

Performing Arts in our Community

Music & Singing
in Richmond

Talent in our
Community

Theatre Shows
& Venues

Music Pubs &
Gigs

Outdoor Theatre,
Film & Concerts

Mick's
Photography



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Editorial Committee: Juliet Ames-Lewis, Lorraine Bradley, Debbie Flaherty, Chantal Richards, Gennie Thompson & Mike Townsin.

Magazine Design: Chantal Richards

 This magazine is recyclable.

Welcome to our New Resident

We offer a warm welcome to our new resident **Brian Newman**

Farewell To:

Marina Richards who has moved to live with family

Competition Winner

Thank you to everyone who submitted competition entries for the **Spot The Difference *The Milkmaid***. Picked at random, the winner is:

Sue McAnena

Congratulations!

Answers from last month's competition are on page 27.

Chapel Schedule: April 2023

2nd April	10.30am
<i>Palm Sunday</i>	Eucharist with hymns
9th April	10.30am
<i>Easter Day</i>	Eucharist with hymns
16th April	10.30am
<i>2nd Sunday of Easter</i>	Eucharist with hymns
23 April	10.30am
<i>3rd Sunday of Easter</i>	Eucharist with hymns
30 April	10.30am
<i>4th Sunday of Easter</i>	Eucharist with hymns

Front Page credits: Richard Howard (pages 4&5), Serge and Norman (page 11), Alison and the Nuns (page 9) and GRiP Theatre (page 8)

Letter from Chantal



Spring at last! Fresh beginnings for our new Chaplain and exciting summer months ahead.

So here we have another jam-packed issue full of upcoming events in the Almshouse Community. There is a new regular column on Arts & Culture, for which Mike Townsin has written an opening article called ***Ars Gratia Artis*** (Art for Art's Sake) on page 18.

Following on from the theme in our March issue – *Artists in our Community* – we are shining the spotlight again on our community talents in the form of *Performing Arts*. Starting with an amazing interview with resident professional actor, Richard Howard. There are highlights from Alison McAlear, professional musicians Peter, Serge and Norman and not forgetting juggling tips from Jonathan and Jive Dancing with Paul!

We have a new correspondent, Joe at Riverside Radio, on local theatre. Find Joe's report on his favourite upcoming local professional and amateur theatre productions on page 8.

If singing and choirs appeal to you, then Juliet has written a fabulous round up of all things musical, with plenty of local groups and a thriving network that you can get involved with too!

We are always on the look out for new contributors, so if you have a book you love, a film you enjoyed, a new hobby, or would like to share your experiences of events in

and around our community – then please do talk to your Scheme Manager or email me at: c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk. Sharing is caring!

For those of you that maybe don't know me, I design and help edit this magazine and it's my absolute pleasure to bring you pages and pages of news and reviews each month. Hopefully I'll be back out with my camera soon.

Enjoy the longer days!

Mick's Photography

Each month, we want to share with you the amazing photography of Mick Tinson. You will probably know him as



our Projects & Estates Manager. Here is a small taster of his visual talents.



Richard Howard – No Ordinary Life

Interview by Mike Townsin

When Jo Davison suggested I interview Richard Howard for the magazine, the only thing I knew about him was that he is an actor, and has been treading the boards for nearly sixty years.

At 19, he went to the Bristol Old Vic Theatre School with the intention of becoming a set designer, but later switched to a two year acting course.

In 1965 Richard secured his first acting job at the Manchester Library Theatre, sweeping the stage and playing Fabian in *Twelfth Night* under renowned Artistic Director Oliver Neville, subsequently Principal of RADA, where Richard later directed.

From that point his career continued to be that of a classical actor, mainly in the theatre but with periodic excursions into film and TV, like many who are classically trained. He spent the next few years in provincial repertory theatre – Shakespeare, Shaw, Brecht, D H Lawrence, Joe Orton – followed by small parts on TV and in films, including *Oh what a Lovely War* and *Inspector Clouseau*; then two years at the Stables Theatre Club in Manchester, founded in 1969 in conjunction with Granada Television, in order to develop ideas for TV. His fellow actors included Maureen Lipman, John (Gladiator) Shrapnel, actor/director Richard (One Foot in the Grave) Wilson and William (Heartbeat) Simons.

By the early '70s he had moved to London and appeared in various plays at the Royal Court, including *Lear* starring Harry Andrews.

For two years he was a member of Laurence Olivier's National Theatre Company at the Old Vic; his fellow players included Ronald Pickup, Anthony Hopkins, Diana Rigg, Michael Hordern, Alec McCowen and Constance Cummings. Later



Richard rehearsing as Duncan in *Macbeth*

he toured Australia with the National Theatre's *The Front Page*, and worked with Richard Eyre (later National Theatre Director) at the Nottingham Playhouse, in London theatre including *The Young Vic* and at the Bristol Old Vic – with, among others, Tom (The Full Monty) Wilkinson, Simon (Young Winston) Ward, Sinead Cusack, Roy Hud and Simon Callow.

Richard is clearly self-deprecating by nature, but cannot be accused of name-dropping: the fact is that throughout his working life he has performed with many actors who are now household names, and friends.

Asked for thoughts on acting he quoted Oliver Hardy (partner of Laurel): "We had a lot of fun...but we were always real. Even in our shortest pictures, we tried to be real", by which he meant you have to inhabit the character and the moment.

And of the ups and downs of the stage? "First nights are always nerve-wracking!"

To top off a busy decade, in 1977 Richard set off to tour India, Nepal, Pakistan, Korea and Japan, playing Mercutio in *Romeo and Juliet* (his favourite part) among other roles, with the London Shakespeare Group, a company of seven actors and a stage manager (with costumes and props in three trunks!).

In the early 80s he toured Africa, Europe and South East Asia with an LSG production of *Twelfth Night*.

In Belfast he appeared in Chekhov's *The Seagull*, and there met – in the Linen Hall pub – award-winning Irish writer Christina Reid to whom he was married for 22 years until her death in 2015. In 1986 Richard returned to Ireland appeared in Thomas Kilroy's *Double Cross* a play about William Joyce, the wartime traitor/broadcaster



Double Cross – Richard, far left.

‘Lord Haw-Haw’; when it transferred to the Royal Court, London the Observer's theatre critic said of

Richard's performance, “An enchanted audience ate out of his hand...impeccably funny”.

Asked what he particularly loved about life as an actor, he said “the fun and creativity of rehearsals and the banter of the dressing room!”

In 1987 he, Christina and his three step daughters moved to England and settled in Twickenham, with his son Lucien.

