema in Old Dover Road was a line of shops, which included a barber's. It was a dusty, seedy place with four leather chairs, specked mirrors and sticky fly-papers covered in dead bluebottles, hanging from the ceiling. One could pass the time waiting for your turn for attention by flipping through the pages of dog-eared magazines, which included 'The Razzle', full of smutty jokes and cartoons. Another one featured healthy girls keeping fit at nudist camps.

'Short back and sides' cost a shilling or sixpence for boys. Jars of Brylcream and bottles of hair restorer were to be had. As the white-coated hair-cutter brushed you down he would mutter: "Anything for the weekend, sir?" Although I'd just come out

of the Royal Navy I never quite realised what he meant until yeas later.

From time to time men would enter the shop, pass through to the back room and then emerge again and leave without getting their hair cut.. After witnessing this several times I asked the chap who was chopping away at my overgrown locks what was going on. In a low voice he told me that there was a bookie in one of the back rooms. It must have been a Saturday a few days later when I read that a horse named 'Lucky Lord' was running at Doncaster. Taking a 53 bus to the Standard I found a furtive chap reading the 'Sporting Life' in his office behind the barbers. After deciding I wasn't a plain clothes detective he took my bet. "Half a crown to win, 'Lucky Lord'". That afternoon the dear thing won easily at ten to one, though I didn't get the glad news until Sunday morning.

This success started off a chain of events which have lasted to this day, made me a lot of friends and lost me a lot of money. Although I've seen a lot of great horses I shall never forget 'Lucky Lord' and the nervous man in the back of the barber's where the library is now.

WN couldn't source a photo of the barber's shop Tony used but we did find one of the Roxy cinema which stood where M&S stands today..look at the cars to date the photo!



Reviews by Patrick Barry

A word about the reviewer....Patrick Barry was drawn to South East London in the early 80s and has stayed because he loves the place and the people. Forty years on he is on his way to becoming a local. He says he needs to work harder on moaning about change and reminiscing about how much better the place used to be.

How do we decide which book to buy? Now that we can shop again the staff in Waterstone's, Greenwich are helpful and knowledgeable. If you have shifted online then the Amazon algorithm ("people who liked/bought this also liked/bought...") is scarily accurate, unless your family have hijacked your account. Otherwise books get brought to our attention thorough best-seller lists, publicity and prior fame and literary prizes

A book might be published because the author is already famous for something else which will bring its own publicity regardless of the merits of the book itself: Katie Price/Jordan pretended to be an author of the book she looked forward to reading and Robert Galbraith's 'Cuckoo's Calling' became a lot more popular once JK Rowling was confirmed as the true author.

Richard Osman is ubiquitous as a quiz show host who also devises shows and produces them. He doesn't write the theme tunes, yet. Osman is Billericay-born Dickie and (as Ian Dury would have it) he's "not a bleedin' thickie". The six foot seven inch Osman has featured at the top of the 'Weird Crushes' list and is now also top of the best-sellers list with....

'The Thursday Murder Club' (Pub Viking RRP GBP 14.99, Hardback. 377 pages) is Richard Osman's first book. It's an enjoyable, lightly humorous, well-plotted murder mystery that revolves around four amateur sleuths who live in a luxury retirement complex. The four residents in god's waiting room occupy themselves by pooling their talents and experience to solve crime. Osman teasingly celebrates the senior citizens attempts to come to grips with modernity when others might scorn them for the same. In his acknowledgements Osman refers to his mother's "sense of kindness and justice" and it is these flavours that make it a gentle read,

rather than dark one. Osman's charm and intelligence shine throughout. It would be hard not to enjoy this clever romp.

Robert Harris first novel was based upon the premise that the Nazis had won the war. The V2 rocket programme was a late attempt at gaining that victory. Harris wrote 'V2' and in it he brings to life the "appalling ingenuity" of the Vergeltungswaffe Zwei (Vengeance 2) flying bombs that targeted London at the end of the war the focus is upon five days in November 1944. It was during those five days that one such rocket killed 160 people locally, when it hit a crowded Woolworths store in Deptford, on New Cross Road.

