



Representing the views of all who live in the historic Thames-side village of Strawberry Hill

No. 157 Spring 2015

“It’s celebration time, come on!”

2015 is a very special year for the Strawberry Hill Residents’ Association, marking the 50th anniversary of our founding.

That has to be worth a party. So we are celebrating with a Golden Jubilee Picnic in Radnor Gardens on Sunday, 17th May. There will be music, the unveiling of a permanent memento of the Association’s 50 years of working for Strawberry Hill residents, and it’s all free. Everyone is invited to come along, bring their picnics, and enjoy an afternoon of family fun.

Backed by Richmond Council and the Friends of Radnor Gardens, with support from the Civic Pride Fund, the Golden Jubilee Picnic will start at 2 p.m. with a welcome for the picnickers from Fulham Brass Band.

Celebrating 50 years 1965 to 2015

Between 2.30 and 3 p.m. June Turner, one of the founders of the Association back in 1965, will introduce the Celebration

Sundial, designed and made for the occasion and installed in the Rose Garden of Radnor Gardens.

The Brass Band will entertain us throughout the afternoon and Strawberry Hill Bowls Club will be open for any would-be players who would like to try their hand. Teas will also be available in the Clubhouse and the popular playground is sure to be busier than ever.

The Golden Jubilee Picnic continues until sunset. So get the date in the diary and do as the song says: “It’s celebration time, come on!”

The Twickenham Museum has created a small temporary exhibition to celebrate our anniversary. There are display boards describing the origins, the history and the activities of the Association.

The Museum is open from 11 a.m. to 3 p.m. on Tuesdays and Saturdays and from 2 p.m. to 4 p.m. on Sundays.

www.twickenham-museum.org.uk

Friends of Radnor Gardens Grand Fundraising Quiz

Cllr. Clare Head, chair of FoRG writes

Save the Date! St. George’s Day, Thursday 23rd April 2015, 7 p.m. for 7.30 p.m. at Radnor House School.

Watch the Post Office window for our Flyer.

In this issue...

You may have noticed that we’ve just turned 50 but we’re not slipping into peaceful middle-age just yet. Far from it: this Association remains as active as ever and we’ve organised a Golden Jubilee Picnic in May to show it. You’re all invited - see the article opposite. And we’d like to see you at the AGM on 22nd April where you can have a glass of wine on us. That’s two parties in one year!

Elsewhere in this expanded Bulletin you can find a short history of the Association (page 3), interviews with four of the leading Committee members from the past (pages 7 and 8), and get an idea of what life was like in Strawberry Hill in 1965 (page 5), if you’re too young to have been here at the time.

50th AGM to focus on the future

The 50th Annual General Meeting of the Strawberry Hill Residents’ Association will take place on Wednesday, 22nd April from 7.30 p.m. at Strawberry Hill Golf Club. All local residents, members of the Association or not, are warmly invited.

SHRA (for short) is keen to recruit new committee members to replace long-servers who are retiring. They are Bruce Duff, chairman since 2006; Robert Youngs, joint-chairman from 2006 to 2012, our local historian, website manager and producer of The Bulletin for many years; and indefatigable Bulletin editor Eugene Bacot. We are looking especially for people with IT skills and experience in maintaining a website.

Anyone wishing to stand or to propose another candidate should telephone the secretary, Pam Crisp, on 020 8898 1878 at least one week before the AGM. A précis of each individual’s past experience and current activities would be helpful.

Following the business part of the AGM, there will be plenty of time for questions and comments from the floor. So come along, have your say, and then join us for a glass of wine.



Top-of-the-range new home for MKG 3000

It took two years of planning applications, but at last the new MKG 3000 centre is about to open in Wellesley Parade. And it has been well worth the wait. Owner Stefan Kadlubowski and his small team of Polish builders have produced an exceptionally attractive building with first-rate facilities.

"I wanted to reference the original architectural style of the Village in a contemporary idiom," he says. "Already people are coming up to me in the street to say how much they like the result."