During the 80s and 90s Richard toured with the LSG again, was in a *Midsummer Night's Dream* at the Crucible Theatre Sheffield and in Athens, and in *Jane Eyre* in the West End with Tim Piggot-Smith. He toured Pakistan playing



Richard as Benvolio and Simon Ward as Romeo

Thomas More in *A Man For All Seasons*; was at the National Theatre in *Stanley* with Anthony Sher, in a UK tour of Bristol Old Vic's *Macbeth* with Pete Postlethwaite, at Richmond Theatre in *The Father* with Edward Fox and Stephanie Beecham, and at the Orange Tree Theatre.

During the '90s and '00s he toured the Gulf with the LSG, and the US with AFTLS (Actors From the London Stage), a company of five actors producing and acting in Shakespeare plays at colleges and lecturing students; he did three trips and reports the experience as “challenging but well paid”

Over the years his TV work included *Poirot*, *Kavanagh QC*, *Oliver Twist*, *David Copperfield*, *The Bill* and *Casualty*. And he has directed, written and adapted work for the stage.

Finally, perhaps this extract from *As You Like It* (Act 2, Scene 7) accurately describes Richard's working life...

“All the world's a stage..... and one man in his time plays many parts”.

Music and Singing



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

As many of you know, singing is my passion. I have sung since I was aged 8 and sung professionally since I was 21. It's good for the soul and good for the body too! Whether you enjoy listening to others or want to get involved yourself, there's lots going on in our borough.

Richmond upon Thames has a long history of being a great place for music. The first music venue The Crawdaddy Club was built in 1963, and since then it's been home to some of the most famous bands like The Rolling Stones and The Yardbirds. The borough has always had a reputation as a hub for live music performances. You can see everything from classical, rock, pop, jazz and folk music at countless venues. The Eel Pie Club, operating out of The Cabbage Patch features musos either of the 60s era, or those who still practice the noble art of blues and R&B that originated back in the 60s. The Turk's Head, The Bull's Head, The Crown, One Kew Road are just a few others of the many venues with live music offerings in Richmond upon Thames.

Listening To Others

Richmond Choral Society concert on Saturday 1st April at 7.30pm at the Richmond and Putney Unitarian Church, Ormond Road, Richmond TW10 6TH. A concert of choral favourites followed by a social gathering. More info: www.richmondconcerts.co.uk

Music Events

Teddington Choral Society: Haydn: Missa in Angustiis and Mozart Vespearae solennes de Confessore

Saturday 1st April @7.30pm at All Saints Parish Church, 14-16 Market Place, Kingston. KT1 1JP. Tickets £15. www.eventbrite.com



Richmond Opera: Venus and Adonis and Ode on St Cecilia's Day, with a baroque orchestra.

Saturday 15th April @ 6pm and Sunday 16th April @2.30pm.

Normansfield Theatre, Teddington. Tickets £20. www.ticketsource.co.uk/RichmondOpera



Hampton Choral Society: Faure Requiem, Poulenc Gloria, Faure Cantique de Jean Racine and Franck Panis Angelicus.

Saturday 22nd April @7.30pm. St James's Church Hall, St James's Road, Hampton Hill TW12 1DQ Tickets £15. Box office: 0208 9441 5394. Or pay on the door.

Getting Involved in Music and Singing

Cambrian Community Choir

Mondays 12pm–2pm. A friendly community choir with a wide range of songs, singing in harmony and learning to free our voices along the way. No auditions or experience necessary. Led by Deirdre O’Kelly, who has been teaching singing and leading choirs for over 20 years. More info: David Lemon on [020 8948 3351](tel:02089483351) or email: manager@cambriancentre.org

Avenue Club Choir

Tuesdays 3pm–4.30pm. With Ian Bloomfield & Margie Harrison. The Choristers are back at The Club, singing here every Tuesday afternoon! More info: [020 8948 8807](tel:02089488807) or e-mail avenueclub@kewcommunitytrust.org.uk

Off Beat Choir

Thursdays 8.15pm–9.45pm at Vineyard Church, Main Hall, Richmond TW10 6AQ. Learn by ear, free taster session, no audition. MD is Marta Radwan. More info: email offbeatchoiruk@gmail.com. Facebook: @obchoir. YouTube: Offbeat Choir.

Ham Rock and Gospel Choir

Wednesdays at 7.15pm. Sessions are at St Richard's Church, Ashburnham Road, Ham, TW10 7NL. First session is FREE! No audition — everyone welcome! If you'd like to come along please get in touch with Deirdre at deekelly@hotmail.com More info: hamrockpopandgospelchoir.godaddysites.com/

“The choir is such a great way to start the week, it makes me feel positive and happy.”

Twickenham Choral

One of the foremost choirs in south west London. Prospective members are welcome to come along and sing at Thursday rehearsals. Improve your vocal skills and make new friends. After a couple of weeks the conductor will ask you to pass a brief voice test. A basic knowledge of music is necessary, but perfect sight reading or a voice like Pavarotti’s is not! There is no need to prepare a piece. More info: twickenhamchoral.org.uk/

Landmark Singers

Wednesdays 7pm–9pm. Suitable for singers able to read music or a very quick ear and able to hold a line confidently. An audition is required. An established ensemble exploring a variety of styles and genres including folk and traditional music from around the world, classical, jazz, pop and gospel music. To audition email: education@landmarkartscentre.org

Choir at St Mary Magdalene, Richmond

Choir practice is on Thursdays. Choristers and Adult Choir – 7.30pm–9.00pm. Email the Director of Music, Alexander Knight. music.stmarys@richmondteamministry.org **Website:** www.richmondteamministry.org/st-mary-magdalene/choir/

Local Theatre by Joe at Riverside Radio

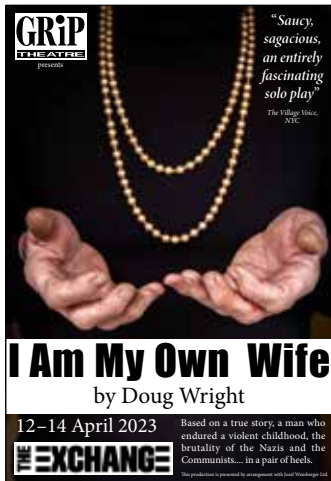


by Joe Beecroft



Dear Residents, my name is Joe and I co-present **Spotlight** on Riverside Radio every Tuesday from 7pm. We feature local theatre news, reviews and interviews plus a selection of show tunes. You can listen live here: www.riversideradio.com/shows/spotlight or on your smart speaker.

Local theatre groups are at the heart of so many communities, it's another world that so many don't know about and I hope this little taster is enough to tempt you away from the television set. Here is my recommended local roundup of local theatre in April.



The Exchange Theatre Twickenham (opp Twickenham station).