Harris pits the Brits' mission to pinpoint the V2 launch area in Holland involving his WAAF heroine Kay, against Werner Von Braun's apprentice rocket scientist Graf. Graf is dissilusioned with the devastation that his originally peaceful work is causing which is made all the more pointless given that Germany appear destined for defeat. He had wanted to "build a spacecraft, not an instrument of murder". Harris crafts a good tale that gives one a sense of how differing individuals might have experienced aspects of war. 'V2' is fictionalised but the same science that killed the shoppers in Deptford was later repurposed by the Americans to win the 'space race' against the Russians.

Flash Fiction

Ten years ago, there had been a true turning point, Jacob realized as he sat at his desk. He had only been a child of the lockdown then but now media could talk about it as the great change. People had learned a new way of living and it stuck—how to be satisfied with less, how to be grateful for the time spent with loved ones. No more senseless buying of product after product, it had been a break for the entire world, a moment of deep inhale and exhale for the earth, making the planet livable again. Jacob readied his fingers at the keyboard. An environmental journalist now, he needed to write about that life-changing time and how it had benefited nature. But at what cost? The question came quietly to his mind. Jacob paused his fingers, but only for a moment. The human race had been given so many warnings, but he *would* dedicate this piece to all who had suffered.

Kathy Cullen

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WHAT'S ON

TV and Film Review



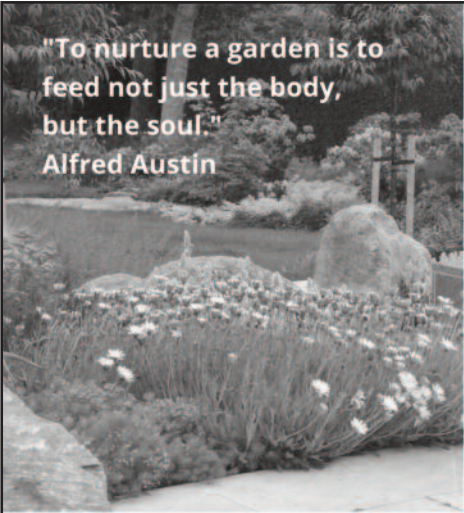
Professional and local conductor, Andy Morley, reviews a favourite TV show and a Film for WN readers

Coming 2 America (Amazon Prime): Once upon a time in 1988, the heir apparent to the Kingdom of Zamunda, Prince Akeem Joffer (Eddie Murphy), set forth across the seas on a quest to find 'someone to care, someone to share'. Armed only with his wit and charm - and the ability to mop a restaurant floor with pride - he quickly caught the eye of one Lisa Macdowell (Shari Headley). Sweeping her off to the Royal Palace, he wedded her in an explosion of pink polyester and they lived happily ever after; well, almost.

It's 30 years on and the Royal household is faced with a dilemma. Akeem and Lisa have three beautiful, smart, daughters, but Zamundian Law allows for only male successors, and King Jaffe Joffer (a welcome reprise from James Earl-Jones) is ailing fast. To secure the Royal line, he and his shaman Baba (Arsenio Hall in grotesque witch-doctor garb) tell Akeem of his estranged son, conceived in a New York tryst back in 1988 - cue flashback to the most ridiculous scene in the movie! Akeem must travel back to America, find his son, and make him a Prince. This is definitely one for Coming to America enthusiasts, of which I am one, but everyone else might want to watch the original (also available on Amazon Prime) to understand the many references - such as the barbershop guys, skilfully reprised by Murphy and Hall in heavy prosthetics - I recommend you do.

The Terror (BBC iPlayer): Appearing last month on iPlayer was the highly acclaimed AMC horror series 'The Terror'. Based on Dan Simmons' novel of the same name, this tale is a fictionalised account of the very real and ill-fated 1845 voyages of HMS Erebus and HMS Terror, who left in search of the Northwest passage to secure trade routes to Asia. Faced with increasingly unnavigable conditions, Captains Sir John Franklin and Francis Crozier's ships become locked in the ice off the coast of King William Island. The crew must learn to live with each other for longer than they ever hoped, resist the hunger and cruelty of men, and strive to unite against a more sinister evil. If it's heavy but captivating television you're after, you'll scarce find a match in the current selection of shows, but, be warned, it's not for the faint-hearted.

Want to try your hand at TV/Film reviewing? Drop Polly an email for details.



