

No. 141 December 2009

Christmas begins with carols and mince pies

Christmas gets under way in Strawberry Hill at 6 pm on Friday, 11th December, with carols, hot mince pies and mulled wine when Dr Arthur Naylor, Principal of St Mary's University College, unveils the Christmas tree in Wellesley Parade, outside Sopa. Before that local children are invited to arrive at 5.30 pm to help decorate the tree in preparation for switching on the lights at 6.30 pm. The carol singing will be led by the Strawberry Hill Singers.

Now in its sixth year, the tree and carol singing ceremony is made possible by residents' subscriptions which fund the purchase and decoration of the tree. Richmond Council will also provide some monies, but requires matching funding from SHRA.

We shall be asking for contributions to cover some costs and to make a donation to local children's charity, Roy Kinnear House in Waldegrave Road.

Robert Youngs, Joint Chairman of SHRA, says: "This Christmas event has become very popular. It is a focal point for local people to come together and to express the spirit of our community."

SHRA thanks Phil and Sopa Rochford, at the Thai restaurant, for allowing us to use their premises for serving mulled wine, soft drinks and mince pies. Local businesses, including MKG 3000, the Post Office, Kayzan, Waterlily and the chemist, have supported the event with generous contributions and Costcutters will be providing the wine at a discounted price.

Contact Centre looms large on Gifford House site

The Council's new Contact Centre is under construction on the Gifford House site and it is now possible to see the close proximity and the scale of the Centre to nearby homes.

The building is located on the children's garden of the former Centre. The land where the 1970s Centre stood has been sold along with Gifford House, the former old folks' home, which has been unoccupied for five years.

Gifford House, which closed in 2004, has been sold to a company which plans to use the site for residential care. Contracts will be exchanged at the end of November, but the name of the company will not be released until that time.

The development has long been controversial and the source of much concern to nearby residents in the last five years. Questions unanswered are why Richmond Council needed to build on the

children's garden and why part of the former Centre land is being sold to private developers.

Teresa Read, who has led the campaign against the development says: "It should be noted that the Council congratulated

Vincent Cable for

his support in Parliament against garden grabbing. However, they do not seem to be against building on the former Centre garden in Twickenham, despite total opposition from local residents".



The Contact Centre under construction, seen from Pope's Avenue

Footbridge ready by early December

The long-campaigned for refurbishment of the footbridge at Strawberry Hill station will be completed before SHRA's Christmas tree unveiling on December 11.

SHRA has pursued SWT and Network Rail for at least the past five years urging rebuilding and repainting of the dilapidated bridge. SHRA is happy that the work is being undertaken to a

high standard, in contrast to a previous refurbishment.

Bruce Duff, joint Chair of SHRA, said: "We campaigned long and hard for this project. We are grateful for all the help we received from local people and local councillors. But there are other improvements needed which we will continue to push for."

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Post Office not safe yet

Our Post Office is not safe from closure, despite escaping the cull in March last year. In any future round of closures, the volume of business will be taken into account when deciding which outlets should be closed.

Post-mistress Aparna and Jay would like to remind you that, apart from the familiar Post Office services, they offer bulk posting and issue foreign currency. You can also pay in and withdraw money on most UK bank accounts. Oyster Cards and Travelcards are available at the front of the shop and you can make use of their high-quality dry cleaning service. Most residents value the service the Patels provide, so use it or lose it!

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Strawberry Hill House

More cash needed for restoration work

The appeal to raise £8.9 million for the restoration work is drawing to a close, but even when reached, it will be insufficient to fund all the work.

Extra cost was incurred when dry rot was discovered and further funding is needed for items such as a copy of Walpole's angel in the Little Cloister, blue and white pots in the garden and various chairs.

Tree appeal

The design team is seeking to recreate the garden Grove as envisaged by Walpole, who spent as much time on the grounds as he did on 'the little castle'. When re-instated, the grove will run at right angles to the cloister and gallery. It will include laburnum, lime, larch, acacia, juniper and nine strawberry trees.

Most trees cost between £50 and £70. A few cost as much as £700. The Twickenham Local History Society is among the first to contribute. There are plenty more to sponsor. To sponsor a tree for yourself or your family contact Anna Chalcraft at:

annac@apple13.demon.co.uk

Please mark your e-mail 'Strawberry Trees'.

US visit sneaks a peek at Walpole

A group from FoRG and the Trustees, led by Michael Snodin, Trust Chairman, visited Yale University in the USA in October to see a remarkable collection of art and artifacts belonging to Horace Walpole.