The ground floor is a spacious shop and reception area for Volvo; Mazda and Subaru business remains in the group's Heath Road premises. There is a glass wall where customers can relax with a coffee and watch their cars being serviced in the adjoining workshop, which handles all makes.

Upstairs is a one-bedroom flat with "must-haves" like high ceilings, under-floor heating, a wet room and even a small sun terrace. In Stefan's words: "We've gone for the famous 'wow factor'." Later on, a second apartment is planned.

Acting as his own project manager, Stefan meticulously researched every aspect of the build. The feature soffits, barge boards and gable ends were made by hand. Bricks had to be Old London Stocks in the traditional soft yellow, with grey Indian slate tiles on the roof. Paint on the arched entrance gate had to match the blue of the two decorative clocks on the front and side walls, crafted to Stefan's design and lettered in gold leaf.

With his first construction such a success, he has advice for anyone else planning a major build: "Use the internet to source materials. I saved thousands that way."

Stefan, the K in MKG 3000, founded his company with two partners in 1998 in Heath Road, adding the Strawberry Hill workshop a year later. He is now sole owner of one of London's top dealerships for Mazda, Volvo and Subaru.



MKG300's new development

Marcia's memories

Local artist, Marcia Hughes, reminisces about the last 50 years

Strawberry Hill Residents' Association is not alone in celebrating a Golden Anniversary this year: artist Marcia Hughes has lived in the same house in Shacklegate Lane since 1965. And though that puts her just outside our boundary, we are granting her honorary status as an Strawberry Hill resident because family connections with the area go back three generations. Her great-grandfather was a local policeman and her grandfather served as a fireman.

Your Bulletin reporter met Marcia when she exhibited her watercolours of fruit and flowers in her studio during an Art House weekend. A member of the Society of Women Artists, she teaches at the Landmark Arts Centre and has received numerous awards. And as a long-time resident, her memories are as fascinating as her paintings.

After getting married, she lived first in Surbiton. "But that was too pricey. So we came to Teddington, which was considered rather down-market in those days." Many of the large houses were divided into bedsits and it was not until the late 1970s and 1980s that they were updated and began to be family homes again.

Her own house was one of the first to be built in Shacklegate Lane in the mid-19th century, as part of a terrace called Catherine's Cottages. Next-but-one was the General Post Office and the remains of a stable still exist at the back of the present building. A few doors away was Newmont Engineering, a metal components factory where Marcia worked for 20 years. Houses now stand on its site, although the company still operates in Isleworth.



An example of Marcia's work

When Marcia arrived, there were a number of traders in the vicinity, including a caravan company, a junkyard and various other enterprises known to the locals as "Steptoe-type outfits". All gone in 2015, thanks to gentrification, recycling and e-Bay.

"Fifty years ago, the whole area was much less green, and the streets weren't tree-lined, like today," Marcia recalls. So she set about putting up window boxes and hanging baskets, an idea her neighbours soon followed - just as

they did when she transformed her tiny concrete-paved garden into a showpiece of flowers and shrubs.

Nowadays, with house prices soaring, she welcomes the way homeowners pay much more attention to the "kerb appeal" of their properties.

Among the changes Marcia has witnessed over the last half-century, what she deploras most is the huge increase in traffic. "Back then, only a few College students owned cars and there was very little commuter parking - unlike today, when almost every street is lined with parked cars all day long, making them dangerous for children."



Marcia Hughes enjoying her garden

On the positive side, she finds today's students from St Mary's better-behaved than those of the past: "Back then, they would move in hordes along Waldegrave Road heading for the Red Lion (now the Waldegrave Arms), leaving broken wing mirrors, estate agents' boards, bollards and anything else detachable in their wake." All the same, she feels that the College used to be more involved in the community: "Their Bonfire Night firework display was always a big favourite with my family."

As a doyenne of Teddington Artists, Marcia Hughes will be showing at their June exhibition at the National Physical Laboratory. Then, from 3rd to 5th July, she will participate in this year's Art House event. For full details, check her website:

www.marciahughesart.co.uk

Advertising Feature

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A brief history of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association

Robert Youngs, our archivist, has been leafing thorough 50 years of minutes, Bulletins and letters

Trunk road threatens to split village

January 1965. Harold Wilson is Prime Minister, Sir Winston Churchill dies, the Beatles' "I Feel Fine" tops the charts, nine million viewers watch Coronation Street and Geoff Boycott takes 3 for 47 against South Africa.