"To nurture a garden is to feed not just the body, but the soul."
Alfred Austin

HISTORIC GREENWICH REOPENS ITS GROUNDS AND MUSEUMS



Private Dining Domes 7th–31st May

Why not celebrate the easing of lockdown with a unique culinary experience? Set against the backdrop of the Queen's House, these Dining Domes are the perfect place to enjoy lunch, afternoon tea or dinner for up to six people this May.

British Royal Portraits at the National Maritime Museum

Tudors to Windsors: A major exhibition of British Royal Portraits opens 28th May. Come face-to-face with the kings, queens, heirs and favourites who have shaped British history over the last 500 years. (The exhibition has been organised in partnership with the National Portrait Gallery, London, this unique collaboration features superb works by artists including Holbein, Lely, Reynolds and Warhol.) Tickets now on sale at the National Maritime Museum. Members go free and they can also visit all of their sites for free and receive invites to exclusive online and on site events. Time to become a Member and support our Greenwich Heritage?

Sing Your Way To Health

Trinity Laban Conservatoire of Music and Dance in partnership with Lewisham and Greenwich NHS Trust are running 20 free singing sessions for Greenwich residents living with Parkinson's, lung conditions or chronic pain. All levels of musical experience are very welcome.

Singing for Lung Health will take place on Mondays 10:00-11:15 and is aimed towards those with a long-term lung condition such as COPD, asthma or pulmonary fibrosis. Singing and breathing exercises can help manage feelings of breathlessness. The facilitator is James Moriarty.

Singing for Pain Management will take place on Wednesdays 10:00-11:15am via Zoom and is aimed towards people living with conditions such as fibromyalgia, arthritis and severe historical injury.

Experienced Sing to Beat Parkinson's practitioner Nicola Wydenbach will lead vocal exercises and teach well-known songs on Fridays 10:00-11:15 via Zoom and is aimed to help manage their condi-

tion and improve their vocal strength. To register and for further information: <https://www.trinitylaban.ac.uk/take-part/for-adults/singing-for-good-health/>

Mycenae House Open

Classes to resume in May and a series of summer concerts are planned in the gardens. For details... Tel: 020 8858 1749 info@mycenaehouse.co.uk www.mycenaehouse.co.uk



If you have any events, happenings or entertainment you'd like publicised, please email: wnews@westcombesociety.org. Polly Morgan (above) and our readers look forward to hearing from you.

Arts Society Greenwich

Street Art

Lecturer: Doug Gillen
4pm Monday 10 May 2021

Doug Gillen will explore the key stages in street art's growth. From international superstars like Banksy to local underground heroes find out about the different elements and styles that comprise the scene with no rules. Who knows, you might even start looking at the world a little differently.

This lecture will be presented on Zoom. Members will receive email joining instructions. Guests are welcome for £5 - please email ticaclark@hotmail.com for further details. www.theartsocietygreenwich.org.uk



Charlton & Blackheath Amateur Horticultural Society

May meeting Monday 17th May, 7.15pm on Zoom
Local naturalist Joe Beale will talk about the changing management of the local area and the impact on plants and wildlife. Non-members are welcome but please contact cabahshortisoc@gmail.com in advance to check space.
Please see our website <https://cabahs.com> for details of other events including our Annual Plant Sale at Charlton House walled gardens, 30th May 30th from 11am.

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FEATURES

The Making of an Orchard

Over the last decade, visitors to the Pleasaunce have watched the young fruit trees grow, waiting eagerly for them to fruit. This year the orchard is looking healthy with lots of blossom. WN asked Anne Robbins, of PiP! (Planting in the Pleasaunce), to share why they decided to plant the orchard, and how they did it.

“Fruit trees have many benefits: they produce food, of course, and help show young people that apples and plums don’t just come from supermarkets; they absorb carbon dioxide and help improve air quality; their shade reduces heat impacts; and they support other wildlife like birds and beneficial insects. And the local collaboration that is needed to bring about a small orchard helps build community and links between local government and residents.”

