



The Bulletin

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40th Anniversary

Representing the views of all who live in the historic Thameside village of Strawberry Hill. No.129 November 2005

Deputy Mayor to unveil village Christmas Tree

Clare Head, a Strawberry Hill councillor (South Ward) and Deputy Mayor of Richmond will unveil the SHRA Christmas Tree at 6.30pm on December 16 and begin the annual Carol concert. The venue is Wellesley Parade.

All those attending will be refreshed with free mulled wine and nourished with mince pies. Free fruit juices will be provided for children. A key feature of the now annual ceremony is the decoration of the tree by

local children who are asked to be at Wellesley Parade by 6pm. Our local carolers, the Strawberry Hill Singers, will lead the carol singing with favourite and much loved traditional Christmas songs.

Clare Phelps, SHRA secretary, who, with a team of event helpers, organises the tree unveiling says: "This event gets more popular every year."
Diary Date: 18:30, Wellesley Parade, Friday 16th December.

South West Trains boosts services next summer

TWO 'BOUNCE BACK' TRAINS IN THE MORNING

Two early morning trains will be added to the service from Strawberry Hill to Waterloo via Kingston from June, 2006.

South West trains has agreed to halt two 'bounce back' trains at 07.50 and 0820 at Strawberry Hill following a request by SHRA. The decision follows an energetic period of meetings and correspondence by Joe Brett, SHRA transport committee member. Joe explains that bounce back trains usually pass through Strawberry Hill without stopping on their way to Teddington where they start their normal schedule.

Benefits

Joe says: "These two additional morning trains will primarily benefit passengers to Kingston, Norbiton, Wimbledon and so on. They won't be quicker to Waterloo than trains via Richmond.

However, school children and people going to Kingston Hospital will clearly benefit"

Confirmation of the augmented service came from Peter Brooks, Timetable Development Manager.

SHRA has been pressing for better services since the revised timetable of December last year effectively reduced train frequency to two trains an hour.

Train research in depth starts

The joint SHRA/St Mary's College research project into travellers use of, and attitudes towards, the local train service began on November 25 with the participation of SWT and local shops.

Students distributed questionnaires on Strawberry Hill station through the day while Cost Cutters and the Post Office provided collection points. The project has the twin benefits of fitting into students' second year geography studies at St Mary's and providing SHRA with objective and professionally researched data which can be used in negotiation with SWT and other bodies.

SWT participated fully in planning for the project and contributed gratis the services of their commercial research partner MORI. SHRA funded some of the research costs.

Professional

Advice on the framing of questionnaires was provided by professional researchers at MORI.

The national research organisation also provided St Mary's University College with educational material for the second year geography research modules.

Dr Kevin Cook, Head of Geography studies, says: "This gives students first hand experience of a live research situation, benefiting from the advice of professional researchers and helping the community."

Eugene Bacot, Chairman of SHRA adds: "This is an excellent example of generous cooperation. We are grateful to both the College and SWT."

Results of the research project will be made know early next year.

New plaza plan ready in December

The controversial plan for a plaza at Wellesley Parade has been revised to allow more parking spaces and will be presented to Richmond Council's Transport Group for approval on December 14. Members of the public may make their views known at the meeting, but must give advance notice to Colin Sharpe, 020 8891 7338 at Richmond Council

Adopt a tree to keep our streets green

Residents are urged to care for street trees near their homes under an Adopt a Tree scheme launched by Richmond Council. The green stickers have already begun to appear on trees in Strawberry Hill.

The campaign began with the planting of the first of 1,000 new trees by the Mayor Cllr Robin Jowit. The planting programme is the largest ever undertaken in a single season. Anyone can adopt a tree

from large groups adopting all the trees in their local park of gardens to individuals looking after a single tree in the road.

Local schools are also being encouraged to participate in the scheme.

Anyone interested in joining the scheme should call 020 8892 7808 or visit the Council website:

www.richmond.gov.uk/trees or e-mail: Trees@richmond.gov.uk.

Knock on from the plaza scheme

Council parking plan for station yard

Discussion led by SHRA and Richmond Council has begun with Network Rail over proposals to introduce paid parking at the station yard in Tower Road.

SHRA originally contacted Network Rail to establish the ownership of the land with a view to improving the look of the area as part of the Association's 40th anniversary celebrations.

Contact with Network Rail coincided with the announcement of the plaza plan. It was suggested that the plaza should be part of a more comprehensive parking proposal.

SHRA has urged that all proposals for the site should take account of the needs of local businesses.

Rubbish dump

Councillor Clare Head has given strong support to the plan and is seeking to set up a meeting with SHRA, Richmond Council and Spacia, the property arm of Network Rail. Cllr Head says of the station yard: "People have dumped rubbish around the edges; graffiti scribbles have been busy and fences are leaning. It's not a pretty sight.