Then on Saturday the 9th, The Richmond and Twickenham Times published an article about a town centre development plan for Richmond, in which new arterial and "primary distributor" roads were proposed to relieve the traffic congestion.

In Twickenham, one of these roads would have run from the A316 near Egerton Road, down Grove Avenue and into Strawberry Hill at Radnor Road, which was to be extended to join Waldegrave Road near its junction with Waldegrave Gardens and continue on to Broad Street in Teddington.

Widening Radnor Road would have led to the demolition of many homes, and a new extension between Tower Road and Waldegrave Road would have chopped the community in two. Headlines in the following issues of the R&TT said it all: "Houses may come down to make way clear", "Houses on road route are now unsaleable" and "Save our village battle".

Having merged two years earlier, Twickenham and Richmond Council existed only as a "shadow authority" before becoming Richmond-upon-Thames Council. Twickenham Council immediately issued a statement dismissing the plans as "seriously misleading" and complained that it had not been consulted. But Strawberry Hill residents decided to take no chances. They formed a group to oppose the plans and 450 people attended the first General Meeting of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association on 11th February 1965 in St James' Hall - which, ironically, would probably have been demolished if the plan had gone ahead.

The first officers elected at the meeting included A W Holden (chairman), George R Kerpner (secretary), Cecil G Whithair (treasurer) and June Turner (vice-chair) - see pages 7 and 8. The Committee's plans and decisions were published as Bulletin No. 1 and residents were encouraged to join the Association for a subscription of 5 shillings (25p).

Once the threat of the new road had subsided, the new Committee turned its attention to other local matters, including aircraft noise, already an issue 50 years ago; increases in domestic rates (75% over the 3 years to 1966 and still the highest in the Greater London area); traffic, parking and excessive development (Fortescue House School) - all topics which regularly concern residents today.

"New blood saves life of society"

This was a headline in the Surrey Comet in April 1985. A proposal to wind up the Association had been tabled at the AGM by the chairman at the time, Ralph Wilcocks, because the chairman and secretary planned to step down next year and new officers could not be found. The chairman told the meeting that there had been "lukewarm support for the Committee" and appealed for suitable members to join the committee.

Fortunately, a new chairman, Christopher Fraser, was quickly nominated, and the whole Committee was re-elected and members offered their support with Bulletin distribution.

A birthday party for Alexander Pope

In 1988, the committee organised a party to celebrate the 300th anniversary of Alexander Pope's birth. Held in the Waldegrave Suite in Strawberry Hill House, festivities began with an 18th century punch (courtesy of Young's brewery) followed by a buffet supper. Entertainment took the form of readings and music, provided by a wind ensemble from the Royal Military School of Music at Kneller Hall. Three hundred tickets were sold at £11.50 each.

Major planning applications opposed

Bulletin 12, in May 1969, noted that planning applications had been submitted for the development of two large pieces of land in the area: the Fortescue House School site, bordered by Wellesley, Hampton and Stanley Road, and the Glenside site, bordered by Walpole Gardens, Spencer Road and Popes Avenue.

The first, previously occupied by the Metropolitan & City Police Orphanage and later, Shaftesbury Homes School for Boys, caused Association members serious disquiet about over-development and traffic. Nonetheless, the project was approved in January 1971 and it is now Shaftesbury Way, with over 100 houses.

The Glenside application, for an indoor sports centre with squash and badminton courts on open land, was refused after the Association objected in what proved to be the first skirmish in a 13-year battle against a series of attempts to develop the site. A subsequent application for more courts was refused in 1978. The final application, in 1982, for housing, was approved by the Planning Inspectorate - but not before the Association had incurred legal costs of approximately £1500 to fight it. The site is now occupied by 28 houses.