Luckily, they had help: the Orchard Project had recently been set up to encourage local groups in London to restore and grow orchards and harvest surplus fruit so it could be donated to people in need. Now a national initiative, it started with support from Capital Growth, funded through the London Mayor’s Office. “The Royal Borough of Greenwich was also sympathetic: the Parks Department understood the case for planting fruit trees and approved the idea of using space in the East Greenwich Pleasaunce. The Friends of the East Greenwich Pleasaunce were very enthusiastic, too. This all took a bit of paperwork, like developing a constitution and writing the grant application, as well as quite a few meetings.”

In December 2011, PiP! planted six trees in the Pleasaunce. The trees needed serious

guards: other London orchards had seen vandalism and so the new trees had cages to keep them safe. A year later, PiP! planted another set of fruit trees to the east of the first batch.

If you visit the Pleasaunce in spring, you’ll find a wonderful display of blossom from the plum, pear, and apple trees. It complements the ornamental blooms of the Japanese cherries.

So what happens to the fruit? Sadly, PiP! have hardly managed to harvest any, but it’s probably not the fault of human thieves. We think squirrels are stealing the bulk of the produce! “But we still celebrate the abundance that the orchard promises with a wassail, a January event to sing to the trees to awaken them for spring and enjoy a glass of cider, reminding us all of the potential harvest of fruit. Let’s hope that this summer will see the trees flourish, and next winter the return of communal wassailing.”

-WN/Anne Robbins



Healthy Tip: Stress Awareness

Stress can make us feel alive and is a normal response to pressure or increased demand. The adrenaline stress produces though can become addictive and make it seem like we are constantly living in the fast lane, trying to keep up with the demands being placed on us - at work or in our personal lives.

It is no surprise that constant high levels of adrenaline will have negative effects on our health and wellbeing. Although on its own, Heart Research UK say it won’t necessarily increase your risk of developing heart disease, “but the choices we make when we’re stressed, which can include overeating, drinking alcohol and lack of exercise, can have a negative impact on our heart health.”

“Stress can raise blood pressure levels which, if prolonged, may start to damage the heart and arteries. However, once feelings of stress pass, increased blood pressure levels usually reduce and therefore the best way to address this increase is through prevention and management of our stress levels.”

Below are Heart Research UK’s tips for addressing high or prolonged stress:

Exercise Regularly: Whilst exercise can be one of the first things to drop out of our routine in times of stress, research indicates that exercise reduces levels of stress and anxiety.

Rest and Recover: Taking time out of the day to re-charge, whether it be going for a short walk or doing something you enjoy, can be important for preventing burnout.

Question Unhelpful Thinking:

Sometimes our thought patterns can be unhelpful in increasing stress levels, such as when we ruminate over a problem, or over-exaggerate a situation. Questioning our thinking is useful for stopping stress in its tracks.

Support Others: Research indicates that both connecting with and helping others can be great for our mental wellbeing. So activities such as volunteering can give a sense of purpose outside of our work.

Learn Something New: Learning a new skill can help to give a sense of purpose and can also be a great distraction tool when stress levels are particularly high.

Seek support: If you are feeling overwhelmed, anxious or stressed, seek support from services including the Samaritans, and psychological therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy which can be accessed through the NHS or privately.

Post-Covid the above prescriptions will become commonplace advice for many of us visiting GP surgeries. Research continues to show how stress, unhealthy eating habits, lack of exercise, isolation and overthinking have very real negative effects on our health. The overwhelmed NHS will be asking us all to take more responsibility and save lives, this time our own.

(Editor’s healthy tip: For inspiration, put WN’s chosen quote around your environment - in your home, in the car or on a piece of paper in your pocket: *“Yesterday is gone. Tomorrow has not yet come. We have only today. Let us begin.” - Mother Theresa*

.Anne Williams

The Pastry King

Pastry is thought to have begun life around the Mediterranean with the Assyrians stretching thin layers of bread dough and baking it with nuts and honey. This leaf-like pastry was carried by missionaries on trade routes to the east and into Europe and Britain by the Romans who manipulated it to form shells or coffyns that could protect meat from drying out over an open fire. Only with the practice of preserving butter in northern climes did pastry begin to take on the shape it has today.

Butter’s ability to harden when cold means that when mixed with flour it can trap air and can interrupt, or shorten, the

development of the protein gluten thereby producing a crumblier texture and giving us the word shortcrust. The aim here is to keep everything as cold as you can. Bear in mind that butter is about 17% water so very little liquid is needed to bind the dough. Another element in achieving a light crumb is getting as much air as is possible into the mix and here sieving the flour is helpful. When heated the trapped air will release steam which in turn creates more air pockets making for a lighter structure.