There is an abundance of one night shows, but one I recommend is being produced by GRiP Theatre, ***I Am My Own Wife*** by Doug Wright. This is a fascinating true story of a man that endured the brutality of the Nazis and the Communists, for 3 nights only, 12th–14th April. Tickets: exchangetwickenham.co.uk/. Tickets £15/Concessions £10.

Mary Wallace Theatre, Twickenham
By the Thames, home to the Richmond Shakespeare Society. Fancy a bit of

Henry V, one of Shakespeare's most renowned histories covering the Battle of Agincourt during the Hundred Years' War, 22nd–29th April. **Box Office: 07484 927662.** Tickets £17. Members £14.



Hampton Hill Theatre has so much to offer. From the 18th–22nd April and hailed as one of the



greatest plays of the decade they have ***Constellations***. A really strong two-hander about science, romance and the concepts of free will and fate within the quantum multiverse theory. Tickets: www.hamptonhilltheatre.org.uk. Tickets £15. Produced by OHADS (Old Hamptonians).

Kitson Hall, Barnes. Barnes Community Players have for you ***The Incident Room***, a dark but funny account of the police bungles which hindered the hunt for the Yorkshire ripper back in the 70s. It is given a modern outlook by exploring the glass ceiling and misogyny and rivalries between police forces. 31st May–3rd June. Tickets: www.ticketsource.co.uk. Tickets £16.

If you'd like to stay up to date, tune into Riverside Radio—we are one of the country's biggest community radio stations. Maybe I'll see you at one of the shows, or email me: spotlight@riversideradio.com

The Epic Amateur Drama!



by Alison McAlear

None The Wiser

A comedy by Anthony Booth

In 1979, when I was 21, my cousin Gordon roped me into being in a play that his friend Tony was directing. It was a comedy called *None The Wiser*. They were part of an amateur dramatics group called The Epic Players.

Someone had suddenly dropped out at the eleventh hour and so I came to Tony's rescue. I then asked my sister Chrissy to also get involved and she was the prompter, sitting in the wings feeding lines.

The play was about five female shoplifters. I played one of these, who dressed up as a nun to try to fit into a community without being suspected as to what they were really up to.

Two real nuns turn up at the house where the thieves are staying and the fun begins. One of the older lady players had a scene which involved her carrying onto the stage a tray full

of cups and saucers and she was shaking so much that the whole stage was filled with the noise of rattling china.



Before she went onto the stage, Chrissy said to her, "are you alright?" and all Chrissy could see was the absolute fear in her face! Then when she finally went to deliver her lines, she skipped at least two pages of script causing the rest of us to go into sheer panic mode and Chrissy was struggling to deliver anymore lines because she was in a state of confusion, not having ever done this before.

After it was over I said to Gordon and Tony, "Never Again!". It was somewhat of a disaster and trust me, nothing epic about it whatsoever!

In both photos above, I am the one at the very end, far side right.

Local Theatre Venues

Richmond Theatre

Pre-West End productions and leading actors. 1 Little Green, Richmond TW91QH. To book: www.atgtickets.com

The OrangeTree

Award winning theatre-in-the-round, specialises in staging new plays and rediscovering classics. 1 Clarence Street, Richmond TW9 2SA. To book: 020 8940 3633. www.orangetreetheatre.co.uk

The Exchange

Community facility with theatre. Programmes include drama performances, talks, film club, music. 75 London Road, Twickenham TW1 1BE. To book: 020 8240 2399 www.exchangetwickenham.co.uk

Hampton Hill Theatre

Community facility and home of Teddington Theatre Club (TTC) and Youth Action Theatre (YAT). High standard amateur productions and hosts visiting productions. 90 High Street, Hampton Hill TW12 1NZ. To book: 020 8410 4546 www.hampton-hilltheatre.org.uk

The Hammond Theatre

Performing arts theatre, drama, dance, music, comedy, live NT and Royal Opera House screenings. Hanworth Road, Hampton, TW12 3HD (located in the grounds of Hampton School). To book: 020 8783 4418. www.thehammondtheatre.co.uk

The Mary Wallace Theatre

Host to the Richmond Shakespeare Society (RSS) theatre group. Performs eight productions a year of Shakespeare, Greek Tragedy, other classics, all eras. The Embankment Twickenham, To book: boxoffice@rss-mwt.org.uk

Local Music: Pubs and Gigs

Roderick Williams OBE & Iain Burnside.

7:45pm. 18th April

Leonard Elschenbroich & Alexi Grynuk.

7.45pm. 9th May

Both at St Mary the Virgin, Twickenham Riverside.

More info: www.richmondconcerts.co.uk

Will Johns Band. 14th April

Staffell Stewart Band . 26th May

Both at the Crawdaddy Club Richmond (Richmond Athletic Ground),

Twickenham Road. More info: www.richmondconcerts.co.uk

Singaround. 8pm. 9th April

Diana Jones Tour. 8pm. 16th April

The Cabbage Patch, 67 London Rd, Twickenham (across the road from Twickenham station)

James Deane. Sunday's from 6.30pm

The Red Cow, 59 Sheen Rd, TW9 1YJ

Mark Hurrell Quartet and John Williamson Trio
6th April

Judi Jackson with Jamie Safir (jazz) 20th April

The Turk's Head, 28 Winchester Rd, St Margaret's

Bootleg Blondie. 8pm. 21st April

Landmarks Arts Centre, Ferry Road, Teddington

Other music venues to look out for:

The Bull's Head, 373 Lonsdale Rd, Barnes

The White Horse, Worples Way, Richmond

The Crown, 128 Lower Mortlake Road

One Kew Road, 1 Kew Road, Kew

Richmond Theatre, 1 Little Green, Richmond

The Angel & Crown, Church Court, Richmond

Outdoor Theatre, Film & Concerts

Osterley Park House and Gardens :

Outdoor cinema showing *Elvis*, *Top Gun Maverick* and *Dirty Dancing*. £15.50–£21.50

More info: www.nationaltrust.org.uk/visit/london/osterley-park-and-house/events

Hampton Open Air Pool: Concerts: *The Music of Stevie Wonder*, *Whitney – Queen of the Night* and *Hello Again – The Neil Diamond Songbook*, *ABC*, *Natalie Imbruglia* and *Fairport Convention*. £40.

More info: www.hamptonpooltrust.org.uk/concerts/

Chiswick House and Gardens:

Happy Place Festival which includes workshops, talks, food and special guests £38.50. More info: www.happyplacefestival.seetickets.com/event

Romeo and Juliet £10–£18. More info: www.chiswickhouseandgardens.org.uk

Hampton Court Palace: Concerts: *Tom Jones*, *Soft Cell*, *Grace Jones*, *Kool and the Gang*, *Rick Astley* and more. Picnic and music. From £55. More info: www.hamptoncourtpalacefestival.com

Kew the Music: Concerts: *Hacienda Classical*, *Jools Holland* and *The Human League*. £63.25. More info: kewthemusic.gigantic.com/kew-the-music-tickets/

Musician: Peter Rees

I would like to introduce myself, my name is Pete Rees and I am very fortunate to have recently joined the community at Church Estate. I am looking forward to getting to know everyone and was asked to write a few lines to tell you a little about myself.