Radnor Works was a small industrial site on the river side of Strawberry Vale, occupied by Arthur T. Gibson, manufacturers of Kinnear Patent Steel Rolling Shutters and Gibson Patent Bi-folding Doors. Applications to develop the site were made and refused in 1971 and 1973. Two years later, Wandsworth Council considered purchasing the site for housing, a proposal which seems to have come to nothing. Then in 1977, despite objections and appeals by the Association, approval was finally granted for what is now now Mallard Place, with over 50 houses.

But the Association does not routinely oppose applications for development. Following principles laid down in the early 1970s, the Committee only intervenes if requested to do so by members. In all the cases above, there was considerable opposition from the Association's members and barely any supported them.

In certain instances, the Committee will support a planning application - for example, when it is seen to improve the street scene. And on the rare occasions when opinion amongst members is divided, the Committee will use its influence with the planning authorities to reach an acceptable compromise.

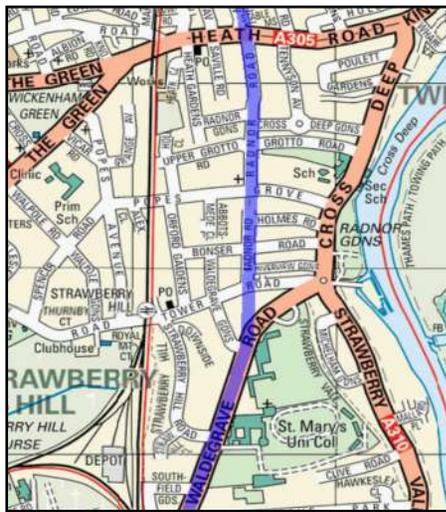
Subscriptions

The first committee established the annual subscription at 5/- (25p). This was raised to 50p in July 1983 to rebuild its depleted funds after fighting the Glenside development. Three years later, the subscription was raised to £1; then to £3 in 2003 and to £5, the current figure, in December 2010. These increases are slightly below the rise in the Retail Price Index over the same period.

The Bulletin

Since 1965, the Bulletin in paper form has always been distributed, free of charge to all homes in the area. Committee members write the articles (which frequently include suggestions from members) and handle the layout, printing and organise distribution. For most of its 50 years, it has been distributed by volunteers, usually within a week of printing, apart from a short and ultimately unsuccessful period in the 1980s when it was distributed with free local papers. Distribution reverted to our more reliable volunteers.

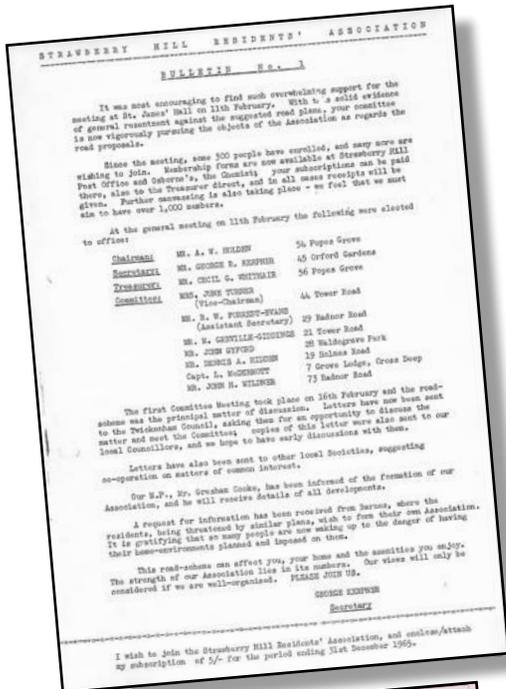
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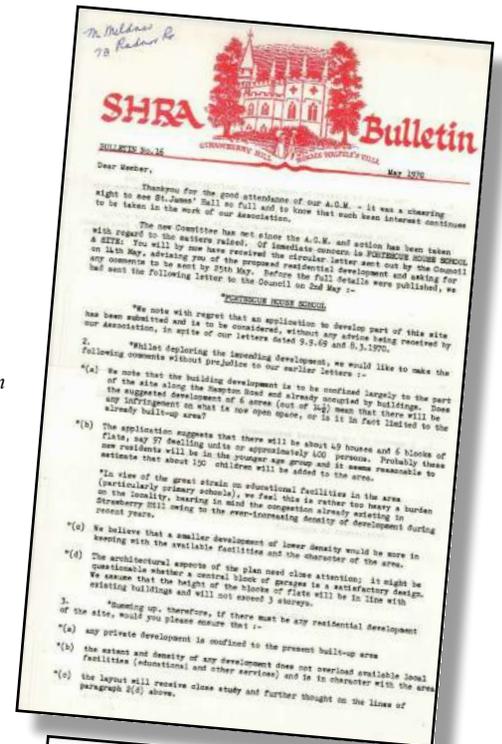
The route of the proposed 'primary distributor road'

