

No. 149 Summer 2012

Jubilee Street Parties

The Jubilee spirit was royally celebrated in Strawberry Hill with street parties on the Sunday and Monday.

Upper Grotto Road tipped and smiled through the rain

Fortified by Diamond Jubilee cocktails, the party in Upper Grotto Road kept going until midnight.

Deborah Gray, one of the organisers, says: "My, we scrubbed up well in the rain, even though we huddled under gazebos."

The verdict: "Marvellous; the party created a warm community spirit. Neighbours from opposite ends of the street made friends, shared food and drink and everyone tipped and laughed together".

Children were the focus. A giant bouncy castle dominated the street. Children's games ran during breaks in the showers. The barbecue spluttered and produced damp, but tasty sausages and burgers. Food aplenty was piled high.

"We were thrilled by a favourite band, Born Native, who braved the elements", says Deborah.



Cocktails for three, and another thirty, created cheer in the rain

The Strawberry Hill Diamond Jubilee Cocktail

(as served in Upper Grotto Road)

50cl gin
25cl strawberry liqueur
Two dashes of Angostura Bitters
Sparkling wine

Shake with ice, pour into a Martini glass.
Top up with fizz.
Garnish with a strawberry.

Waldegrave Gardens

Having celebrated the Silver and Golden Jubilees, Waldegrave Gardens had started thinking about a Diamond Jubilee party more than two years ago, well before our terrific "wedding" street party last year. (to be fair, jubilees are easier to predict than weddings).



The party gets underway in Waldegrave Gardens

The party was opened up to those outside Waldegrave Gardens because there are many in our area who simply cannot close their roads (sotto voce - unless of course, they are hosting an Olympic cycle race!)

Starting in the afternoon for the children, the party progressed in the early evening for grown ups with a juke box and the renowned local jazz band, 'The Alley Cats'. Throughout it all there was enough food to feed far more than the 150-plus that attended. Just as well, because it was, as you will remember, a little cold - the

Continued on page 2....

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SHRA position on parking explained

Bruce Duff, Chairman of Strawberry Hill Residents' Association, writes to all residents of Strawberry Hill.

This is a good time to update Strawberry Hill residents on Richmond-upon-Thames Council's project for parking in Wellesley Parade.

The original proposal was part of its ongoing policy to support small businesses and to allow residents in all parts of the London Borough of Richmond upon Thames to have easier access to their shops and services. The first phase was introduced in Tower Road and was generally agreed by the shopkeepers themselves to have boosted business.

Phase 2 was intended to free up some parking spaces in Wellesley Road Parade, currently used all day long by commuters. The plan was to create two spaces for 2-hour free parking for those of us who live here and to add two more unrestricted spaces so that there would be no loss of spaces for commuters.

Your SHRA Committee considered this to be a sensible scheme. It would have been good for us all and in particular, people with small children, the elderly and those with restricted mobility, as well as our shopkeepers.

The Council chose to conduct a very limited consultation covering only the immediate area around the shops. As a result, the plan was rejected by some shopkeepers, who felt that it would discourage, rather than encourage, shoppers to park and shop. There was never any question of a decision being taken by the Council without full consultation with residents and traders alike. Plans for such a consultation have been put on hold and any further information should be sought from David Marlow, Councillor for South Twickenham Ward.

I hope that this clarifies the situation and underlines our aim always to represent the best interests of everyone in our Village.

Bruce Duff

Chairman, Strawberry Hill Residents' Association

Jubilee parties continued from page 1

sort of June evening that makes you hope that summer is yet to come, despite the date.

Games, music, dancing, food, wine and great fun - all in celebration of the sixty year reign of our ever-popular and not-so-far-away-neighbour in St. James's, Queen Elizabeth II.

Orford Gardens

Second guessing the weather was the biggest gamble for residents of Orford Gardens - and they got it right by choosing the sunny Bank Holiday Monday.



Bunting from underwear cut-offs fashioned by the ingenious 'jam lady' of Orford Gardens

Planning the Jubilee celebration began in April. Meetings in the British Legion Club brought volunteers together to manage everything from road barriers to children's entertainment and street games. And the games were brilliant from tables tennis to pool, skateboarding to cycling challenges and races.

A highlight was the fiercely contested Best Decorated House competition featuring a life-size cutout of The Queen and an enormous red, white and blue tiered cake. One house was

decorated with brightly coloured bunting made from underwear. Younger children enjoyed a tea party followed by a captivating magician and a treasure hunt. At the end of an exhausting day a group of dads fired up the BBQ so that parents could enjoy music, food and a rewarding glass of wine.

Heath Gardens raises a charitable £20,000

For the last 11 years, Heath Gardens residents have held a street party and this year it coincided with the Jubilee. What is more, residents also make a donation to various charities from funds raised at the events.

