

No.170 Summer 2019

Official opening of Radnor Gardens Café

On 26th May, café staff, Friends of Radnor Gardens (FoRG) and numerous other residents gathered at the café to welcome the new managers, 'Mustard and Cress', run by the Dillon family.

The café was officially opened by the deputy mayor of Richmond upon Thames, Councillor James Chard, and the chair of FoRG, Clare Head.

Entertainment took the form of a bouncy castle and a youth band (Richmond Youth Jazz Band, soloist Emi Francis).

Refreshments were provided by Mustard and Cress, with Siobhan Dillon in attendance, and the flowers came from All About Flowers.

We on the SHRA committee are sure everyone is really glad to have the extended café open again, and we hope it will be strongly supported by local



residents and other visitors to the area. We are less happy to hear about the vandalism that has occurred in the Gardens at night. Serious damage was done to café tables, the toilet door and some plants back in May.

Local residents have complained about the

noise of groups of people who drink heavily in the gardens and smash glass bottles.

The police are aware of this anti-social behaviour and will be patrolling the area. Please inform them immediately if you are concerned about anything happening in the Gardens at night.

A new river crossing from Radnor Gardens?

The Borough's Local Plan was officially adopted a year ago. As a result and in pursuit of an idea trailed in the Plan, the Council undertook a Consultation at the end of last year on the possibility of a new pedestrian/cyclist bridge over the Thames.

Upwards of 1000 people responded, most of whom thought it was a good idea in principle. While a crossing between Orleans Gardens and Ham Street was preferred, a crossing from Radnor Gardens to Ham Lands was runner up (see the **ha-veyoursay** section of the Richmond upon Thames Council website).

Recently, fresh impetus for the idea of a

crossing from Radnor Gardens has materialised and illustrations as to how this could be achieved have been published. The Association has considered these plans which involve the creation of a new roundabout on Cross Deep at the junction with Popes Grove from which a bridge would sweep over the gardens and then the river.

We have grave reservations about the

value and practicality of this plan as do the local councillors and The Friends of Radnor Gardens. The Council's Report on the Consultation states, "Whilst the Council has no firm proposals for a new bridge at this stage and no funding has been allocated or sought, the purpose of this consultation was to establish whether local people think the idea is worthy of further exploration. Should there be positive interest, the Council would plan to move forward with a full feasibility study, identifying possible funding and proposals for wider community engagement."

We will of course keep you in touch with any future developments.

NEWS FLASH

The next Police Liaison Group Meeting will be held on 25th September 2019 at 7.00pm, at the St James Emanuel Centre in Radnor Road

Local consultations: Use your voice

Heathrow Airport Expansion Consultation

Residents are advised to provide feedback to the consultation on the website:

<https://aec.heathrowconsultation.com>

or email to:

feedback@heathrowconsultation.com

Strawberry Hill CPZ

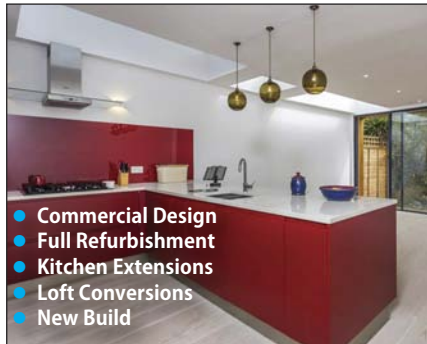
The six-month trial period ends on 4th September. Representations on the effect of the new CPZ may be made either by letter to:

Head of Engineering (Traffic and Parking Policy), Civic Centre, 44 York Street, Twickenham, TW1 3BZ

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SHdesign@richmondandwandsworth.gov.uk

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News from Strawberry Hill House The Annual Music and Fun Day

On 9th June, the fourteenth annual Music and Fun Day was held in the grounds of Strawberry Hill House and St Mary's University. This well-loved community event raises much needed funds for the 18th Century gothic castle situated just off Waldegrave Road.

This year nearly 5000 members of our community attended the event and raised £8000. This money will be used to carry out essential repairs at the property and will also support its education and outreach programme. The Strawberry Hill Trust would like to thank everyone one who attended and



Strawberry Hill House Music and Fun Day 2019

supported the event, and particularly their volunteers who tirelessly shook buckets, baked beautiful cakes and gave all our visitors a warm welcome.