Well, I have been a professional bass player nearly all of my life, and still play live when the opportunity arises. I travelled extensively in my touring days and feel blessed to have gigged with some great fellow musicians, in so many fantastic venues – including playing live for Putin in the Kremlin – that wouldn't happen these days! Many years and many stories.....

An Actors Life

“I have found that an actor's work has life and interest only in its execution...It has no rules (except perhaps audibility). With every play and every playwright the actor starts from scratch, as if he or she knows nothing and proceeds to learn afresh every time—growing with the relationships of the characters and the insights of the writer. When the play has finished its run, he's empty until the next time. And it's the emptiness which is, I find, apparent in any discussion of theatre work.”

**Paul (A Man for All Seasons)
Scofield**

Musicians: Serge & Norman

Norman May of Wright's, learned to play the guitar at 10. In his teens, he played in a skiffle band. In his thirties he played in a jazz trio. His playing was a hobby rather than a career. In his late 60s he took up the ukulele and founded the Teddington Ukulele Players. He also plays in group called *Stompin' at the Saveloy* (not a typo!) as well as running a ukulele band at the Avenue Club in Kew. One of the members of the band is Trustee, Serge Lourie, pictured above with Norman. In Norman's words: "Playing music keeps your brain active and is supposed to be a great antidote to Alzheimer's, and it's something you can do into your old age"



Juggler: Jonathan Blythe

"I picked up juggling in 1988, the day Wimbledon won the FA Cup. At my brother's celebration party a New Zealander was juggling and he got me going (anyone can do it!!). On and off done it ever since. There's even a U-tube channel: [Juggle with Jon!](#)



Jive Dancing: Paul Philips

My wife and I are joint holders (along with at least 998 others) of the most people doing a jive ever recorded by the Guinness Book of Records 2014.

Contractors Lanyards / ID



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

All staff and contractors who undertake work for the charity have been given a Richmond Charities lanyard, which is an ID card which they should wear around their neck to show that they are instructed by the charity to carry out work on our almshouse estates or in individual almshouses.

If a contractor is coming to undertake work in your almshouse, it is good practice for residents to ask to see their lanyard. If they have forgotten to wear it, please let your Scheme Manager know and we will remind them!

Can I remind all residents that the charity will never send a contractor around to your home without your prior approval. If you are ever in any doubt as to whether a contractor has been sent by the charity or not, please err on the side of caution and do not let them in until you have phoned your Scheme Manager for verification.

This is what the charity lanyards look like:



Changing Your Bank Account



by Alison McAlear

If you decide to change your bank account it is really important to let us know, either myself or Sam, here at Head Office.

This is because we will need to give you a blank Direct Debit Mandate to complete and sign, as then we have to change our banking templates for the Direct Debits.

Although banks will tell you that they sort this out for you, we have to follow our own guidelines and make sure that we have officially kept our records in order and that we have the most up to date signed instructions from a resident.



12 Annual Flower Seeds To Sow In April

1. Amaranthus
2. Borage
3. Calendula
4. Cornflowers
5. Cosmos
6. Marigolds
7. Nasturtiums
8. Nicotiana
9. Poppies
10. Sunflowers
11. Sweet Peas
12. Zinnias

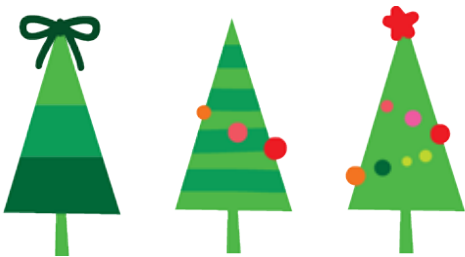
SAVE THE DATE

CHRISTMAS LUNCH 2023

Date: Thursday 14th December
Time: Lunch
Location: Richmond Hill Hotel

We have booked the date for this year's Residents' Christmas Lunch for Thursday 14th December in the same venue, Richmond Hill Hotel.

Please be sure to put this date into your diaries as we know it is quite an occasion.



Contribute to our Next Issue

If you would like to contribute an article for the next issue, the deadline is:

Friday 14th April 2023

Give the article to your Scheme Manager, or email to c.richards@richmondcharities.org.uk

As a guide on word count, a one page article is ideally 340 words.

SAVE THE DATE:

17th & 18th May

Arts and Crafts Showcase

The residents' Arts and Crafts Showcase dates have been finalised. The Showcase will be held over two days in the Hickey's Chapel on 17th and 18th May.

The first session on 17th May will be over lunch and the next session will be on 18th May in the evening with refreshments. Residents will be displaying their arts and crafts for all to see, so save the date and bring along your family, friends and neighbours.

REMINDER: Quiz Night

Date: Thursday 27th April **Time:** 6pm
Location: The Chapel

If you haven't been to a Quiz night before, why not give it a go? Don't panic – you don't have to know everything! You will be part of a team and can pool your knowledge. and you probably know more than you think.

Team sizes are up to 8. If you are on your own, don't worry – we can introduce you to another table.

There is a small prize for each member of the winning team. If your group size is bigger than 8, please make two (or more!) smaller tables – the smaller teams often win!

Why not give it a go?

Drinks and nibbles will be provided.



Richmond May Fair



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

Richmond May Fair
Saturday 13th May
10am–5pm

The Richmond May Fair returns to Richmond Green on 13 May after a 3-year absence (for obvious reasons). Visitors can look forward to all the things they love about this community fair – including children’s rides, the Scouts’ barbecue, the dog show, the craft marquee, local performers and musicians and a wealth of stalls hosted by Richmond-based charities.

The Richmond May Fair has been a firm fixture on the local calendar for almost 50 years, taking place on the second weekend of May every year since 1980 and only stopping due to covid.

Borough residents have said that the May Fair is part of their family history – those that once looked forward to coming with their parents or grandparents are now bringing their own children to ride the helter skelter. The fair plays an important role in bringing the people of Richmond together to support good causes and enjoy a great day out.

This year, The Richmond Charities will have a stall at the Fair to publicise the charity’s work – so do come along and enjoy the Fair and come and say hello to us on our stall!

Almshouse Open Day



by Juliet Ames-Lewis

The Richmond Charities
Almshouses Open Day
Saturday 8th July
Midday – 4pm

The year, for the first time, the charity is going to hold an Open Day and Family & Friends Day, when we will open some of our almshouse estates to the public and also to residents and their friends and family.