"The donations to date total over £20,000 - an incredible achievement," says Dominika Dean, one of the organisers. The gamut of events had something for everyone, from a Dad's cake competition, games for children, doughnut-eating competition, tops-and-tails and a children's tea party.



Heath Gardens in full party mood

Nor was that all. In the afternoon the Bubbly Bar opened and the communal BBQ was lit for food provided by all residents, topped off with the Heath Gardens communal photograph.

In the evening there was live music, the Heath Gardens auction and the lighting of Chinese Lanterns.

Bus disruption during the Olympics

Changes to bus routes and stops are planned in July and August when the Olympic Cycle Road Races and Time Trials pass through, or near to, Strawberry Hill.

In summary, during the Road Races on Saturday 28th and Sunday 29th July, there will be no 33 and R68 services. The R70, 267 and 281 services will be diverted or curtailed. During the Time Trials on Wednesday 1st August, the R68 will be suspended, the 33 and 281 will be diverted or curtailed. Full details of planned changes are available from: tfl.gov.uk/gamestravel

This includes information on alterations during Games road events, although services will remain subject to change, as London 2012 organisers have not yet finalised operational plans.

Information on service changes and the need to 'check before you travel' will be publicised to passengers in advance of the Games. In the meantime, more information on transport changes during the Games, and advice on avoiding disruption, is available from:

<http://www.getaheadofthegames.com/>

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SHRA supports pub hours protest

An application for late-night opening and live music and dancing at the refurbished Waldegrave Arms is opposed by large numbers of residents.

Local resident Michael Allsop of nearby Southfield Gardens says: "Residents living close to the pub are up in arms over the proposed terms for its new licence. The strong opinion of residents is that the pub should be restored to its former glory as a much-valued 'local' serving the surrounding community, not an entertainment destination for late-night revellers with all the problems attendant with such venues."



Protesters outside the Waldegrave Arms

SHRA is supporting the objections to the re-licensing application. The pub at the corner of Shacklegate Lane closed a number of years ago and the site has been redeveloped into 22 flats. The pub itself is currently being refurbished.

SHRA Chairman Bruce Duff emphasises that residents are not opposing the re-opening of the pub: "We want to make it clear that we do not object to a licence being granted to the premises. We consider a well-run community pub in a residential area is generally an asset to that community. Sadly, the terms of the current application indicate that this is not the type of venue that will be created."

Live music and dancing

The licence application requests opening from 10 a.m. to midnight each day, extended to 1 a.m. on Fridays and Saturdays, with food, live music and dancing throughout the proposed opening hours. Security staff will supervise entry on weekend evenings.

Opponents say the presence of security staff underlines that it is not intended to be a community public house, but an entertainment destination.

SHRA has written to the licensing authorities to express these fears. "We believe the terms of the licence should be restricted to those appropriate for a normal community public house in a family residential area," says Bruce.

Serene days at Swan Island among historic boats

In the second part of our series, we talk to people who live and work on the island

Fiona's oasis

The owners of Swan Island are the Newman family, which has worked at the riverside oasis for 50 years. In day-to-day charge is Fiona Gunnion. Fiona explains that her father discovered the island in the 1950s, when he rented a building there. When the chance came to buy Swan Island came, he jumped at it.

Forty years, on the island retains its essential charm, though the buildings have been much improved. Today around 15 businesses, ranging from boat repairers to a company making skeletons for medical students, and 40 boat owners live and work together.

Fiona agrees that it must be many people's dream to have their own island. Each day she sees the changing seasons of the river from her office. Her favourite time of year is Spring... "Summer is beautiful too, as is Autumn. It's difficult to choose. I have been working here nearly 50 years. I am very lucky."

Owners of boats moored on the riverside pontoons agree. Many have been Fiona's tenants for 25 years and more. Some live on historic Dunkirk boats. Often, on summer evenings, they can be found sharing a beer around a barbecue and watching the river pageant unfold.



Fiona Gunnion outside her office

Boating idyll of the river lovers

Joe Eves, boat repairer, has lived on the Thames beside Swan Island for nearly 35 years. "It's a good community here," says Joe. "I wouldn't want to live anywhere else."



Joe Eves

At present Joe is restoring an old Dunkirk boat, the Lurline. The 100-year-old motor yacht took part in the recent Jubilee celebrations. "She is still in excellent shape; but I've got a slight problem with the propeller shaft."

Nigel's riverscape

Joe is also the former owner of Peggotty, another famous Dunkirk boat, now owned by Nigel Frost. Peggotty, an oak and teak motor yacht, was in the thick of the



Nigel and Derek on Peggotty

Dunkirk rescue, ferrying soldiers to the larger ships and eventually bringing home 80 survivors.