Here is a recipe for shortcrust pastry which makes a lovely base for a spring-time/summer asparagus and cheese tart.

Ingredients

- 225g plain flour
- 125g frozen butter or block margarine cold water
- 1 egg yolk

Method

- Sieve the flour into a bowl.
- Grate the butter into the flour, coating as you go.
- Gently rub the mix through your fingers allowing it to fall back until you have a fine crumb.
- Gradually add enough water so that the whole mixture starts to come together.
- Roll out the dough, lever into a pie dish and refrigerate for 30 mins.

- Set your oven to 200c.
- Prick the pastry with a fork and then place in the freezer for 5 minutes.
- Mould tin foil into the pastry casing and cook for 10 minutes. *Pastry making tip: when you first put the pastry in the oven you add some filling, tin foil, baking beans, rice, etc...so that it keeps its shape. Once it's become firm after a little cooking you can remove this.)*
- Remove the foil and cook for 10 minutes before brushing the pastry with egg yolk and cooking for a further 5 minutes.
- Remove from oven.
- Voilà!

- Jo Burnand



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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

RGB Carbon Neutral: Regeneration Proposals Anne Robbins

The Borough’s consultation on proposals for achieving carbon neutrality has closed, and it will be some time before we can see the results. For the Westcombe Society’s response, key points included the need for a strategic review of transport, which contributes some 31% of carbon emissions in the Borough; and energy efficiency improvements in privately owned and rented housing. Energy for buildings accounts for 64% of our carbon emissions, but for many people reducing energy use and adding renewable energy sources are hard to understand and set in place.

Within our Borough, much of the planning for getting the area’s net carbon emissions down to zero by 2030 is being done by the Regeneration and Growth Department, working with consultants who have begun a key scheme to develop the impetus for householders to improve their homes by investing in renewable energy. They will work together with the council to do this.

Councillor Sarah Merrill (Shooters Hill), Cabinet member for Regeneration and Growth, says: “Our solution, our vision, is to tackle the issue of domestic heating emissions through air and ground source heat pumps, and solar panels, drawing the manufacturing of these into the borough and training up and using entirely local labour.”

“All our new council houses are virtually carbon neutral. Other new builds are easier to tackle as we liaise with developers about using ground source heat pumps and solar panels. The really difficult nut to crack is the 1000s of privately owned residential houses across the borough all using gas boilers. What we want, and what we are exploring, is how we can install the infrastructure and the ground arrays for ground source heating to a number of private houses who would then pay us a connection charge and a fee for the energy, which would be lower than existing gas bills, but

would start to repay the costs to the council. Retrofitting privately owned houses is not something any other borough is exploring to the best of my knowledge.”

We have conducted a feasibility study of some roads in Eltham and are examining this at the moment and, over the next few months will be exploring a business case. The economics of this for the public purse are still not clear and I emphasise that this is a vision and a will and not yet anywhere near any sort of decision. A lot depends on the financing that central government makes/or does not make available.”

The temperature of the soil stays steady even at shallow depths, warmer than the air in winter and cooler than in summer. By running liquid through pipes buried in the ground and processing it using the same principles that a domestic fridge works on, it’s possible to extract warmth for keeping houses heated. Combined with solar photo-voltaic installations for electricity, home heating can become carbon neutral. Greenwich is aiming to do this on a larger scale, and it may be a pioneer for the whole country.

At the same time, the Borough has been in discussion with local further education colleges about expanding their construction and engineering courses so that local trainees will have the skills needed to install and run renewable energy systems. And, rather than selling it off for redevelopment, it has opted to retain the disused power station in Plumstead and turn it into a manufacturing and skills base for renewable energy development, to bring sustainable enterprise to the area.

Clearly this is an ambitious plan which will depend on many things coming together. But if it works, there may soon be sites in Westcombe Park where groups of homes could benefit from lower bills and the satisfaction of no longer having to choose between being warm and helping to cool our planet.