The Open Day will showcase our almshouses, our community, our forthcoming projects and our almshouse application procedure.

The day will be centred around Hickey’s and Church Estate and visitors will be offered tours of the Chapel and grounds. We will have activities for children and refreshments. Staff and Trustees will be on hand to talk to visitors about the work of the charity.

We would love residents to be involved and to bring family and friends along to celebrate our community.

We will share more information about the day in due course.

Coronation Weekend 6th–8th May 2023



by **Juliet Ames-Lewis**

**Coronation Weekend
6th–8th May 2023**

Further to my article in last month's Almshouse News, I am delighted that residents at some estates have come forward to take the charity up on our offer to put up marquees, tables and chairs in almshouse gardens for the Coronation weekend, so that residents can hold their own Coronation parties.

Marquees will be put up at Hickey's, Candler and Michel's Almshouses. Candler residents will be inviting residents from Wright's to join them, and Michel's will be inviting residents from Bishop Duppa's and Queen Elizabeth's to join them. And all almshouse residents are welcome at any of the resident run events!

If you would like to be part of a Coronation weekend party, please do let your Scheme Managers know and they will link you in with residents organising parties at one of the other estates.

Residents at Church Estate might also like to think about using the Garden Room for a party – again, please speak to your Scheme Managers about this, if this is of interest.

We will, as you know, be holding a ***lunch at Hickey's in the marquee there on Sunday 7th May to welcome our new Chaplain, Derrick Thompson, and we hope that residents from all estates will join us for that (please RSVP!)***

The 3 marquees can be used at other times over the bank holiday weekend by residents, as long as, please, that the parties do not clash with our service of welcome and lunch for Derrick.

Coronation Vigil Service

Our new Chaplain, Derrick, will be holding a service in our Chapel on **Thursday 4th May at 4pm** which will be a service of Vigil for the King, ahead of the Coronation, using an order of service put together by the Church of England specially for this occasion.

Derrick warmly welcomes all residents, staff, trustees and regular chapel attendees to this service which will be followed by refreshments!



Out and About Group by Richard Yardley

Upcoming Visit:

The Big City Exhibition

Guildhall Art Gallery, Basinghall St, London EC2V 5AE

Tuesday 4th April

Meet at Richmond Station at 10.30am.

An exhibition of London, painted on a grand scale. All welcome. If you would like to join, please contact Richard Yardley or your Scheme Manager.

Upcoming Visit:

Charterhouse Almshouses

Charterhouse Square, Barbican, EC1M 6AN

Tuesday 23rd May.

Meet at Richmond Station at 10.30am

A tour has been arranged at a special price of £1 per person. All welcome. If you would like to join, please contact Richard Yardley or your Scheme Manager.

Review of our visit to *The Wild Table of Love*, bronze statues by Artists Gillie and Marc, by Angela Greaves

On Tuesday, 14th March, Richard met 5 residents at Richmond Station, and we headed off to Waterloo. A quick pit stop at The Fire Station restaurant next door to Waterloo station provided the fuel to carry on in the crisp sunny weather. We all had the full English Breakfast served in a frying pan, highly recommended. Memorabilia from the original fire station was evident in the ceiling with the original hoses featuring in the light fittings. A quick bus trip to St Paul's Cathedral where we alighted and walked to Paternoster Square. In the centre of the square was *The Wild Table of Love* bronze statues by Artists Gillie and Marc. We were delighted to join the animals at their table. The photographs tell the story. After filling ourselves with the delightful statues we went on to have tea and cake at the new Salvation Army restaurant, which was lovely. Not wanting the day to end we crossed the Thames over the wobbly bridge (the Millennium Bridge) and decided to travel homewards on one of the Thames Clippers to Vauxhall which was well worth the single senior fare of £5. A train to Richmond and Twickenham and we were home. Where had the whole day gone?

Lots of laughter, chatting, eating, and drinking – a thoroughly enjoyable day out in London. Compliments to Richard for arranging this wonderful day out.



The Richmond Charities Almshouses in Bloom 2023



by Linda Prendergast

Spring is in the air and bulbs are popping their heads out to say hello. This year we're going bigger and better with the **Almshouses In Bloom 2023** competition. There will be trophies and garden vouchers for first, second and third places in both of the main categories. Firstly, individual gardens, and for those who don't have gardens there will be a category for pots and hanging baskets. There will also be a prize awarded for that one garden the judges thought earned a *Special Commendation* and every entrant will receive a certificate.



We are also keen to encourage residents at individual estates to collaborate and work together, so that perhaps all (or a cluster) of individual gardens or pots have a planting theme or a colour theme. Why not speak to your neighbours and pool your ideas?

All entries will be marked and rated by our impartial judges Owen and Emma and a prize giving event will be arranged to present the trophies and gift vouchers to the winners.

If you would like to enter the competition please contact your Scheme Manager and ask for an entry form.

Judging will take place on **Saturday 1st July** and all entrants will be reminded in advance of the date giving you the chance to dead head and do some more weeding before Owen and Emma visit!

Loki the Dog

"Guess what? In the coming months, there will be a beautiful Greyhound looking to visit residents in their own home"

"Pardon me, what did you just say? A dog.... visiting?!"

"Yes, a visit from Loki, who is a Greyhound. He loves to visit individuals in their home, he absolutely loves be fussed and he also enjoys being stroked"

"Well I never"

"Yep, it is true. He will be visiting with his owner, Jess"

"Look, I have a photo of him"



"Beautiful isn't he?"

If you would like a visit from Loki and Jess, please let your Scheme Manager know.

Ars Gratia Artis



by Mike Townsin

Juliet's brief to me was to write "a piece on what art expresses" which is a bit like being given a History of Art degree course assignment!

Paintings, sculptures and performance art are, of course, visual expressions of emotion on the part of the artist which have an emotional impact on the viewer.

"Every artist was first an amateur" said the 19th century American poet and philosopher Ralf Emerson, a truism with which anyone who has put brush to canvas or has observed a four-year-old's tentative efforts, will readily concur! I once proudly did a portrait of my best friend for his 60th birthday who, upon receipt, hated it and rolled it up! A lesson there.

But art doesn't only express emotions, it conveys thoughts and ideas graphically for the purposes of social comment and, often, propaganda. My first experience of this was Picasso's *Guernica*, an incredibly powerful anti-war painting, portraying the suffering of war. In a similar vein and with a similar purpose, the photographer Don McCullin has raised photojournalism, particularly of war, to a visceral art form... at the same time as bringing home the horrors of war, poverty and famine to a wide, international audience.