The correct channels have to be navigated, and probably slowly too. Spacia is investigating the purchase of leasing of the land to a third party. SWT has to be offered the land first. If it doesn't want it, the Council will consider leasing/buying it. Once ownership has been finalised we can bring pressure to



Clare Head: "Dumped rubbish and graffiti"

clean up the site or the Council's transport department will deal with it.

Your views sought

I am sure that if car parking spaces were marked out instead of parking randomly more parking spaces would be created.

If we knew who parked there it would point us in the right direction regarding the length of parking time to be allowed and the cost."

Residents can e-mail Joe Brett, SHRA transport committee member with their views:

joe.brett@shra.org.uk

or contact Cllr Clare Head Home Lodge, 13 Gloucester Road, Teddington, TW11 0NS or e-mail:

cldr.thead@richmond.gov.uk

More parking for plaza

A petition with more than 600 names raised to protest at the Wellesley Parade plaza has persuaded planners to change the design and car parking layout.

Shopkeepers, residents and SHRA protested that there had been insufficient time for consultation and that the proposals were not widely circulated.

Shopkeepers also wanted more parking space and varied parking times from 20 minutes to one hour.

The new plan to be presented to the Council Transport Group on December 14 will show more parking spaces.

The plaza has been made possible by a grant of £100,000

from Transport for London. The grant can only be spent on the area surrounding the station, not the station itself, and must be accepted by March 2006 or the offer expires.

Yellow lines to control 'morning mayhem'

Residents of Strawberry Hill road will be presented with traffic calming proposals aimed at ending the morning rat run of commuter cars.

Following complaints, Richmond Council is proposing to introduce a six-month trial of double yellow lines around Strawberry Hill Close and some of the passing places along Strawberry Hill Road. Cllr Clare Head says: "There is morning mayhem in Strawberry Hill Road. Residents will be explained the new system in detail. If this doesn't work we will have to try more stringent measures".

Strawberry Vale crossing query

At the recent transport public meeting held at St Mary's College, Richmond Council was asked to put a crossing at Strawberry Vale, near to the shops.

Business Book

Martin Butler, son of Jack Butler, former owner of Butler's Hardware, now Sopa, has published a book about marketing and sales techniques entitled 'People don't buy what you sell.'

Priced £16.99 it is available from Ottakers.

Friends reject grassy bank plan and bath house resiteing

The plans to replace the rockery in Radnor Gardens with a grassy bank and to resite the gazebo/bath house were rejected at the Extraordinary Meeting of the Friends of Radnor Gardens in November. Building the grass bank would have involved dumping tonnes of infill on the site and the disappearance of the rose garden. Moving the bath house to a site by the river would require £50,000 of additional funding. The EGM was called following a disputatious AGM in the summer. At the conclusion of that meeting, the Chairperson, Denise Carr, resigned. The Friends also approved a motion of no confidence in a

report by Council on the felled bean tree and to commission an independent scientific opinion. Tests for honey fungus the remaining trunk were to be carried at the end of November. Three motions criticising the Gardens plan were carried:

- In view recent doubts voiced at FoRG about the destruction of the rockery in Radnor Gardens and plan to replace it with a grassy bank, FoRG is opposed to this aspect of the Gardens plan and calls on Richmond Council and the Arcadia Project to abandon this part of the scheme
- FoRG calls on Richmond Council and the Arcadia project to abandon the plan to

dump tonnes of infill on the rock garden in Radnor Gardens so as to create a grassy bank

- In view of the cost of £50,000 involved in moving the gazebo to a new site by the river, FoRG calls on Richmond Council and the Arcadia project to leave the gazebo/bath-house on its historic and original site and spend the money on refurbishing the building.

A fourth motion about the bean tree was also carried. It proposed

- That the members of FoRG have no confidence in the report obtained by the Council about the slain Catalpa *preciosa* and want to commis-

sion a completely independent professional scientific opinion (NB this tree was the largest *Catalpa preciosa* in the whole of this country - ref *Champion Trees of Britain and Ireland*. Ed. Dr Owen Johnson. It was planted on April 8, 1903 by Mrs Lawton to commemorate the opening of the Gardens. There is also a cedar tree which the Council have talked about cutting down. It was planted in 1911 to commemorate the coronation of King George V and we do not want it felled either)

SHRA understands that there are now no plans to cut down the cedar tree

New proposals sought for the Gardens

By Geoff Pope, Chairman, Friends of Radnor Gardens

With the onset of the first cold snap of winter, there has been an upsurge in activity both inside and outside Radnor Gardens.

Inside the gardens work has commenced on realigning and re-grading the path at the northern end and the finishing touches to the popular (if not universally so) children's playground have been completed - albeit that the realigned fencing is now far too close to the replacement Indian Bean tree (*Catalpa*). Early in the New Year improvement to the gates and entrance at the Southern end of the gardens are scheduled by the Council.