Many of the artifacts will feature in an exhibition devoted to Strawberry Hill which opens at the Victoria & Albert Museum next year, curated by Mr Snodin.

Addressing the US supporters of Strawberry Hill who have made many generous donations of works of art, furniture and money over the years, Mr Snodin said: "I'm tempted to say, 'Welcome to Strawberry Hill'. The new show dovetails nicely with the other major exhibit at the University's Centre for British Art, entitled 'Mrs. Delany and her Circle', as it was Walpole who designed the fanciful frame depicting a portrait of the botanical artist that opens that show."

Young friends

A Young Friends of Strawberry Hill Group is being set up. Open to all, the members will organize it themselves, choose their own activities and decide how they wish to support the House.

For more information contact Claire Leighton at:

Claire.leighton@blueyonder.co.uk

or Anna Chalcraft on 020 8977 4978.

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Opera at the Stadium

Following their acclaimed production of Godspell in May, Twickenham Operatic Society (TopS) will be returning to Twickenham Stadium with Smokey Joe's Cafe from March 4th - 6th 2010. This exciting ensemble piece holds the record as the longest running review on Broadway.

Smokey Joe's Cafe will be performed in the St George's Suite at Twickenham Rugby Stadium with non-stop singing and dancing in true TOPS style with songs to suit all tastes. Tickets are available from 27th November by calling the box office on 07771 596755.

Launch of community section on SMUC website

The first tangible benefit from SHRA's liaison with St Mary's University College (SMUC) went live in August with SMUC's launch of the Community section on their website. This contains information on forthcoming events at SMUC, facilities available for use by local residents and clubs, and much more useful information which can further good relations with the College (go to www.smuc.ac.uk and click on "Your St Mary's").

A second meeting between SHRA and Dr Naylor, the principal, and Mr Lean, a vice-principal, in October raised the issues of parking, and student behaviour. Complaints have been received of raucous behaviour in the early hours at the beginning of term.

Student behaviour

SMUC says it is not possible for them to oversee student behaviour outside the campus. They do take complaints from residents seriously, take action where they reasonably can, and provide feedback.

The College stressed that one-off complaints are usually difficult for them to address, unless they are serious matters where the police need to be involved. Where there is

a pattern of rowdy behaviour it is easier to pinpoint the culprits and resolve (see below).*

The next meeting will look at the number and type of recent complaints. SMUC advised they also hold routine quarterly meetings with the local police.

Car Parking

SMUC says it seeks to raise the profile of the Green Travel policy among the student body to discourage car use. SHRA has proposed some additional ways of helping to achieve this.

However, a recent step backwards is the removal by Streetcar of one of their two cars located on the campus. SMUC is pushing for this to be reinstated, but with a smaller vehicle more affordable by students.

New Sports hall

The new sports hall project is currently still on track for building work to commence in early 2010.

If you have issues you would like raised with SMUC at the next meeting in January 2010, contact Mike Allsop (details on page 4).

* For complaints (or plaudits) about student behaviour telephone Kevin Germaine, Director of Student Services 020 8240 4343/4120.



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Friends of Radnor Gardens

Fun Day was a prelude to carols in the garden

By Clare Head, Chairman, FoRG

The opening of the café and Family Fun Day were two high spots of the summer and a prelude to more exciting events and family participation.

The Family Fun Day in Radnor Gardens was serenaded by the Richmond Youth Jazz Band, quenched by beer and wine from the FoRG bar in the gazebo, and fed from the café to the delight of hundreds of families picnicking on the grass. The SHRA held a stall selling strawberry-themed produce, which raised about £150 for SHRA funds.

While the café proved a great success with families, there are difficulties with the management of this project. Despite FoRG's and the Council's best endeavours, the café tenant has left.

When the contract is returned to the Council, the café can be re-opened under new management. But for the moment we are in a limbo. Many of you have been in touch with me to offer your services and I am most grateful to you for that. I have passed them on to the Council and we can now only wait.

Carols in the Garden

FoRG is organizing a Carol Sing Song in the Gardens on Friday December 18th at 6.30 pm. We will be serving mulled wine, hot chocolate and mince pies from the café, so do come along and share the fun.

If there are any choirs out there or musicians who would like to accompany us, please ring me on 020 8977 7789 or email me on cldr.head@richmond.gov.uk. Any offers of help would be gratefully received.

We thought that on the night it might be a kind idea for each child to bring a discarded or outgrown toy that could be passed on to a less fortunate child.

It is more blessed to give than to receive!

Share your garden memories

Radnor Gardens has a fond place in many families' memories, from watching their children grow up to seeing elderly parents contemplating the ever-changing view from a riverside bench.

