

No.168 Winter 2018

## At Last! An extension for Radnor Gardens Café

After a long wait, a Mediterranean-style extension with retractable sides and roof has been erected at the Radnor Gardens Café. The Friends of Radnor Gardens (FoRG) won a bid last year from the new Village Planning Fund for a structure to extend the café and provide shelter for customers. SHRA supported the bid and many local residents voted for the plan.

It is a top-of-the-range 'Isola' model from Italian company KE which has been erected by Central Awnings whose strapline is 'alfresco solutions'. Indeed, this substantial bit of kit should allow the cafe to be used all year round and in all weathers. Some additional funding is being provided by FoRG to support the cost of the extension and to provide light and heating. Marcus said: 'It will really help on showery or sunny days to protect people from the elements'.



## SHRA GET-TOGETHER . . .

The day dawned for our Radnor Gardens Get-Together and, luckily, this year, it turned out to be a beautiful summer's day.

The event was well attended, and many enjoyed the BBQ and a glass of wine or beer provided by the Café. Thanks to Marcus, Michael and their team for doing such a wonderful job and keeping the food and drink flowing. Children, young and old, enjoyed the free drinks and treats provided by SHRA.

What a delight to sit in the sun, or wander round the gardens, and listen to the ensemble from Richmond Brass Band which played a mixture of jazz, classical and traditional music with such enthusiasm. Thanks are due to the young musicians, who sat in their shady spot, and kept us so well entertained for the afternoon.

Thanks to all residents who supported the event. There was no doubt that the weather helped to make it really enjoyable; it would appear a good time was had by all.

## IN RADNOR GARDENS Sunday 2<sup>nd</sup> September



## Carol singing with SHRA



Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December, starting at 6.00pm

The annual carol singing is moving back to Wellesley Parade, where children will again be encouraged to decorate the Christmas tree, and free mulled wine with mince pies will be available for adults. There will be soft drinks and treats for the children. We do encourage donations in return for these freebies – all collections will go to a local charitable cause. The event will be held on **Friday 14<sup>th</sup> December, starting at 6.00pm**, outside the shops near the station on Wellesley Parade. Bring the family, warm coats and a strong singing voice!

## RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION £5.00 (minimum) PER HOME FOR 2018

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**If at all possible – Larger donations are always welcome!**

## The Lost Treasures of Strawberry Hill

### An exhibition of items from the collection of Horace Walpole

Horace Walpole was born (in 1717) with the proverbial silver spoon in his mouth, the youngest son of the all-powerful Sir Robert Walpole, 1st Earl of Orford and effectively Britain's first prime minister. Walpole was a complex character, in public a man of taste at the centre of politics and fashion, but in private a hard working scholar and historian. His vivid record of these different worlds in some 4000 often brilliant letters, published in 48 volumes, has been a main resource for historians ever since.

ancient buildings for its architectural features, and dramatically broke the classical rule of strict symmetry. The result was a building that was both complex and picturesquely irregular, suggesting an organic development over centuries. Walpole's word for the effects of Gothic – 'gloomth' – did not mean the vision of dark and terrifying masses we associate with Gothic today, but rather an 'irregular lightness and solemnity'. But for Walpole, Gothic crucially had a unique ability to summon up ideas and emotions.



**Portrait of the Ladies Waldegrave**  
Joshua Reynolds (1723-1792), 1780-81  
Oil on canvas, 143 x 1683 cm

Painting purchased with the aid of  
The Cowan Smith Bequest Art Fund 1952  
© National Galleries of Scotland, Edinburgh

Strawberry Hill, his summer villa, was the centre of his scholarly and creative endeavours and the setting for his huge collection of art and artefacts. Built between 1749 and 1790, it was very largely designed by Walpole and a group of his friends, as he said, 'to please my own taste, and in some degree to realise my own visions'. Twickenham, being close to London, had many summer villas, but nearly all were in the classical style. At Strawberry Hill he created 'the castle (I am building) of my ancestors', pinnacled and battlemented. Houghton Hall, his father's Palladian palace in Norfolk, was built as an expression of power and wealth; Strawberry Hill, filled with coats of arms, celebrated his family's illustrious ancestry. Although the Gothic style was occasionally used in other buildings at the time, Strawberry Hill pioneered ideas that led directly to the more serious Gothic revival of later years. It was Gothic both inside and out, it lifted 'quotations' of details from

A succession of dark and light episodes started in the grey hall, passed through the more cheerful private rooms and back to darkness in the purple Holbein Chamber before finishing in the blaze of light and crimson in the Gallery and other rooms of the State Apartment. This was the setting that inspired him to write, in 1764, *The Castle of Otranto*, the earliest Gothic novel, following a dream 'of which



**Hunting Horn**

Léonard Limousin (c1505 – 1575/7), 1538  
Copper, painted enamel and cow's horn, 30.5cm length  
Private Collection © Private Collection UK

all I could recover was, that I had thought myself in an ancient castle (a very natural dream for a head filled like mine with Gothic story) and that on the uppermost bannister of a great staircase I saw a gigantic hand in armour'. The bannister was just outside his bedchamber.