Controversial

Outside the gardens there has been intense discussion both at the working party and the Friends of Radnor Gardens Extraordinary General Meeting on November 22. This was in response to the controversial development plans for the Gardens in relation to the Thames Landscape strategy and the sudden felling of the majestic *Catalpa* tree - planted (see column 4)

Linda Kingswell

In memory of Linda Kingswell who died recently, SHRA has made a donation of £20 to the Cancer Research Fund. Linda was a very popular member of the community who worked in the chemists in Wellesley Parade for many years.

Ricky Bocolet

One of the loyal distributors of the SHRA Bulletin for many years, Ricky Bocolet has died. His contribution to SHRA over many years is much appreciated.

Civic Pride push gets results

SHRA approaches to Richmond Council in the last year seeking improvements to under the Civic Pride scheme are showing results. Work on refurbishing pavements in Radnor Gardens was completed in September. In Tower Road, the grass verge has been replanted and barriers erected to protect the verge.

Planter

With Council help SHRA has also placed a planter beside the wall of Harjji's cobblers shop. As well as bringing a touch of colour to this corner, the planter is also aimed at deterring graffiti and parking. Flowers were selected and planted by SHRA volunteers. SHRA thanks MKG 300 and Rawlinson & Webber for watering the plants and Sopa for watering the planters in Wellesley Parade.

Gardens playground overspill probe

The opening of the children's playground in Radnor Gardens in the summer has been heralded as a great success. Numbers of children and parents - particularly fathers - gather ever week in the playground which was opened by Clare Head, Deputy Mayor and South Ward Councillor. Richmond Council contributed £65,000 for the play area which is independent of other work planned under the Radnor Gardens scheme. However, heavy rain has revealed a danger of overspill from a Thames Water sewer, as happened in September with debris flooding the road and part of the garden near the playground. Richmond Council and Thames Water are investigating.

when the gardens opened in 1903.

The vista between Richmond Hill (The Royal Star and Garter Home) through Ham Lands to the Thames at Radnor Gardens is known as the Great River Avenue. It is well worth enhancing. However, this must not beat the expense of preserving and improving local amenities and important features of the Gardens.

Rethink

Now that Friends of Radnor Gardens have rejected the expensive landscaping proposals that would have meant resiting the gazebo and the loss of the rockery and the rose garden, it is time for a re-think of the development scheme. Any new proposals will need to be presented to the public for comprehensive consultation. It ought to be possible to develop a notable end point or feature to the Great River Avenue vista in Radnor Gardens without detracting from, but adding to, the existing amenities and landscape. It is hoped that new proposals can be drawn up by the funding partners that will meet the aspirations and interests of the vast majority of users. Time will tell.

GUEST COLUMN
Michael Snodin, Chair FoSH



Friends aim for millions more to fund restoration

The award of £4.62 million from the Heritage Lottery Fund for Strawberry Hill is wonderful news. The award is a tribute to the huge amount of work by the Friends over the last two years.

Now we have to get down to even more serious work to set the campaign for restoring the house on a new path.

Next year we embark on the development phase. This includes the preparation of a Conservation Management Plan based on a detailed historical dossier which will track evidence of the changes to each room, and the house as a whole, from Walpole's time to the present.

A group of House Guides has stepped forward nobly to assist with one part of this task, namely the transcription of the key parts of Walpole's letters. If any resident would like to assist in this work, they can do so by becoming a Friend*

The other main area of activity is continued fund raising. The project needs to raise some £3.2 million in a very short time, if we are to meet a target set by the Heritage Lottery Fund.

We welcome the participation of all residents of Strawberry Hill in accomplishing this great project.

Committee of Taste

In recognition of the generous donation of £1,000 by SHRA towards the Strawberry Hill restoration fund (see anniversary supplement) SHRA has been made a member of the select Committee of Taste.

The original Committee of Taste was formed by Horace Walpole to create his 'little Gothic Castle in 1747 with two friends, architect John Chute and the artist Richard Bentley.

This Committee of distinguished men ushered in the Gothic era when they remodeled the exterior and added such details as the battlements and towers. Extensive gardens and landscaping was also an important feature of their work.

Inside they house, this extraordinary trio adorned the walls with biblical scenes, an eclectic collection of furniture and works of art collected during Walpole's Grand Tour.

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RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION OF £3.00 (minimum) PER HOME FOR YEAR 2005

This subscription renewal may be made by cash, cheque made payable to Strawberry Hill Residents' Association. Hand to either:

- (a) Richard Spires, 70 Pope's Avenue, TW2 5TT - Standing Order Forms available from Richard Spires or the SHRA website
- (b) Costcutter by Strawberry Hill Station
- (c) Post Office, Tower Road

Additional donations are always welcome!

Name(s):			
Address:		Telephone:	
Date:		Amount:	
eMail:			