Continued from page 3 Here is what some of our front pages looked like in the past. Bulletin 1 was a single page, typed and photocopied. Bulletin 14 (December 1969) was the first issue to be in colour, albeit with just a red banner, and with a new logo. This

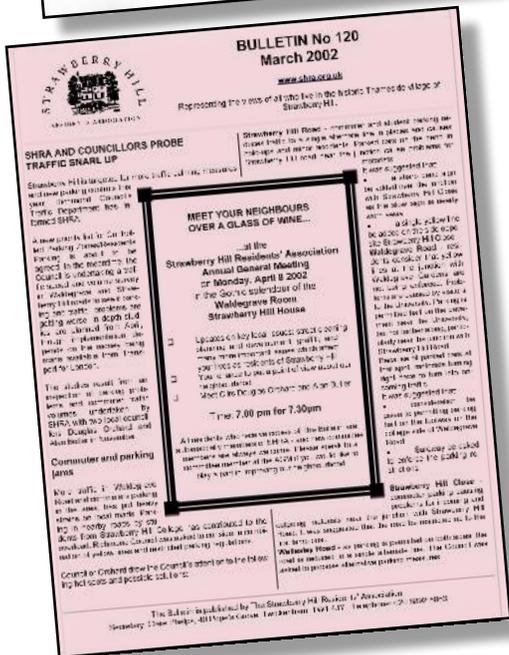
style continued until December 1987, when it reverted to monochrome (but printed on pink paper). Since November 2007, it has been printed in four colours on at least six pages with advertising.



Left: Bulletin 1 announces the formation of the Association



Right: Bulletin 16, May 1970, in 'colour' on foolscap paper, expresses concerns about the Fortescue House development



Left: Bulletin 120, March 2002, on pink paper. Traffic and parking seem to have been on people's minds



Right: Bulletin 135, the first full-colour issue with advertising

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Strawberry Hill 50 years ago

There is nothing permanent except change - Heraclitus

Judging by the houses alone, Strawberry Hill seems to have changed little in half a century. Most of today's houses had been built well before 1965, the notable exceptions being those mentioned in the article on page 3, Alexander Close, Abbotsmede Close and smaller infills elsewhere. The big difference, of course, is the number of parked cars, despite the imposition of the Controlled Parking Zone, and a much-criticised proliferation of street signs.

Occupants of the shops, however, seem to change regularly. Records for the early 1960s are incomplete, but we have been able to draw up the table on the right, showing what you might have seen around the station 50 years ago and the shops which have taken their places. They clearly demonstrate the contrasting needs and lifestyles of residents then and now. In 1965, there was presumably no demand for a bridal wear shop, a design studio or even a restaurant. But the loss of a local greengrocer and butcher (and later, a delicatessen) may not seem like progress to some.

What has changed most of all is the number of passengers using the station. In the earliest years for which we have statistics, 1997/98, 434,000 journeys started or ended at Strawberry Hill each year. The comparable figure for 2012/13 was 1,045,000, a huge increase of 140%. The numbers for 1965 would have been considerably lower and the station must have been much quieter. It did have a full-time ticket office and a waiting room, though.

Aircraft noise, of course, has been a major concern since the Association was formed. Statistics for aircraft movements for 1965 are not available, but during 1969 between 4 and 5 million passengers used Heathrow Airport (renamed from London Airport in 1965). The corresponding figure for 2013 was 72 million! Although aircraft have got bigger and quieter in the last 50 years, these figures suggest that the number of aircraft passing over Strawberry Hill has increased by at least 10% per annum.