Nigel, a graphic designer, has been a river-dweller for nearly three years. "I wouldn't go back to living in a flat," says Nigel. "Peggotty is just right for me. I sleep so well here and my son Dominic, who joins me at weekends, loves the river life."

Nigel adds, "People often want to see boat, especially the chaps from the British Legion nearby." Best of all. Nigel enjoys the daily changing riverscape, with its birds and river fowl.

River star

Derek Jones, on the boat next to Nigel, has lived at Swan Island for 25 years since leaving the RAF. His boat was rebuilt by Joe Eves.

"I have made very good friends here," says Derek. "You don't find a community like this on land. We all appreciate the river's seasons. All sort of strange things happen. In Winter you get ice floes on the river and you can hear the ice cracking against the hull."

"Ducks go silly during the mating season. One flew into my cabin and sat on my lap. She wouldn't move," Derek says "Just to look at the daily changes on the river is marvelous. No two days are alike."

Christmas Carol Concert

We will be holding our popular Christmas Carol Concert again this year on Friday 14th December.

This year we have are pleased to welcome a new choir, formed from volunteers at Strawberry Hill House. There will be refreshments and a collection for a local charity.

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Dianne's play reveals the colourful life of Lady Waldegrave

Local playwright Dianne Cutlack brings promenade theatre back to Strawberry Hill House in December with a play about the remarkable Lady Waldegrave.

Hot on the heels of Dianne's recent play about Horace Walpole, "The Last Great Lady", is a colourful Christmas celebration of the life of the great Victorian society hostess.

Dianne says: "She was the confidante of prime ministers and royalty, artists and poets. Frances's rise to the upper strata of London society was all the more remarkable because she was not born into the aristocracy. She inherited estates including Strawberry Hill from her second husband, George, 7th Earl Waldegrave." She adds: "Frances was destined to marry four times, but only once for love".

The Last Great Lady runs from 7th to 19th December. Tickets (at £25) are available through Strawberry Hill House:

www.strawberryhillhouse.org.uk

Or telephone 020 8744 1241.

Dianne's source of inspiration and admiration

The inspiration for Dianne's play was sparked by Nick Smith, the director of Strawberry Hill House. "We were both keen to bring Frances to life and the thought of a Victorian play at Christmas was irresistible," says Dianne. "She was a remarkable woman. She combined the philanthropic society hostess qualities of a Guggenheim or a Rothschild with a keen political mind. She had the glamour and allure of a Hollywood film star."

Politicians actually used to play to her if she sat in the gallery of the House of Commons. On one occasion the Lord President of the Council complimented her on a new bonnet. Her type of personal magnetism and power defies the modern era."

Many unusual facts came to light during the research. "Frances's father, John Braham, was a famous operatic tenor, the Pavarotti of his day. He was a Jew who converted to Christianity. Frances grew up in a very lively,



Frances, Countess Waldegrave in 1850

bohemian household where she met many of the great artists, painters and writers of the early Victorian age."

Frances was given a good education, had a keen mind. Later in life she helped to write many of the Parliamentary speeches delivered by her fourth husband, Chichester Fortescue, an Irish MP. "She did, however, struggle with the stigma attached to the fact that certain sections of London society considered her 'low-born', says Dianne.

Sad sale

"The saddest thing I discovered was the little-known 'second' Great Sale of Strawberry Hill's contents. Frances's second husband, Lord George Waldegrave, has always been painted as something of a scoundrel for selling Horace Walpole's possessions in the Great Sale of 1842.

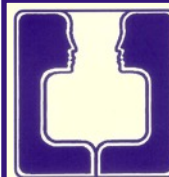
However, what is less known is that the husband who survived her, Chichester Fortescue, did exactly the same thing following Frances's death.

"The motives behind the two Great Sales were slightly different. George Waldegrave was paying off mountains of debts. Chichester Fortescue was so devastated by his beloved wife's death he could no longer bear to live in the house or look at her possessions."

From her researches, Dianne developed admiration for Frances. "With her keen interest in politics, in a later era she probably would have followed Nancy Astor, and become a female MP. She was a formidable society hostess. Her dinner parties and balls were annual events described in the newspapers and attended by the Prince and Princess of Wales. She was on first-name terms with prime ministers, politicians, artists, and the nobility.

"Sadly, there are no portraits of Frances Waldegrave at Strawberry Hill; in fact, there aren't any of Horace Walpole either! Those Great Sales stripped the house of every valuable painting it had, most of which are now in famous private or public collections.

However, there is one legacy of her reign. A room at Strawberry Hill designed by Frances Waldegrave as a Turkish boudoir is being restored this year, and visitors will eventually be able to see what was unquestionably Frances's favourite room in the house."



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Stiff and difficult, the hickory dilemma

By John Naish, our golfing correspondent

Wikipedia writes that hickory wood is 'very hard, stiff, dense and shock resistant'. These attributes made it ideal for golf club shafts before steel came along in the late 1920s.