Walpole's collection, too, played a role, in the form of a portrait of Lord Falkland of about 1603, 'all in white', which inspired the episode in which the figure of Manfred's

grandfather steps out of the picture frame, one of the many Gothic horror tropes established by the novel.

By the time of Walpole's death in 1797, Strawberry Hill contained at least 4,000 objects, not counting several thousand prints, drawings and coins, acquired over some 55 years. They included paintings and sculpture of all periods, classical antiquities, historical curiosities, and a wide range of decorative arts, embracing several different collecting traditions, most notably the high art of European connoisseurs and the historic portraits and objects of British antiquarians.

Walpole was also a keen connoisseur of painting and the first historian of British art, publishing his *Anecdotes of Painting* at his own press. But he valued even more the way in which objects had the power to reach back to people and events in the past. Strawberry Hill, a house full of portraits, became a house full of stories, presenting distinctive aspects of British and European history in a pioneering and museum-like way.

But equally striking was the sheer range and variety of works of art and objects, from drawings by Clouet to paintings by Van Dyck and Reynolds, miniatures by Holbein, carving by Grinling Gibbons, Sèvres porcelain, Boulle chests and historical relics like the hair of Mary Tudor and Cardinal Wolsey's hat.

Almost from the start, Walpole had suspected that his house and collection would not long survive him. He accordingly recorded everything in detail in *A Description of Strawberry Hill*, printed at his own press in 1774 and 1784, in which he positioned himself as the successor to the great collectors of the past. In 1842 the collection was dispersed in a celebrated 24-day sale.

Now, 176 years later, many items are back to the restored interiors at Strawberry Hill and as far as possible returned to the places they were first shown. This exhibition presents a unique opportunity to assess Walpole's achievement and experience his treasures, and Strawberry Hill, as he intended.

**Michael Snodin**, *co-curator of the exhibition and Chairman of the Strawberry Hill Collections Trust*

Adapted from an article published in the *Spectator*, 10 October 2018

The exhibition runs, seven days a week, from 20 October 2018 until 24 February 2019. Book entry at:  
[www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/losttreasures](http://www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk/losttreasures).

Tours and group tours are also available.

## New Licence for Strawberry Hill House & Garden

A new alcohol and entertainment licence granted to Strawberry Hill House permitting frequent events into the late evening is causing concern amongst some of its neighbours, particularly regarding potential noise disturbance, generation of traffic and lack of parking space.

SHRA shares some of the concerns and will be monitoring any impact on our residents

and the area arising from the operation of the new licence and the use for entertaining of the temporary marquee, which, despite not yet having planning permission, has already been erected.

Further details of SHRA's approach to the licence and marquee planning application can be found on our website:

[www.shra.org.uk](http://www.shra.org.uk)

## Update on new CPZ

**The design for the proposed CPZ, which will cover Hampton Road up to the Green and roads from Wellesley Road down to the station, has been circulated to affected households.**

**It will be implemented before Christmas and will prevent non-permit holders from parking in the area between 10.00am and 4.30pm, Monday – Friday.**

**For the design, go to: [www.richmond.gov.uk](http://www.richmond.gov.uk) and search for: Strawberry Hill CPZ**

## Support Richmond Brass Band

Join Richmond Brass Band and young brass players from the area for the 8<sup>th</sup> annual Festive Brass concert! Held in the delightful Clarendon Hall at York House, Festive Brass features a variety of brass talent from the borough of Richmond upon Thames including: Sapphire Brass, Richmond Youth Brass Band and starring Richmond Brass Band. Festive Brass raises money for the Mayor of Richmond's selected charity, which is Refuge Richmond. Don't miss this fantastic afternoon of music, with drinks, food and a raffle! **3.00pm on Sunday 9th December at Clarendon Hall, York House**

## Update on the Station and Rail Service (South Western Railway)

Regular users of Strawberry Hill station will have noticed that the waiting room on Platform 2 has been closed for a while with a notice announcing confidently that it will be open again when remedial work has taken place. We have been trying to encourage Customer Services at South Western Railway to provide an update (given that there is no sign of anything happening) but to no avail. We will keep on trying . . .

More significantly, weekend travellers, when engineering works have closed the line, are left completely in the dark as to where their rail-replacement bus service might be found - opposite the main entrance to the University on Waldegrave Road. In the good old days of South West Trains, the buses actually came to the station via Tower Road and Strawberry Hill Road and there was at least a small sign left to that effect. We have heard that the reason for the changed route of the buses is due to the corner of Tower Road being impassable for buses because of parked cars. We have to reluctantly accept that buses will not be returning to the station, and we will be pressing for adequate explanatory notices giving directions to be provided.