Continued on page 6

1965 occupant	Current occupant
Tower Road, North Side, from the station:	
Confectioner (Brock)	Robinson Design
Possibly auctioneer or estate agent	Peggy's Pantry
Boot repairer	MKG 3000
Grocer (Yardley)	Off Licence (Premier Wines)
Unknown	Hairdresser (Bradley Smith)
Unknown	Strawberry Hill Dental Clinic
Post Office (Chas Severn)	Post Office (Patel)
Tower Road, South Side, from the station:	
Grocer (McDowells, moved to north side in c. 1970)	Bridal Wear (Lin Chan)
Butcher (Framptons)	Estate Agent (Farish Short)
Greengrocer (Quality Corner)	Hairdresser (Kayzan)
Car Hire (Wallis)	Lexington Court
Estate Agent	"
Wellesley Parade, from the station:	
Newsagents (L M Barratt)	General Store (Everydays)
Sweetshop (Bon Bon)	Bahn Thai Massage
Chemist (H G M Osborne)	Chemist (Strawberry Hill Pharmacy)
Grocer (E E Burford)	Sopa (1st 2 units)
Ironmonger etc. (Butlers)	Sopa (end unit)

They got their skates on

Despite some initial opposition, organisers of the Richmond Rink at Strawberry Hill House say it was a big success with families and children. Many young skaters took to the ice over Christmas and the holidays, some skating every day to build up their skills. Local schools brought parties of children to test the ice, and then made return visits in response to popular demand. Skating became an inclusive sport, too, due to the use of wheelchairs on the ice.

Why Richmond Rink? The name of the temporary ice rink was chosen as a reminder of the heritage of skating in the borough. The original and much-loved Richmond Rink in East Twickenham closed in 1992, leaving a regrettable gap in community sport and the social lives of many residents.



Carol singing in Wellesley Parade

Our annual Christmas carol-singing and tree-unveiling took place in Wellesley Parade on 12th December. On a fine, dry evening there was a large turn-out of people, and lots of children enthusiastically helped to decorate the tree.

Carols were led by Helen Astrid, our local opera singer. She encouraged the youngsters to

sing the first verse of "Away in a manger", while she and her students sang descant parts to other favourites. Mulled wine and mince pies were served, with juice and sweet treats for the children.

A collection was made in aid of a local charity - the Strawberry Hill Overseas & Community Concern (SHOCC) - and a donation of £300 will be presented at the AGM of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association - see page 1.



The Mayor, Cllr. Jane Boulton assists a younger resident decorating the tree

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MKG 3000



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Strawberry Hill: then and now

We found some photographs and postcards from the early 1960s and sent our photographer out to capture the same views today. Compare old with new to see how things have changed (or not) in half a century.



Then: Tower Road and the crossing in the early 1960s. There's an estate agent on the corner and behind, the petrol pumps of Wallis's Car Hire, probably the owners of the 1963 model Ford Zephyr on the right.

Now: Lexington Court apartments on the left have replaced the old building and where the cobbler was, MKG 3000's new development.



Then: River Hill Lodge and Inverness Lodge in Popes Grove were demolished in 1967 together with a third house, Myrtle Villa, to make way for Alexander Close (right).



Then: one of the last steam trains to pass through Strawberry Hill in 1967. The picture shows the wooden level crossing gates and the old signal box, demolished in 1977.

Now: the same view today. Rochester House has been extended and redecorated.



Then: the drive and entrance to Horace Walpole's Strawberry Hill House 50 years ago. Now: the restoration has left the structure intact, but it is now painted in historically-accurate off-white and the crenellations on the left-hand block have gone.



SHRA'S "leading ladies"

Many people have given their time, ideas and enthusiasm to SHRA over the years, but none more than June Turner and Clare Phelps.