The Friends of Radnor Gardens is updating its website and would like to receive your photos, recollections and memories of the part Radnor Gardens has played in your life, as it has in countless other families' lives. Please share these with us. We would also like to have an

ongoing competition to see who has the oldest memory of Radnor Gardens! For example, does anyone remember the night (only 69 years ago) in September 1940 when Radnor House was demolished by an enemy bomb? Were there any functions of yesteryear you especially remember?

Please send your contributions to Charles Head, our website manager, on charles_head@hotmail.com or post to Charles Head 4, Fortescue Avenue, West Twickenham, Middx, TW2 5LS, or ring the Chairman Cllr Clare Head on 020 8977 7789 for the safekeeping of precious material.



The Family Fun Day in Radnor Gardens. Visitors enjoy the music and the fine weather

Car club revs up in Upper Grotto Road

Richmond Council's Streetcar car sharing scheme began in Upper Grotto Road on November 2 with a six month consultation period to May 2010. Residents have complained that they lose a parking space in a road already crowded with cars.

No club cars have yet put in an appearance and the space remains empty. At least one resident has received a ticket for parking in space when arriving late at night and finding no parking spaces available in the street.

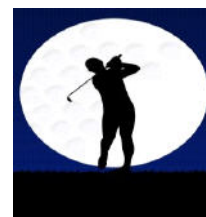


The car club space has already booked careless parkers

Cllr Clare Head, Chairman of the Friends of Radnor Gardens, has announced that the gardens have been nominated for the Green Flag Award.

"With a beautiful playground, bowling green and club house, summer-opening café, extensive lawns sloping down to river, views to Twickenham, Radnor Gardens has something for everyone. Dog-walkers love to come here in all weathers and enjoy the beautiful trees, river view and two heritage summer houses. We are working with the council in their plans to renovate paths, the rose garden, borders and many other parts of the Gardens and bring it up to the high standard the Green Flag Award demands".

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Why inquisitive Juliette never stops looking

When people spot an inquisitive woman with a clip board in their road they are tempted to ask her what she is doing, says Juliette Taylor, Richmond Council's Ward Champion for South Twickenham.

The inquisitive woman will be Juliette. "I don't mind in the least," she says. "I am very happy to tell people what I do and to get their views on such things as graffiti, cracked pavements, road crossings and overhanging hedges".

Juliette has been Ward Champion covering the Strawberry Hill area for two years. Her job is to ensure that any local problems are listed and referred to the appropriate Council officers. And then she chases them up to make sure the jobs are done.

Once a year she organises a Green and Clean Walk around Strawberry Hill with local councillors, police and groups such as SHRA.



An overhanging hedge in Pope's Avenue - the kind of pavement obstruction that Juliette will be taking action against

This year's walk took place between the 7th and the 15th of September.

Juliette also carries out her own mini-walks to check that nothing has escaped her gaze or failed to be attended to. "There were no big issues this year," says Juliette. "I live in the ward so I am always on the look-out to make sure our ward is the cleanest and safest. My daughters complain I never relax because when we are walking to the shops I am always noting things."

Juliette says her main message to residents is that if they have any concerns they should call Richmond Council on

020 8891 1411 to be put in contact with the appropriate Council officer*. Juliette is also full of praise for local Neighbourhood Watch Team lead by Sgt Claire Hughes-Smith. The Team can be contacted on 020 8721 2910 or 07879 431228

* We will publish a full list of Council officers names and contact numbers in the next issue of The Bulletin.

Oyster cards and free parking

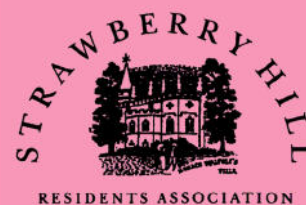
The mysterious, cloth-covered black boxes on both platforms on Strawberry Hill station become operational from January when the Oyster Card Pay-As-You-Go system comes into effect.

Also approved for January next year, parking will be free on Sundays at Twickenham station car park.

Distributor needed for Holmes Road

We are looking for someone to distribute the Bulletin in Holmes Road three times a year. The time commitment is about half an hour. Please contact: Clare Phelps or email:

Bulletin@shra.org.uk



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RENEWAL OF SUBSCRIPTION of £3.00 (minimum) PER HOME FOR YEAR 2010

This subscription renewal may be made by cash or cheque made payable to Strawberry Hill Residents' Association.

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B Costcutter by Strawberry Hill Station

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Payment may also be made by Standing Order. Forms are available from John or from the SHRA website (www.shra.org.uk)

Additional donations are always welcome!

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