Passengers will also have noticed that the destination announcements orally and visually on board the new rolling stock are still saying that the service ends at Strawberry Hill - although one corrected version has been heard recently. There was an occasion the other day when a passenger was put off from joining the train on Platform 1 when she heard clearly that the train was going no further. This is completely unacceptable and we are trying to get the train company to sort themselves out!

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Our commemoration of the Great War comes to an end as we mark the centenary of the signing of the Armistice. After more than four years of unspeakable carnage one might have the impression from some of the images of the time that there was wholesale jubilation and celebration now that the conflict had at last come to an end. Indeed, at the time this was the authorised view, but looking into the records and reading personal testimonies, it is apparent that any joy felt around the 11<sup>th</sup> November 1918 was momentary. In the days that followed there was a general sense of shock, trauma, profound grief, as minds turned their focus from the progress of the war to the terrible losses it had wrought, and in many quarters the painful questioning of what it had all been for. Personal diaries from the front suggest that on the day of the Armistice, many soldiers felt numb, confused or psychologically shattered, suddenly faced not with the bullets of the enemy, but with the turmoil of their own emotions. Corporal Clifford Lane of the Hertfordshire regiment wrote: "We were too far gone, too exhausted really to enjoy it. . . . There was no cheering, no singing . . ." and Sergeant-Major Richard Tobin of Royal Naval Division: "I should have been happy. I was sad. I thought of the slaughter, the hardships, the waste and the friends I had lost."

The title of these articles for the bulletin was given as "Hunt for Heroes". I was personally

## Hunt for Heroes

### Committee vice-chair Peter Lamb concludes his investigation into Strawberry Hill in the First World War

uneasy about this heading because the soldiers who returned did not think of themselves as heroes. There had indeed been the most outstanding acts of bravery and self-sacrifice, but ideals of glory and heroism were soon extirpated on the fields of Flanders, the Seven Seas, the beaches of Gallipoli and the numerous other battlefields throughout the world.

In the last four years I have uncovered the names of around 30 servicemen who lived in or had a strong association with Strawberry Hill. Documentation for some has allowed me to sketch something of their lives, for others I have had little more than a name and some dates to go on. But in every case they represent a life that had been irreparably affected by the war.

I will finish this series with one family who lived in **Radnor Gardens**. **Frank Bertie Bradford** resided at number 20 with his father John Bradford and stepmother Annie. He was born in Twickenham in 1894 and in 1911 was working as a draper's porter. He served in the 8<sup>th</sup> battalion King's Own Royal Lancaster Regiment and was killed

in action on 26<sup>th</sup> September 1917 during the attack on Polygon Wood near Ypres.

The Bradford family was firmly connected with the area. Frank's father, a lamplighter for the council, was born in Twickenham in 1854. Louise his first wife, Frank's mother, worked as a dressmaker and was also born in Twickenham in 1852. Before moving to Strawberry Hill they lived in Grosvenor Road. The family obviously stuck together as Frank's elder brother, **George Edwin Bradford**, was living with his wife Ethel next door at 19 Radnor Gardens. He was born in Twickenham in 1882 and in 1911 worked as a grocer's assistant. He served in the Duke of Cambridge's Own Middlesex Regiment. Unlike his unfortunate brother, he survived the war and continued to live at the same address until at least 1938. He died in 1962.

And so I come to the end of this commemoration of the souls of Strawberry Hill who lived through the Great War. There are no doubt others who I have not been able to trace, but I may uncover their names some time in the future. But to all those whose lives were cut short by the conflict, and to those who lived on bearing the scars of those four terrible years . . .



## REQUIESCANT IN PACE

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## Strawberry Hill's Unknown Soldier

**In July, a local resident called Paul Houston knocked on my door in Upper Grotto Road and asked if I wanted this large**



**photograph of a First World War soldier. He knew that the Bulletin has been featuring Strawberry Hill residents who had served in WW1 and thought we might be interested in the picture.**

He had bought the picture at the junk shop on Twickenham Green many years ago and had always been intrigued to know who the soldier was. On the back of the picture was the address - 52 Upper Grotto Road -and

what appeared to be the name 'Black', and a second photo of the same soldier as a baby.

As an amateur genealogist and SHRA Committee member, I offered to help.

The starting point was the 1911 Census, the last before the outbreak of War, which revealed the **Nicholes** family living at no.52.

A Medal Records Card indicated that **Frederick Nicholes** was a private and driver in the Royal Field Artillery (Regimental no.45149). He was awarded the Victory and British Medals, but not the 1914-15 Star, indicating that he joined up later in the War - consistent with his birthdate of 3<sup>rd</sup> November 1898 in Brentford.

The photograph had the initials 'RFA' on his shoulder badge. **Fred** survived the War and married **Beatrice Searle** in 1926, when they lived at 88 Queen's Road, Twickenham. He worked as a lathe operator and died in 1992. In line with Paul's wishes, the photograph has been accepted by Twickenham Local History Museum as an artefact of local interest.

**Andrew Miller**

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