Without June, Strawberry Hill would have been a very different place to live. As she puts it now: "Back in 1965 there was a real risk of a four-lane highway being bulldozed through people's homes." See page 3 for the route that was planned. Appalled by the idea, June and three friends set up an anti-road committee (the precursor of SHRA), distributed leaflets and posters, and the huge financial support they received at a meeting in St James' Hall prompted them to brief counsel, who successfully fought the road at the Public Inquiry in York House.

Residents realised they could fight for other causes, and so began the 50-year story of SHRA, which still has the task of monitoring planning applications and threats to the neighbourhood.

After a 20-year absence in Africa with her husband Willie, who was in the Diplomatic Service, the Turners were plunged into SHRA affairs again on their return - he as Chairman. Road safety has always been a major concern for the Turners and it was thanks to their campaigning that the council added the roundabout and "keep clear" markings at the potentially dangerous junction of Tower Road with Cross Deep/Strawberry Vale. They also went to the aid of residents of Orford Gardens and Tower Road, where drivers from elsewhere would park and leave their cars sometimes for weeks on end. Evidence gathered by recording number plates led to the introduction of a CPZ.

June says: "Everything changes and some things are beyond the influence of

local people. But with determination and organisation, we can all help to preserve and improve our area."



June Turner

And it was Clare's organisational skills which were her big contribution during 15 years as secretary of SHRA. Joining the Committee after she retired in 1998, she worked with everyone from South-West Trains to the Civic Pride Fund and, of course, our neighbourhood councillors, always looking to represent the best interests of Strawberry Hill residents.

Among her key achievements is the liaison which now exists between St Mary's University College and the community, represented by SHRA, to deal with day-to-day matters such as student parking.

During Clare's involvement with the upgrading of the station, she discovered that the unloved area opposite Strawberry Hill



Clare Phelps

Road - "A tip", as she describes it - did not belong to anybody. So she persuaded the council to clear it up, add a planter and even bicycle racks. SHRA supplied the plants and does the upkeep.

Aided by Eugene Bacot, Clare was the prime mover behind two popular annual events: SHRA's strawberry stall at the Fun Day in the gardens of Strawberry Hill House and the Christmas carol singalong in Wellesley Road. She took a particular interest in planning issues and played a major role in the dispute over St James' Hall and the need to provide short-term free parking in Tower Road for the shops.

June and Clare, often called SHRA's "leading ladies", agree: "The Strawberry Hill Residents' Association has been responsible for keeping our village a vibrant community."

Continued from page 8

Tony's enthusiasm and extensive research led to the publication in 1991 of his book, "Strawberry Hill: A History of the Neighbourhood", still available in its 2nd revised version.

Also an authority on Alexander Pope, he has published several works on the poet and his association with Twickenham, as well as organising the celebration of Pope's tercentenary at Strawberry Hill House in 1988.

Tony's first home here was on Twickenham Green. Then, on the daily commute to Strawberry Hill station, a large

Pope's Grotto Restoration

David Cornwell, chairman of the Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust, writes to seek your support

Alexander Pope's Grotto is in a state of disrepair and is on the 'Heritage At Risk' register. A famous landmark in Pope's time, it is now smothered in three centuries of dust and grime and the minerals and fossils that remain are cast in shadow, exacerbated by unsympathetic lighting installed decades ago.

Radnor House School, owners of the Grotto, and the Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust are seeking to restore the Grotto with the support of the Twickenham community, the wider public and those who value the importance of Pope to our English culture and to the English Landscape Movement. The estimated cost of this modest restoration is £300,000. We have secured funding from English Heritage, and the Heritage Lottery Fund has agreed to our applying for an 'Our Heritage' grant. Applications are in progress for a number of other grants. This should cover half of the sum we need to raise. However, we will need to demonstrate matching funding to secure these grants.

We encourage any donation, no matter how small, to help us fund this important local restoration. Once restored, the Grotto will not only be more widely accessible by the public and academics, providing for further study of Pope and his contribution to the English Landscape Movement, but it will also become a valuable resource for use by schools and colleges in the Borough.