But at the other end of the spectrum the

portrayal of beauty, whether of humans, animals, nature or still life, is the predominant theme of art. Here emotions, sentimentality and attraction relating to living things or the natural world are captured by those who have an urge to interpret and communicate beauty: we call them artists, whose inspiration through the ages created the timeless art of Phideas's *Parthenon* to David Hockney's *A Bigger Splash* – "Art is lasting, life is short", as the Greek physician Hippocrates neatly put it. Indeed!

There is, of course, always the question of aptitude, the absence of which is often a barrier for those with an urge to create, but not a barrier to appreciation: many people with no ability at all can relate to an artist's work in one way or another. My friend can't draw for toffee but actually has a deep appreciation of painting and sculpture and is a collector. Libraries have been written about pictorial Art, and my modest attempt to answer Juliet's brief barely scratches the surface of this monumental subject. Anyway, I feel in good company: as Leonardo da Vinci himself once said "Art is never finished, only abandoned".

It is often asked 'what is the purpose of art'. Ignoring the many attempts of artists to answer this profound question, here is my own brief definition: "to lift the spirits of the viewer and/or to stimulate the intellect."

Other attempts to do this in 13 words or less should be submitted to the Editor for publication in a future issue.

Artists In Our Community

In our last issue, we gathered together images from talented artists and crafters in our community. There were a couple by our Trustees that got missed out. Apologies (Ed). So here are the artistic creations of Kate O'Brien and Mike Townsin.

Kate O'Brien: "This is a photo of a quilt I made using the English Paper Piecing technique. This means each piece is cut and stitched (or it can be glued) around a paper template; in this case they are almost all hexagons. Then all the pieces are hand stitched together, first into blocks and then the blocks sewn together. The only part that is machine sewn is the addition of the backing. Officially this is a counterpane rather than a quilt because I did not include any wadding, mainly because on top of a duvet it would be too hot. I started it in January 2017 and finished it early last year ... so not a quick project, but one I am very proud of!"

Mike Townsin: "*Portrait of a Best Friend* (subject hated it and rolled it up!)." (pictured right).



On This Day:
2nd April 1939
Black American soul
artist Marvin Gaye was
born.

On This Day:
10th April 1833
On his opening night Ira Aldridge won over
his audience as the first Black person to play
Shakespeare's *Othello* at the Theatre Royal
in London.

On This
Day:
6th April 1974
Swedish Pop band Abba
won the Eurovision Song
Contest with their
song *Waterloo*.

On This Day:
16th April 1889
Charlie Chaplin (1889-1977)
British actor and comedian (*City Lights*, *Gold
Rush*), born in London, England

National Awareness Days

Stress Awareness Month. 1st–30th April.

Stress and poor mental health are one of the biggest public health challenges that we're facing. Sadly, even though that is the case, we are still not taking its impact seriously enough. We continue to separate mental health from physical health and vice versa. The reality is they cannot be separate – they are two sides of the same coin. There is no health without mental health and stress can lead to numerous health problems. From physical problems, like heart disease, insomnia, digestive issues, immune system challenges, etc to more serious mental health disorders such as anxiety and depression.

Stress Awareness Month has been held every April since 1992 to raise awareness of the causes and cures for our modern-day stress epidemic. It is the time when we have an opportunity for an open conversation on the impact of stress. Dedicated time to removing the guilt, shame, and stigma around mental health. To talk about stress, and its effects and open up about our mental and emotional state with friends, families, colleagues, and professionals.

Website: www.stress.org.uk/national-stress-awareness-month/

Bowel Cancer Awareness Month.

1st–30th April.

This annual event is to increase awareness of bowel cancer and raise funds towards treating this condition. It is driven by various charitable organisations including the Beating Bowel Cancer and Bowel Cancer

UK, who have merged with the main aim of ensuring that there would be no victim of Bowel Cancer by 2050.

Website: www.bowelcanceruk.org.uk/

Stop Food Waste Day. 26th April.

This is the largest single day of action in the fight against food waste. Did you know, one third* of food produced for human consumption is lost or wasted globally? Food waste is central to some of the key challenges facing the world today, including hunger and poverty, climate change, health and wellbeing and the sustainability of agriculture and oceans. Wasting food is also a waste of the energy to grow, harvest, process and cook, and food waste in landfill can cause methane emissions, a potent greenhouse gas. Stop Food Waste Day is to ignite change regarding the global food waste issue. Website: www.stopfoodwasteday.com

(*Source: World Food Programme).

Top Idea for Ending Food Waste

This website and app:

www.toogoodtogo.com shows you what food will go to waste at the end of day in shops and cafes near you.

For example: **Leon in Richmond**: you can collect a bag of food for dinner for just £3.75 at 9pm. Or **Orée Cafe in Richmond**: you can collect a 'Magic Bag' of fresh bakes such as bread, sweet cakes or croissants at 7pm for £3.49.*

Remember: the contents all depend on which items haven't sold that day - so it's a surprise until you pick it up!

Try it! It's fun, delicious and it's saving

food waste. *You will need the app to take part.



Community Conversation

Richmond Council is hosting its next Community Conversation event on 18th April, giving residents from all parts of Richmond upon Thames a chance to put forward ideas for the borough to the Leader of the Council and chairs of the decision-making committees.



Twickenham Singer

Introducing Twickenham singer songwriter Eyitemi's (the name means 'this is mine' in the Nigerian language, Itsekiri) sound is a generous mix of soul and jazz with traces of gospel, afro, and funk.

Photography Exhibition

From portraiture to landscape, architecture to wildlife, and fine art to street photography, Richmond and Twickenham Photographic Society's annual exhibition celebrates the wonderful diversity of photography. Date: Fri 7th April 2023 - Sun 16th April 2023 at The Landmark Centre, Teddington.

There are over one thousand young people in Richmond upon Thames who care for members of their family, often at a cost to their education, social development and mental wellbeing.

Mini Railway Reopens



It's a welcome back to everyone as the Hampton Kempton Waterworks Railway opens with heritage steam train rides and picnics.

Dignity in Care Award



Do you know someone who should be recognised for the compassion and dignity with which they carry out their role as a paid carer or care worker? Nominate them today for a Dignity in Care Award.

Ruils Independent Living are launching a new project in partnership with NHS Richmond.



Dance Class at Richmond Theatre

Join us at Richmond Theatre for our new 45 minute dance class for ages 50 and over.



Council Tax Spending



Your Council Tax will be used to make the borough a vibrant and inclusive place for all. We will be investing in frontline services but also the climate emergency, education, major developments, revitalising high streets, and improving infrastructure.

To mark **International Women's Day**, Richmond Council held a free learning event for community organisations and professionals working across the borough to help combat stalking and violence against women and girls.