Flower Festival

Strawberry Hill House also hosted a flower festival, 23-26 June. The festival was a celebration of sustainable floristry, using British flowers and foam-free techniques for arrangements. In one of the rooms, a local florist used flowers grown in her own garden in Teddington.

32 florists took part in the festival and were joined by four artists, two growers and a photographer. Over 550 visitors attended during the four days of the festival. They not only enjoyed seeing the beautiful arrangements on display throughout the gothic castle, but also had the opportunity to hear talks given by florists about their techniques and their businesses.



The Holbein room decorated by: @nettlewoodflowers



The gothic staircase



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Update on Pope's Grotto

A very successful series of open days has just concluded. The publicity obtained following the broadcast from the Grotto on BBC London News in February meant a big increase in demand and visitors have been spreading the word.

A well-supported fund-raising concert was held at St. Mary's church also in February. A number of academics from home and abroad together with other students interested

in 18th Century literature and Pope in particular have also been entertained. Following the disappointment of the failed bid for funding from the Heritage Lottery Fund last year, a fresh application was encouraged to the renamed National Lottery Heritage Fund. This has been duly made and we await the outcome in September with the hope that the further work required to the Grotto can be completed in 2020. A substantial fund-raising effort has been launched to provide matched funding but there is still a way to go. If readers would like to support the project, the Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust website explains how this can be done to maximum effect.

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 Twickenham TW2 5SD

Strawberry Hill's Own Tragic Suffragette

It was an article in this Bulletin ('Previous Residents', No.160, Spring 2016, available on our website: www.SHRA.org.uk) about the Alexandra Nursing Home, now Milton Court on Wellesley Road, that stimulated local-resident Roger White to investigate the house's history. Roger, who lives at Milton Court, discovered that the site had previously been occupied by Milton House, a large Victorian mansion resembling a 'fairy castle'.

If anyone has or knows of a photograph of the house, SHRA and Roger would love to hear from them.

In the 1901 and 1911 Census, Milton House was the home of the Fargus family and Henry Robert Fargus (1850-1927), a solicitor, was a co-founder of Strawberry Hill Golf Club. Henry and his India-born wife Helen Mary Skinner had five children and the eldest was Henrietta Helen Olivia Roberts Fargus (1880-1949).

Last year was the centenary of Women's Suffrage and SHRA searched in vain for our very own Strawberry Hill suffragette. Now thanks to Roger's curiosity we can celebrate the life of Henrietta Fargus. In her mid-twenties, she became involved in the political struggle for the vote, as did many other well-educated, middle-class women. In April 1909, she is pictured haranguing the Prime Minister, Herbert Asquith, as he is walking in Whitehall. She refused to contribute to the 1911 Census, as did many fellow suffragettes, and then engaged in more militant actions. In January

1912, she was expelled from the Albert Hall for heckling the First Lord of the Admiralty. On 1st March 1912, Henrietta and Maud Joachim broke plate glass windows in shops at 74, 76 and 78 Regent Street. She was arrested and sent to Holloway Prison, appearing at Bow Street Magistrates' Court five days later, where she was bailed by her father and agreed to keep the peace for 12 months (Maud, with a previous conviction, received six months' gaol). In 1918, she married Captain Reginald Durand-Deacon MC of the Gloucester Regiment.

Jump to 1943 and Henrietta was a wealthy widow living alone at the Onslow Court Hotel, Brompton Road, where she resided for the last six years of her life. Unfortunately, during the last four years John George Haigh (1909-1949) was a fellow resident. Haigh used his charm to persuade her to visit his Crawley workshop where he was

allegedly making artificial fingernails for women. He was desperate for money and according to his own account he shot her in the back of the head and stripped her of her valuables before placing Henrietta's body in a sulphuric-acid bath.

She was the sixth victim of this infamous serial killer. His mistake was in choosing a relatively well-connected woman and leaving a trail of easy-to-locate evidence. He was hanged at Wandsworth Prison by executioner Albert Pierrepoint on 10th August 1949.

In a 2002 ITV drama, "A is for Acid", actors Martin Clunes played Haigh and Rowena Cooper played Henrietta.

Details adapted from *John George Haigh: The Acid-Bath Murderer* by Dr. Jonathan Oates, Pen & Sword True Crime, 2014.

SHRA AGM 2019

The AGM of the Strawberry Hill Residents' Association was held on 24 April at Strawberry Hill Golf Club. Residents heard a summary of the Association's work over the last year from Chairman David Cornwell. Items covered included the introduction of the Strawberry Hill CPZ, the Lost Treasures exhibition at Strawberry Hill House and the Heathrow consultation on changes to flight patterns.