A full description of the restoration can be viewed at www.popesgrotto.org.uk, where there is also an online facility to donate. If you would rather send a cheque, please make it payable to the Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust and send it to:

The Treasurer
The Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust
15 Spencer Road
Twickenham
TW2 5TH

The Trust is also seeking volunteers to assist on opening days this year: three Saturday mornings during the Twickenham Festival in June and one morning in September. If you are interested, please contact us through our website.

Victorian house on Pope's Avenue caught his eye. Built in the 1880s by a railway contractor, it was distinguished - as it is today - by unusual chimney stacks in the form of a viaduct. Sometime later, the house came up for sale, Tony bought it and he and his wife, Robina, have lived there for 42 years.

After retiring as an architect 20 years ago, Tony Beckles Willson embarked on a successful new career as a sculptor. Yet he still made time to serve the community as a Chairman of SHRA, co-founder of the Twickenham Museum and a key figure in the restoration of Pope's Grotto.

4 Lessons for £20
Get into golf

Strawberry Hill Golf Club
Wellesley Road, Strawberry Hill, Twickenham TW2 5SD
Tel: 07531 868520
Email: secretary@shgc.net

Two gentlemen of SHRA

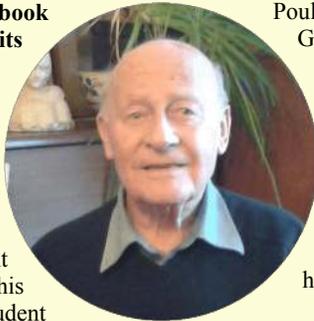
Our reporter has been interviewing two of our former Committee members

There's certainly something about Strawberry Hill: when people move here, they tend to stay - for many years in some cases. Nowhere else will do. Two of our veteran residents are George Kerpner, one of the original "founding four" of SHRA, and Tony Beckles Willson, author of the definitive book about Strawberry Hill and its long history.

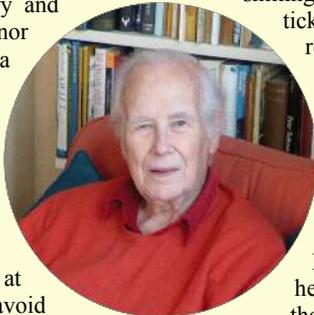
George came here from Austria in his early teens just before the outbreak of the 2nd World War and settled into the top flat at 3 Waldegrave Park - where later on during the bombing, nights were spent huddled in the basement with his neighbours. Apart from his student days at Cambridge and a brief stay abroad after the war, he has remained in Strawberry Hill ever since, meeting and marrying his wife Margaret here in 1952.

Wartime memories are still strong for both of them. As hostilities began, George recorded the date in his diary and then, walking past Radnor Gardens, he stopped to watch a ladies' match on the bowling green. "It might have been the last day of peace, but in the spirit of Sir Francis Drake, they weren't going to let Hitler get in the way of their bowls," he says now.

One day, cycling to school at Hampton Grammar, he had to avoid several houses reduced to rubble after the previous night's bombing. Another raid demolished a house on the corner of Strawberry Hill Road and



George Kerpner



Tony Beckles Willson

Waldegrave Road. For her part, Margaret went to St Catherine's and remembers doing her prep in the Grotto as the bombs fell. She and her family lived in Michelham Gardens and although their home took a hit, they were safely in a part that survived the bomb.

After the War, Margaret moved to Poulett Gardens and after she and George shivered through their wedding at St James' on one of the coldest days of the decade, there was only one place to set up home together: Strawberry Hill - first in George's flat and then in Orford Gardens, where in 1963 they paid £5,000 for the house they still live in today.

While they observe that the appearance of the area is largely unchanged, the Kerpners look back wistfully at bygone aspects of life: children spilling out of the back gardens of Waldegrave Park to play in the College grounds; tennis at the club on Spencer Road, where houses now stand; paying just 5 shillings (25p) for a weekly season ticket to Waterloo. They also recall the allotments where a Luftwaffe bomb was uncovered in the 1950s in what is now Abbotsmeade Close.

Tony Beckles Willson is another local hero, moving to Strawberry Hill in 1959 from Beckenham - "A dull place", he says now. Twickenham, though, has always fascinated him, with its long and colourful history and the many famous people who have lived here over the years.

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