FOR MORE INFORMATION ON ANY OF THE ABOVE ARTICLES, Google: www.richmond.gov.uk

Review by Jenny Ruff

***The Lost King* (2022)**

*Directed by Stephen Frears. Written by Steve Coogan and Jeff Pope. Based on the 2013 book **The King's Grave: The Search for Richard III** by Philippa Langley and Michael Jones*

Thank you Michael Hobbs for always teasing me about not going to your film club held in our chapel! So I decided to silence both Michael and my friend Joy and go over and watch *The Lost King*, as I did know the background to the subject having followed it in the news.

It is a delightful, easy-to-watch film made in 2022, which contains a bit of detective work, a bitter sweet romance and a sprinkling of comedy which kept me glued to my seat from start to finish.

Philippa Langley (played by Sally Hawkins) and her husband John (played by Steve Coogan) have become disenchanted with their marriage. He is living elsewhere but always comes back to the family home to spend time with their two sons, who repeatedly mock him for his exploits with various ladies whom he pursues.

Philippa gets interested, after seeing the play *Richard III*, and a flyer for the local Richard III society. She joins and they attend a lecture at Leicester University. She dives deeper and is allowed to see an old map of Leicester which she has strong feelings about. The society starts a crowd funding page in earnest which attracts donations from all over the world, to dig up the local social services car park where ground penetrating

radar had been used but nothing was found. Philippa wants to dig a trench, and is awarded by the discovery of the legs of a skeleton. The complete male skeleton, with a curved spine and a deathly blow to the skull (from the Battle of Bosworth Field in August 1485) is unearthed. Bingo!



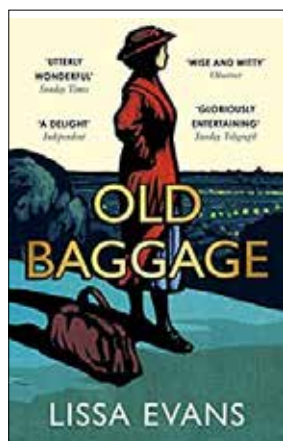
After all of her research and, of course, that wonderful thing called women's intuition, it is now heartbreaking for Philippa to be edged out of the breaking news by Leicester University who are taking all the credit for finding Richard III – they do not come out of this true story looking good.

John and Philippa now find each other interesting again after their exciting adventure and the children are more than happy to have their family united once again.

Step in our wonderful late Queen Elizabeth II who told Philippa she had been following her with keen interest when she awarded her an MBE at Buckingham Palace in 2015, saying the discovery was of national and international significance. Praise indeed.

Richard was interred at Leicester Cathedral in March 2015, restored to his place in history. A good man or a bad man – who knows but he is now at rest at last.

Review by Kate O'Brien
***Old Baggage* by
 Lissa Evans**

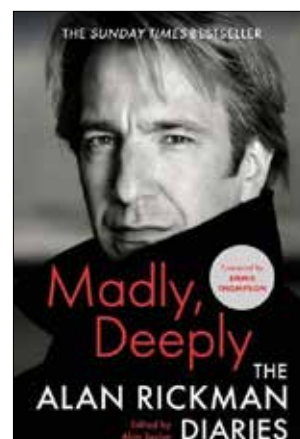


We meet Mattie Simpkin in middle age in the late 1920s. She was a pioneering suffragette who had marched, broken windows and gone to jail. But rather than focus on the excitement of those days (although there are many references), we follow her life afterwards when the 'battles' had been won. She lives on Hampstead Heath and sets up a group of girls, called The Amazons, who exercise and play, and even camp out, on the Heath. It turns out to rival another group of nationalists (as in followers of Mosley) also run by an ex-suffragette. We follow some of Mattie's girls and see how their lives evolve.

The book is funny and touching. Mattie is, to put it mildly, feisty and not always likeable – in fact I wondered if she was the old baggage of the title! But you end up on her side and her heart is in the right place.

Interestingly, Lissa Evans has written a trilogy involving the same characters – *Crooked Heart* was written before this book, and starts near the end of Mattie's life, ten years later when the war is starting. The focus is on someone who appears (no plot spoiler!) right at the end of *Old Baggage*. Lissa said she wrote Mattie as a minor character and then wanted to know more about her, so went backwards. The third novel is *V For Victory*, set in late 1944 and we see how the characters have managed during the war. I ended up reading all three chronologically and would highly recommend them all.

Review by Mike Townsin
Madly, Deeply: The Alan Rickman Diaries



"Fine acting is a bloody miracle of chance, the most fragile blending of time, mood, talent and trust" – one particularly profound quote from these diaries which span 22 years, beginning in 1993 and ending in December 2015, a few weeks before his death, aged 69.

The diaries capture him at the height of his fame. When he was in his 40s two films, *Die Hard* and *Robin Hood Prince of Thieves* catapulted him into international stardom. But despite the many doors that this opened for him, including Professor Snape in the Harry Potter films, he clearly didn't regard them as his finest work. Critics would attribute that to the film *Truly, Madly Deeply* and many more.

He writes in a gossipy and amusing way that is indiscreet, witty and candid, takes us behind the scenes on many of his films and plays, and seethes at the perceived shortcomings of script writers, designers, directors and fellow actors; but throughout he also conveys a generosity of spirit as a friend (notably to Emma Thompson who writes a Foreword), director and enthusiast, and his consummate professionalism as an actor. It's like Rickman chatting to a close friend. If you love film and theatre and are fascinated by the life of actors, you will love this.

Miscellany



Curated by Mike Townsin

- When eating jelly babies, nearly 8 out of 10 people bite the head off first.
- In North Welsh, the word for 'now' is

rwan, in South Welsh it is nawr, the same word spelt backwards.

- Trinity College, Cambridge, has won more Nobel Prizes than the whole of Italy.
- All polar bears are Irish: they are descended from brown bears that lived in Ireland 10,000 years ago.
- More than half the world's population is under 25, and more than half of it is bilingual.
- The first motorist to be fined for speeding in the UK was Walter Arnold in 1896. He was doing 8 mph in a 2 mph zone.
- A babalevante is someone who makes feeble jokes.
- When Jeremy Paxman was at Cambridge, he failed to get into his college's University Challenge team.
- Someone who is cock-thropled has an extremely prominent Adams apple.
- When Einstein published his Theory of General Relativity, the New York Times sent their golfing correspondent to interview him.
- Alexander the Great washed his hair in saffron to keep it shiny and orange.
- Deipnophobia, noun. The fear of dinner party conversations.
- Bobby Leach, the second man to go over Niagara Falls in a barrel, survived the fall but later died by slipping on a piece of orange peel.

Natural Remedies



by Debbie Flaherty

Health Tip – Heartburn

Heartburn is a sensation of burning pain above the tummy button or under the breastbone, possibly accompanied by nausea.

A change of diet, watching how you combine foods and eating slower will make all the difference.