We welcomed new proprietors at Radnor Gardens café, Peggy's Pantry, MKG Motors and Joseph Owen barbers, and said thank you and goodbye to Marcus and Michael at the Radnor Gardens café and SHRA committee member Neil Coburn.

The Association held two successful events – a summer get-together in Radnor Gardens and carol singing by the Christmas tree in Wellesley Parade.

Cheques were presented to Spear and to Pope's Grotto Preservation Trust from the proceeds of the collection at the carol singing. At the end of the meeting, residents were invited to have a glass of wine and talk to the committee members and their neighbours.



Henrietta Fargus attempting to speak to Prime Minister Herbert Asquith

Our New Series . . .
StreetWise
 starts with
Upper Grotto Road



Upper Grotto Road looking East in 2019

StreetWise is a history of the streets of Strawberry Hill. Strawberry Hill Residents' Association will be publishing, via its website, a series of street histories: www.shra.org.uk They are based on research undertaken by members of SHRA, using commercially available genealogical websites and the Local Studies Library.

We begin with Upper Grotto Road simply because it has a history that touches on the life and property of Alexander Pope, probably the most celebrated resident of the area (the full version of the street history is available on the SHRA website).

Radnor Lodge – market garden

Upper Grotto Road dates from around 1898-1899 but the land upon which it was built has a long history which is bound up with the story of Radnor Lodge (which is 29 Radnor Road). Since the

early 17th Century there was a house with land on this spot. It is probable that Radnor Lodge and its land were added to Alexander Pope's estate by Sir William Stanhope. In 1761, he built an underground passage connecting what had been Pope's garden to Radnor Lodge. This tunnel or grotto became known as 'Stanhope's Cave'.

The land, which was later built on, became a market garden from the mid 19th century. In 1819, the land was owned by Viscount Clifden, an Anglo-Irish aristocrat, based in Kilkenny (Clifden Road in Twickenham). From 1857, Richard Clarke was a tenant running the market garden until his death in 1898, which prompted the owners to sell the land for building.

Auction of building plots

In 1898, building plots, in what was called Upper Grotto Road, were auctioned for between £45 and £61 each. The name given to the road was probably because it is a continuation of Grotto Road (formerly Fox Lane) which runs along the north side of Pope's garden. Different builders took on the jobs of constructing 68 houses according to varying plans. However, most are semi-detached, London stock brick, sash windows, box bays or semi-hexagonal box bay windows. They have hipped roofs interspersed with three-storey houses with gabled roofing.

1901

By 1901, building was only partially complete – the following houses were either not yet built or not occupied – (current numbers) 10-14, 32, 44-50, 5-9, 15-39, 53-69. There were 25 houses on the North side of the road and 10 on the South side. Shortly afterwards the houses were completed. In the 1901 Census, the heads of households worked in a narrow range of jobs: 9 were clerks; 8 were in the building trades; and 6 worked in shops. There were foreign-born residents: a US-born stone mason at No.16; a German-born watchmaker at No.51; and a Belgium-born civil engineer at No.22.

Change of numbers

On 5th July 1905, all the house numbers were changed and the present arrangement of odd (South side) and even (North side) numbers was introduced. Prior to the renumbering, the North side was numbered consecutively 1-30, plus number 12 was called Eden Villa, 14 Ivy Villa, 16 May Villa and 18 was Fern Lea. Numbers 56 and 58 were 1 and 2 Jasmine Villas. On the South Side (now the odd numbers) most of the houses had names rather than numbers (some of which can be seen today).

Since 1939

By the time of the 1939 Register, a national survey of every household, 212 people lived in the street. There were 83 people working and 60% were in manual occupations, while 40% were in non-manual jobs.

For many years, No.57 was used by the Salvation Army as Officers' quarters. In 1930/31, No.76 was built as a detached house on the north side of the street next to No.74. The first occupants were Hubert Athelstan Grady, a journalist, and his wife, Ethel. The house was demolished presumably to make way for the building of Hollies Close in 1973.

In 1939, a large detached, wooden-clad house was built at the western end of the road. The first occupant of was Benjamin Yeadon, a boat warehouseman, who was born in 1873. This was No.78 and it was demolished prior to the building of four new houses (Nos.78-84) and a block of four flats at 71 in 2003.

by Andrew Miller

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