Some of us golfers are curious as to what it was like to play the game when Queen Victoria had achieved 60 years on the throne, when short sleeves were considered racy and Strawberry Hill was still associated in local memory with Lady Waldegrave.

So on 7th May, I joined 27 other enquiring golfers for the Strawberry Hill Golf Club Hickory Day. It was wonderful! We played 18 holes under the guidance of Gavin Bottrell, whose Timewarp Golf supplied the antique clubs.

Golf isn't a difficult game, it's just difficult to do. The winners did play marvellously well but judging from the scores, hickory clubs lie somewhat outside modern players' comfort zone.



Gavin Bottrell (right) amuses while our golfing correspondent worries about the time

Our golf course is a landmark of Strawberry Hill. It is a well-kept secret, a warm and welcoming part of civilisation. If you would like to play or just to try the game, come round and see us. Believe me, you'd be very welcome.

Flying the flag for Strawberry Hill House

Jenny Eynon, Property Operations Manager at Strawberry Hill House, writes:

Those of you who have a view of Strawberry Hill House from your homes may have noticed our new flag fluttering away above the Round Tower, which was hoisted by Councillor Clare Head on 21st June. It displays Walpole's arms on a crimson background, and we think it really finishes off the view of our famous skyline!

On the same day, we also installed a reproduction statue, 170 years after the Great Sale of 1842, where it was sold for £3.5s.0d



(£3.25). The Strawberry Hill Trust has installed a replica of the saint in its original position in the restored Oratory. Walpole acquired the statue sometime around 1774, but its exact provenance is unknown. What is known is that the original (owned by the Victoria & Albert Museum since 1982) is extremely rare. The Strawberry Hill Trust found nothing comparable throughout its global research into this object.

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Robinson Design moves to Strawberry Hill

Husband and wife design team Christine and David Robinson have segued from careers in TV and graphic design to home and garden art design. Their's is the latest business to open in Strawberry Hill - the couple from Teddington decided it was time to showcase their studio. "We have worked in this area for several years and our new showroom in the Village has received a warm welcome - and have four projects already" says David.



Christine and David Robinson - design hunters

Their specialities are complementary. Christine began her career as a stylist with famous magazines such as Ideal Home and Homes and Gardens. From there, it was a short hop to presenting a home design programme on Granada TV. Textiles, furniture and décor are their focus.

Design hunter

Christine insists that they do not impose a style on clients, but help them to achieve the look they want. "Often I will go shopping with clients to help them choose patterns and colours. Or I will seek out furniture which fits their ideas. 'Design hunter' is a good name for that."

David, a graduate of the prestigious Inghald School of Garden Design, provides the other side to their consultancy. "We move from Christine's interior designs to complementary garden designs, so that the whole home environment is in harmony."

There is clearly a huge demand for their services. "It can be as simple as designing a few rooms - a recent commission was for a flat above a shop - to a complete home and garden new look" says Christine.

David adds: "Many homeowners, especially in Strawberry Hill, prefer to extend and refurbish. We have seen an increase for design services for houses and gardens as people seek to maximise the potential of their homes."

SHRA sings like a bird. Do you?

If you're a Twitter user, you can now follow us on @SHResidents. We shall be Tweeting information about forthcoming events, local news and other useful information such as Metropolitan Police alerts.

If you don't yet Tweet, setting up a Twitter account is quick and easy: you don't need to disclose any personal information - all you need is an email address. You don't need a smartphone either: a PC or Mac will work perfectly well.



Rotary at home in the golf club

For more than 10 years, Strawberry Hill Golf Club has been home to Twickenham upon Thames's Rotary Club. Many residents and local companies are members, including local businesses, sharing Rotary's aim to promote business and fellowship.

While for many people that means corporate networking, the fellowship goal translates into massive charity work, both at home and internationally.

Mark Scudamore, a resident for more than 20 years, says, "The golf club is our home: it is just right for us - especially the friendliness of the management."

From the golf club, Rotary plans its local charity connections, such as the Richmond Furniture Scheme. This collects furniture for unemployed youngsters to learn woodworking skills. The Rotary members also provide dictionaries to all five primary schools in Twickenham, as well as supporting HANDS, the charity which helps local elderly people.



Mark Scudamore: keen to recruit younger members

Internationally, Rotary has raised millions of pounds in a campaign to eradicate polio. The disease is now endemic in only three countries. "We are keen to recruit younger members," says Mark Scudamore. "We need their drive and enthusiasm. They will find a stimulating and experienced professional membership."

Mark adds, "We are also seeing growing numbers of retired residents joining, who find they now have the time to contribute their professionalism and experience."

Residents wishing to join Rotary can contact the Club at:

www.tutrotary.org

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