What to eat and drink...to help reduce the effect of rising acid:

- Bananas
 - Unsweetened yogurt
 - Milk or plant based milk
 - Honey
 - Ginger tea
- * Do not jump around or bend down after eating.
- * Drink before you eat instead of drinking when eating.
- * Don't lie down after a meal.

Wit and Wisdom



Curated by Mike Townsin

- ***These are my principles. If you don't like them, I have others.*** *Graucho Marks (and most politicians!)*
- ***The secret of change is to focus all your energy not on fighting the old, but on building the new.*** *Socrates*
- ***There are two fools in every market place; one asks for too little and the other for too much.*** *Alan Sugar*
- ***There is nothing to writing. All you do is sit down at a typewriter and bleed.*** *Ernest Hemingway*
- ***A consultant is someone who borrows your watch to tell you the time.*** *Adage*
- ***The only thing better than singing is more singing!*** *Ella Fitzgerald*
- ***If I could say it in words there would be no reason to paint.*** *Edward Hopper*
- ***Life is like riding a bicycle. To keep your balance you must keep moving.*** *Albert Einstein*
- ***Actors are agents of change. A film, a piece of theatre, a book can make a difference. It can change the world.*** *Alan Rickman*
- ***Not how long, but how well you have lived is the main thing.*** *Seneca*
- ***I think men who have a pierced ear are better prepared for marriage. They have experienced pain and bought jewellery.*** *Rita Rudner, US comedian.*
- ***Many of life's failures are people who didn't know how close they were to success when they gave up.*** *Thomas Edison*

Getting To Know YOU

Jackie Watson

- What is your favorite song and how does it make you feel? **All the 70s songs make me feel my younger days again.**
- Who is your favorite artist and why? **Tom Jones who I once met at the Savoy & he was so nice (legend).**
- If you could be a star in a movie – what movie would it be? **Maybe *Titanic*, an epic film.**
- What book do you currently have on the go? **I'm reading *Women in the War* by Lucy Fisher**
- What words of wisdom would you pass onto the younger generation? **I always said to my boys, 'life is what you do with it' and 'with hard work you can achieve anything'.**
- What makes you laugh? **Many things make me laugh, silly mishaps and sayings**
- What is your greatest achievement? **My greatest achievement is my 3 sons.**
- If you were Prime Minister for the day, what would you do? **It would be a tough one but I would like to put in place national service, it may help giving youngsters a set of achievements and make for a better set of values to help them in everyday life.**

ALMSHOUSE NEWS – Fun & Games

Y J K Y S T F B K Z E J C Z Q V D Z E V I S Y Q
 M Y K P V X S E N C P G C I N O M R A H L I H P
 T R T A Y A J Z S R W D A B H T Z B Z E V T M W
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 F S A A K X I H S M P S L J O D S W T P I Z H V
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 L O Z R C M J Q U T I T Q R I H B V K B G O L K
 J C X E I B A C M M I M E G A A B M E A B Y R E
 S L J P J J D R E G B F A H L H F R G F H S X N
 L N N F N T C N D R G M L S N I H Z V L G S G A

stagecraft	cast	conservatoire	philharmonic	vaudeville
mime	puppetry	shakespeare	hollywood	festival
cabaret	circus	orchestra	jazz	cinema
magic	pantomime	comedian	costume	drama
opera	ballet	dancing	juggling	musician
stage	actor	singing	theatre	choir

WORDSEARCH: PERFORMING ARTS. Your chance to win a £10 M&S Voucher! Circle the THIRTY words.

Give this whole page to your Scheme Manager, or place in the suggestion box **before Friday 14th April 2023.**

Name: _____

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Answers in next month's issue.

Handy Websites for You



This month **Mike Townsin** shares his favourite websites:

Eatthismuch.com is an automatic diet planner. Enter how many calories you want to eat and how many meals to spread them across, and the service will help you create a diet plan. It includes weekly emails for what to buy at the grocery store, cooking instructions, and updated stats as you go along. It supports various diets, like vegetarian and paleo, and aims to help you avoid

worrying about what to eat at mealtimes.

LaterLife.com is a website focused on giving you the best of all worlds for anyone over 50, with new interesting and informative articles every week as well as access to a wide variety of resources to help you in making the most of later life and retirement, including extensive free guides, competitions and so on.

allpastimes.com to find hobbies couldn't be simpler. There is a list of hobbies and pastimes to pick up. Simply, view the different hobbies to see what catches your eye. Once a new hobby takes your interest, then you can click through to learn more about how to get started with it!

ANSWERS: March – Spot the Difference *The Milkmaid*



Your Healthy Brain



We all know that the reason we do puzzles and games is to keep your brain healthy. To check that we're doing the right things for brain health, do this online check up: **The Cleveland Clinic Brain Check-up.**

It is an online self-assessment with a customized tool that tests your memory and helps you make lifestyle choices that may reduce the risk for brain disorders.

How do I do it?

The Brain Check-up is simple and easy. You need a quiet space and a computer, tablet, or smartphone. Using the website [HealthyBrains.org](https://healthybrains.org) or the mobile app, you can answer a series of questions about you and your lifestyle choices. The entire check-up will take about 20 minutes to complete. Redo regularly to keep check on your brain health.

<https://healthybrains.org>



by Nigel Davis

The American poet Walt Whitman (1819-1892) can be an immensely difficult poet to read. But his modernistic, unmetred, free verse style, coupled with his explicit sensuality, were to become hugely influential (Swinburne, an utterly different kind of poet, was a great admirer, for instance – although, given Swinburne's character, perhaps not necessarily entirely for poetic reasons!).

TS Eliot even quotes him directly in the Four Quartets.

Fortunately, this particular poem, contained in the volume of poems entitled “Leaves of Grass” which Whitman himself constantly throughout his life revised and updated, is altogether more accessible. It in fact draws out from an observation of a scene in nature reflections on productiveness, solitariness and loneliness. You are left in no doubt where Whitman, an intensely gregarious and erotic man, stands on that. A fine poem.

I Saw in Louisiana a Live-oak Growing

by Walt Whitman

I saw in Louisiana a live-oak growing.
All alone stood it and the moss hung down from the branches.
Without any companion it grew there uttering joyous leaves of dark green,
And its look, rude, unbending, lusty, made me think of myself.
But I wonder'd how it could utter joyous leaves standing alone there without its friends near, for I knew I could not.
And I broke off a twig with a certain number of leaves on it, and twined around it a little moss,
And brought it away, and I have placed it in sight in my room.
It is not needed to remind me of my own dear friends
(For I believe lately I think of little else than them).
Yet it remains to me a curious token, it makes me think of manly love;
For all that, and though the live-oak glistens there in Louisiana solitary in a wide flat space,
Uttering joyous leaves all its life without a friend or lover near,
I know very well I could not.