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

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Greenwich Park re-Revealed

As we have previously reported, the plans for improvements to Greenwich Park have had to be revised in the light of the financial impact of the pandemic. Representatives of the Westcombe Society were recently privileged to have a guided tour of the latest proposals for the Visitor centre, Learning centre and Wilderness area.

Vanbrugh Yard. Vanbrugh Lodge is the small house in the southeast corner of the park, tucked behind the contractors' yard and a high hedge. It is to be transformed into a café, toilets and an outdoor seating area with a view over the community garden and into the deer park. Volunteer facilities will be in this area, making use of some of the existing buildings.

The Wilderness space between the flower garden and the deer enclosure has suffered from increased use, loss of ground cover and the impacting of the soil. Ways to enhance this area are being explored. There are plans to provide improved habi-

tats for birds and insects and to find ways of combining natural play facilities with wildlife.

Further to the west, the existing Wildlife centre will be re-purposed to provide an entrance to the Wilderness - 'a natural discovery space aimed at schools and community groups'. This will comprise a Learning Centre and sheltered outdoor learning space. The habitats such as ponds and meadows will be improved to increase the wildlife and will be accessed via super-vised, nature trails. During the work the deer will be moved to Richmond Park and only the smaller fallow deer will return. The Westcombe Society has pledged £1,000 towards the development of the Learning Centre.

There may be further modifications as work progresses, but the project looks exciting and varied catering for a range of different activities. The proposed timetable is below:

2021	2022	2023	2024	2025
Recruitment Technical design Tenders Tree planning Grassland management and habitat creation Bandstand concerts	One Tree Hill Vanbrugh Lodge Pavilion Café Lake Bandstand Tree planting Grassland management and habitat creation Activity programme	Parterre Banks and Grand Ascent Wilderness Learning Centre Learning Trails Tree planting Grassland management and habitat creation Activity programme	Wolfe and kiosk Blackheath Gate Greenwich Fayre Tree planting Grassland management and habitat creation Activity programme	Completion Evaluation Celebration Share learning

Our thanks to Parks Manager, Graham Dear and to Jane Pelly, Head of Landscape. (more details can be found at: https://www.royalparks.org.uk/_data/assets/pdf_file/0017/124019/210224-AT-boards-sm.pdf)

Know Your Neighbourhood

Weather vanes Maggie Gravelle

This item was originally intended to focus on a range of architectural features in the area, particularly those high up which frequently go unremarked. It was a great surprise to me that there are at least eight weather vanes in Westcombe Park. I wonder how many other readers have noticed?

Duck in flight: Vanbrugh Castle was built by Sir John Vanbrugh in 1719. He moved in with his new wife and soon added an additional wing to the east. On Vanbrugh's death the house passed to several owners and in 1906 it was leased to the Duckham family. In 1907 they added the weather vane in the shape of a flying duck.

Stag: On the roof of John Roan upper school, built in the late 1920s, there is a small tower with a cupola topped by a weathervane depicting a stag. The school coat of arms includes a stag's head, which is probably why this design was chosen.

Fox: The Stables in Coleraine Road was built in 1895 as a stable block and house for Vanbrugh Park. It later operated as a commercial stable and then a garage and car hire business before its current development.

Whale: St. Cecilia Place is a small private mews development, said to be owned by musician and TV presenter, Jools Holland. One rarely gets to see behind the high gates but the weather vane is visible from



Westcombe Park station platform. The connection between St. Cecilia, the patron saint of music, and a whale is not known.

Cockerel: Most weather vanes, sometimes called weathercocks, are on public buildings but this traditional cockerel is on a private house in Foyle Road. In the ninth century the Pope decreed that all churches should have weathervanes in the shape of cocks, perhaps to reference Peter's betrayal of Jesus, or possibly simply because the rooster heralds sunrise.

Hunter with dog and geese: This detailed weather vane depicting geese being hunted by a man and his dog is on a modern private house in Langton Way.



Flag: The tall spire on St. John's church, built in the 1850s, provides a focal point for the area, although the spire was only completed in 1873. The church is grade II listed and is topped by a traditional weathervane.

Sailing boat: (pic below) Behind the petrol station on Shooter's Hill Road one can just spot a vane in the shape of a sailing boat with curious holes in its sails. It is on a low building which is now part of The Pointer School.



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